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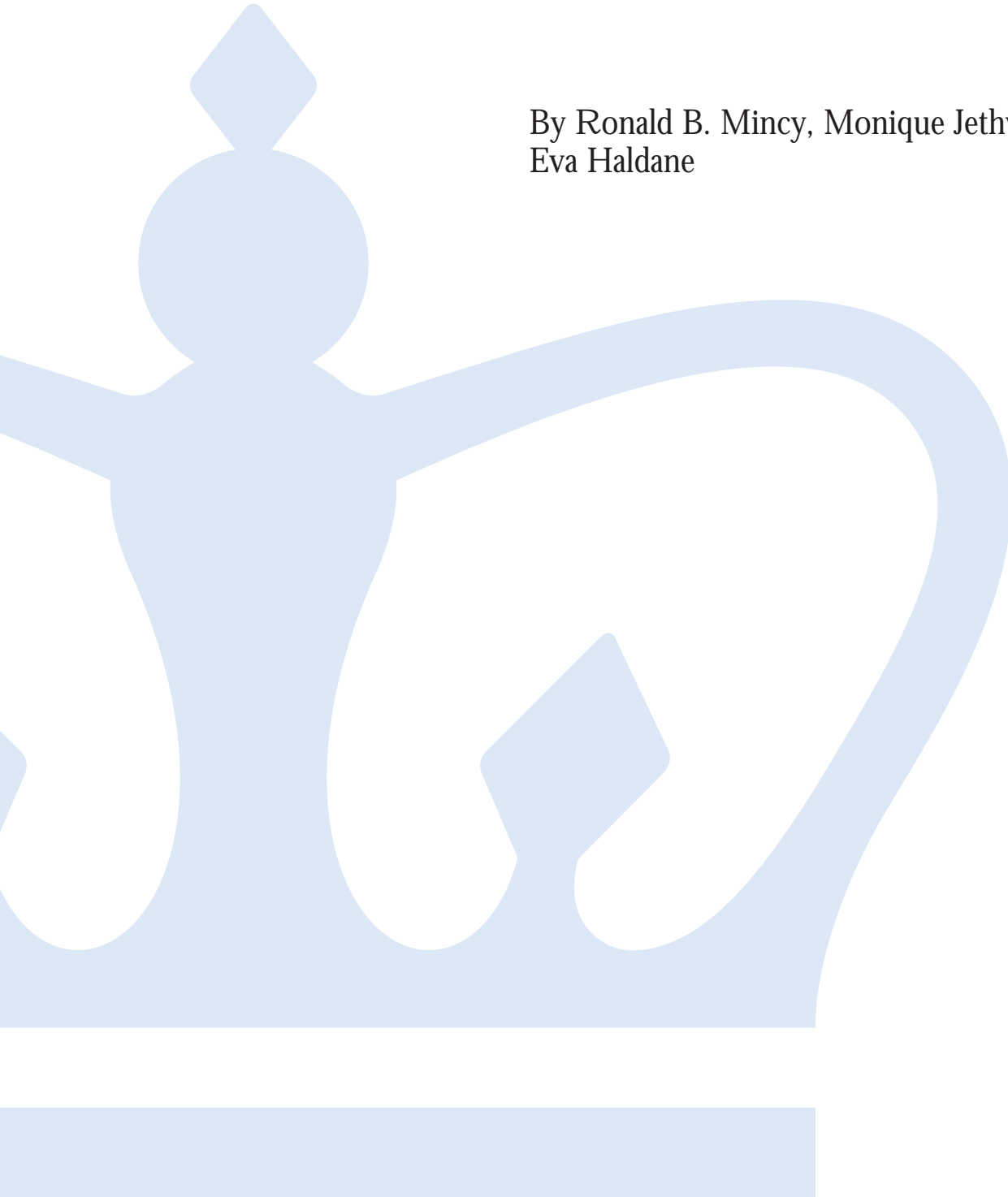
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# A Study of Employment, Earnings, and Educational Gaps between Young Black Bermudian Males and their Same-Age Peers

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*Center for Research on Fathers, Children and Family Well-Being*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bermudians are rightly concerned about the over-representation of young Black Bermudian males among those who have been incarcerated in Bermuda, especially because of drug trafficking and violent crime. Some are concerned that these young men are driven to these activities because they are ‘on the wall,’ or idle. Labor economists describe a unique set of relationships among the various labor-market outcomes Bermudians may have in mind when they use this phrase. These outcomes include employment, unemployment, employment at low earnings (underemployment), and labor force participation. This study uses micro-data from the 2000 Census of Population and Housing in Bermuda to measure these labor market outcomes as well as educational attainment outcomes, and puts concerns about Black Bermudians males under close scrutiny. This study also explores the educational and employment goals of Black male high school seniors and the messages they receive at home and in school regarding their aspirations.

Our examination shows that young Black Bermudian males have nearly the same employment-population ratios and *pure* non-labor force participation rates, the best proxy for being idle, as young White Bermudian males and Black Bermudian females. However, the unemployment rate of young Bermudian Black males is 14 percent, while the unemployment rate of young White Bermudian males is 8 percent. Moreover, young Black Bermudian males have much lower full-time enrollment-population ratios than their same age peers. While full time students are not in the labor force, they are certainly not idle. Further, we show that much of the excess unemployment among Black Bermudian males is related to a deficit in enrollment-population ratios when compared with their same age peers. In other words, Black Bermudian males are less likely to be in school and are more likely to be unemployed and looking for work.

When they are employed, Black Bermudian males are more likely to be employed at low earnings (underemployment) than their same age peers. Employment with low earnings is reason for concern, but it could hardly be described as “idleness.”

After concluding that the most important gaps between the labor market outcomes of Black Bermudian males and their same age peers are unemployment rates, low earnings, and high school or college enrollment, the study focuses on the degree to which these three outcomes differ between Black Bermudian males and their same age peers, especially White Bermudian males and Black Bermudian females.

Labor economists have found that industry, education, and a number of demographic factors, could account for differences in unemployment and earnings. First, this study examined the extent to which gaps in unemployment and earnings are associated with race and gender. Education level, health and marital status, and industries of employment all explain why Black Bermudian males earn less than their same-age peers. For example, Black Bermudian males would gain from additional investments in Technical degrees, but less than their same-age peers from additional investments in other forms of post-secondary schooling.

After accounting for differences in education, the racial differences in the predicted unemployment rates of Bermudian males were unchanged. Race does account for 29 percent of the racial gap in predicted earnings between young Black and White Bermudian males. However, it is difficult to determine how large a role race plays uniquely in the predicted earnings gap because industry of employment accounts for 57 percent of the gap, and both race and educational attainment are associated with industry of employment. Jobs in international and business service companies, which pay higher wages than jobs in other industries, are more



likely to require higher education, but Black Bermudian males obtain fewer college degrees than White Bermudian males or Black Bermudian females.

Black Bermudian females have more schooling than Black Bermudian males, are more likely to be employed in international and business service companies and to have higher predicted earnings than Black Bermudian males. Some of the gains that Black Bermudian females derive from more schooling are partially offset by the association between gender and earnings, which favors men. Black Bermudian males have a predicted earnings advantage over females at every level of education and in every industry. This and the higher returns to college education for Black Bermudian females may explain why the former are less likely to invest in education than the latter.

Next, we examined how much of the educational attainment gaps between young black males and their same age peers was associated with household structure, parents' income, education, and several of other factors. The educational attainment gaps, including enrollment and certification gaps, between Black and White Bermudian males are greater for those in single parent households. Educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian females and Black Bermudian males also differ by household type, but not in an orderly or predictable way. Black Bermudian female teenagers in single parent families are much more likely to be enrolled and to have completed secondary school with a certification and to not be enrolled in any additional educational program than Black Bermudian male teenagers in single parent families. The former are also much more likely than the latter to have an advanced secondary certificate, far more likely to have a technical degree or more, and far—more than four times—more likely to have a Bachelor's degree or more. Similarly, those young adult Black Bermudian females who live

independently are more likely than Black Bermudian males who live independently to have an advanced secondary certificate, a technical degree or more, and a Bachelor's degree or more.

Black Bermudian males may be reluctant to invest in education because they are aware that they will earn less than their White peers. Therefore, efforts to identify and root out all possible causes of the remaining race and gender differences are warranted. This includes efforts to end discrimination in hiring and compensation policies based on race or gender. But it also includes efforts to expose youth and young adults, especially Black Bermudian males, to a wider variety of job-shadowing experiences than those available through their fathers. We know the career paths of Black Bermudian males born before the late 1970s were limited by discrimination in education and employment and by a structure of rewards and opportunities for non-college workers, which no longer exists in Bermuda. Young Black Bermudian males may also be reluctant to invest in education because they know that the gains to higher education can be secured primarily by employment in lower-level administrative jobs in international companies and business services that are now held mostly by females. Efforts to change these perceptions, though difficult, are warranted.

Also, employers may be reluctant to hire many Black Bermudian males or offer them lower wages than other workers, because they display the same soft skill deficits that reduce the employability of less-educated Black males in the U.S. By soft skills we mean they are less punctual, exhibit poorer workplace attitudes, are less able to work as members of a team, and more likely to violate (written and unwritten) rules than their same age peers. These soft-skill deficits could also be related to the same behaviors that inhibited their performance in school. If soft skills are the problem, exposing young Black Bermudian males to the expectations of the

workplace earlier in their development must be part of the effort to reduce unemployment and earnings gaps between them and their same age peers.

Finally, our study of the 2000 Census suggests that the educational choices of Black Bermudian males are rational, if myopic. Like many young people, they may be focused on the present. Unlike their female counterparts, the benefits of getting a college education are not worth the effort required to obtain secondary school certifications that lead to college or the cost of a college education itself. Bermudian educators, policymakers, and youth-service workers must also devise and fund special strategies to get young Black Bermudian males to be more future-oriented when making decisions about school and work.

In order to better inform our recommendations regarding these strategies, we conducted semi structured interviews with 18 Black male public high school seniors to understand how they explain their educational and career aspirations and to explore the messages they receive from teachers and parents regarding these aspirations. These interviews indicate that graduation from high school is likely to result in some participation in college, especially Bermuda College which is free and offers trade certificates and associate's degrees. Students generally prefer to ultimately attend college overseas but almost all participants first plan to enroll in Bermuda College where they can take preparatory courses, complete overseas college and scholarship applications, and simply figure out what they want to do. Employment aspirations include sports, science and trades' professions (electrical, carpentry, IT tech) because they enjoy 'working with their hands' and because they hope to enjoy a varied and flexible work schedule and own their own businesses. Boys observe little professional or managerial work from their fathers or relatives which may contribute to their view that such work is unsuitable for them.

Both parents and teachers support the boys' educational and professional aspirations and advise the boys to 'stick with it' and graduate high school and pursue higher education. Boys experience a 'maturity' challenge, especially when they start high school, and find it difficult to take school seriously. Maturity and disciplinary problems may inhibit teacher-student relationships and contribute to the high dropout rate among Black males in high school. Conversely, parent and teacher support communicates a confidence that the boys can indeed meet their educational and professional aspirations and inspires a commitment to school. With this support, the boys in this study are on track to graduate high school. However, they are only beginning to think about their college and career plans and are not clear about how to achieve their goals.

Parents in this study are supportive but have limited experience with the complex process of college and fellowship applications and teachers are offering this guidance too late, oftentimes in the final year of high school. Results suggest that student-teacher and family relationships are critical to how boys think about their educational and professional futures but that obstacles like gender specific expectations and limited exposure to employment options and college requirements may leave them in the position to say 'we're graduating, but what next?'

Together, these findings lead us to several recommendations for in-school and out of school programs and policy changes that would improve the prospects that young Black Bermudian males will graduate from secondary school, enroll in post-secondary school, and increase their employment and earnings. First, while mothers are highly engaged in their sons' education, their academic achievements and career choices do not appear to be salient to the corresponding choices of their sons. Though many do not live with their fathers, sons model the career choices of their fathers and fathers are less likely than mothers to have post-secondary

education or to work in administrative positions. Thus, the preference for ‘working with hands’ passes from one generation to another even though the economy is generating high paying administrative, managerial, and professional jobs requiring post secondary education. However, ‘working with hands’ and post secondary schooling are not mutually exclusive. Even surgeons work with their hands. This message should be sent by parents, including non-resident fathers, schools, and youth serving organizations.

Secondly, it is essential that Black Bermudian males be exposed to a wider array of managerial and professional choices. In order to facilitate this exposure, we recommend that the guidance and career counseling services for Black males in the Bermudian public schools be greatly increased. An emphasis on life after high school as soon as boys enter high school, coupled with adult support, might help students think about their educational and career interests, generate goals, and develop the confidence to believe that they can meet them. Consistent relationships with guidance counselors might help students to conceptualize the long term consequences of various actions before it is too late. This relational connection is likely to both support students who are at risk of dropping out, and help those who are likely to graduate identify the steps they need to take towards higher education.

Third, we recommend that Bermuda replicate several dropout prevention programs for those who leave school without a certificate, despite increases in the guidance staff, and a few programs targeting out of school youth in order to serve those who have already dropped out. Both the dropout prevention and out of school youth programs are drawn from the U.S. experience. Most have been rigorously evaluated or show promise for reducing the drop out or criminal involvement of young Black males in the United States or increasing their employment, earnings or graduation rates. Because this population has been very difficult to serve, but has

many options for receiving services in the United States, we argue that if adapted well, these programs should be cost effective for Black Bermudian males. These programs are based upon modern youth development principles, which focus on the needs of all youth, rather than on a particular deficit or problem behavior. Almost all of the recommended programs include job-shadowing opportunities, which would expose young Black Bermudian males to a wider array of occupational choices, including those requiring a college education.

Finally, in order to develop programs that effectively serve Black male youth, there is a need for increased collaboration among youth serving organizations and business leaders. A new government agency or department that places a priority on serving out of school youth could support these efforts by utilizing funds saved from variable costs left behind when young Black Bermudian males leave the public schools.

We hope Bermudians will seize the opportunity we have tried to sketch in our study, and work together to begin to construct a way out for its youth and the larger society.

## **CHAPTER ONE: On the Wall or On the Margins? A Study of the Employment and Earnings Gaps between Young Black Males in Bermuda and their Same-Age Peers**

**By Ronald B. Mincy and Eva C. Haldane**

This study documents the size of achievement gaps in unemployment and earnings between young Black men and other youth and young adults in Bermuda and examines the extent to which these achievement gaps are associated with race, Bermudian status, and other factors by which young Black and White men in Bermuda differ. Findings from the study will be used to make recommendations for policy and programs designed to close achievement gaps between young Black men and other youth and young adults in Bermuda, including recommendations for on-going policies and programs in Bermuda.

The marginalization of young men of African descent has been documented in several countries throughout the African Diaspora, including, Britain, Canada, Jamaica, and the United States (Miller, 1991; Bastick, 2001; Figuerora, 2004; National Visible Minority Council on Labour Force Development, 2004; Mincy, 2006). Police reports and media accounts of low rates of academic achievement and high rates of incarceration among young, single, Black men in Bermuda, provide some evidence of this problem in Bermuda as well (Bermuda Police Service, 2005; Regan, 2003). For example, young Black Bermudian men are highly over-represented among the incarcerated population in Bermuda and they are much more likely than their same-age peers to commit drug-related offenses and violent crimes (Bermuda Police Service, 2005). Many in Bermuda believe, with good reason, that these are the same young men who are “On the Wall,” an expression that, we believe, essentially means idle. Put differently these young men are not working, not in school, and not making any meaningful contribution to society.

To respond to this challenge, Bermudians must first be clear about what being “On the Wall,” means. In other words: What are the outcomes for young Black Bermudian men about which they are really concerned? How different are these outcomes from the corresponding outcomes of other young Bermudians the same age?

In the first section of this study we try to translate the concern about being “On The Wall” into its labor market and educational dimensions. If the fundamental concern is idleness, then it must have something to do with being not in the labor force or not enrolled. So we analyze these outcomes for Black Bermudian men and their same age peers. Or, the concern could be that too many Black Bermudian males are unsuccessful in their search for work (i.e., unemployed). So we analyze differences in this outcome as well. Finally, the concern could be that many young Black Bermudian men are working, but many have earnings that are too low to support a family (underemployment). For these young men crime, especially drug trafficking may be a way of supplementing their incomes. So we analyze race and gender gaps in underemployment and earnings as well.

Paradoxically, we find that young Black Bermudian men work almost as much or more than their same age peers. Further, they are only a little more likely than their same age peers to be idle (not in the labor force). However, they spend more time looking for work and they are much less likely to be enrolled. In our view, this latter outcome is critical because, as the next two sections of the study show, the enrollment (and resulting) educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian men and their same age peers play a large role in their unemployment and earnings gaps.

Though it is difficult to draw causal inferences from cross-sectional data, we think these findings can help Bermudians sort through the policy options to reduce unemployment and



enrollment gaps between young Black Bermudian men and their same age peers and persistent racial inequality in Bermuda more generally (Department of Statistics, 2009). Given the long history of racial inequality in Bermuda, it is tempting to argue that racism, particularly institutional racism, plays a large role in the marginalization of young Black Bermudian men and in racial inequality (Clark et.al, 1978; Hodgson, 1997). Another possible explanation is that young Black Bermudian men have not acquired the human capital they need to compete effectively in the labor market. A third explanation is that young Black Bermudian men lack the soft skills (e.g., punctuality, teamwork, cooperation, and so on), which have long term impacts on earnings (Duncan & Dunifon, 1998).

Finally, these explanations are not mutually exclusive. Racial barriers in education and employment may have made it difficult for earlier cohorts of Black men to secure employment in high paying industries and occupations. As a result, while in school younger cohorts of Black men may have believed that the returns to education for Black men are low. However, changes in the industrial and occupational distribution of employment may have raised these returns. If so, young Black men who did not take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them may now be unprepared to take advantage of employment opportunities available to more highly educated workers.

Labor market conditions for Black Bermudian men were adversely affected by the worldwide recession of the 1980s and the subsequent recovery. In Bermuda the recession was accompanied by a shift in the industrial composition of employment from hospitality to the international business sector (financial and insurance companies). There were declines in the demand for less-educated workers, increases in the demand for workers in occupations requiring with higher levels of educational attainment, especially managerial and professional positions.

Black Bermudians were especially vulnerable because of the dearth of Black Bermudians in these occupations (Newman, 1990; Commissiong, 2009).

For example, in 2003, the Department of Statistics (2006) conducted an Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey. Among other things, this survey identified Bermudians at risk in job situations that required high literacy skills, because their scores on all domains used to measure literacy and numeracy fell below minimal standards. Among 16 to 30 year olds, Black men were most likely to be at risk. They represented 34 percent of young people who did not meet minimal skills standards, while young Black women represented 26 percent of young people who did not meet these standards. White men and women represented 15 and 18 percent of those who did not meet these standards, respectively.

To shed light on the importance of race-based vs. human capital (and other) explanations for achievement gaps between young Black men and other youth and young adults in Bermuda<sup>1</sup>, the study will first address three questions:

1. How large are the gaps in employment labor force, unemployment, enrollment, and earnings between young Black Bermudian men and young White Bermudian men?<sup>2</sup>
2. To what extent are variations in unemployment and earnings among young men associated with race, gender, educational attainment, and other factors?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For brevity and focus, we compare the outcomes of young Black men to those of young White Bermudian men, because the two groups compete for the same jobs in the labor market. We also compare the outcomes of young Black Bermudian men to those of young Black Bermudian women, because they come from the same families. Family members provide information and access to jobs and their characteristics are major determinants of educational attainment, which in turn, is a major determinant of earnings and unemployment rates.

<sup>2</sup> Most studies of labor market status focus on employment rates because these incorporate variations in labor force participation and unemployment, and take account of youth who may be discouraged from seeking work (Chapple and Rea, 1998). We depart from this convention because employment rates of Black and White Bermudian men are quite high and non-labor force participation is rare.

<sup>3</sup> The study focuses on young people who are 16-30 years old. Although these young people are making decisions about schooling and labor market activity at the same time, the main focus of this study is on labor market activity. A subsequent study will focus on decisions about educational attainment.

3. Are the associations between unemployment and earnings, on the one hand, and education and other factors, on the other, the same for young Black Bermudian men and young White Bermudian men?

The last question addresses whether young Black men are victims of more subtle forms of disenfranchisement. Even if factors other than race account for substantial portions of Black-White unemployment and earnings gaps, race-based inequities may still play some role. This can occur if employers reward young Black and White Bermudian men differently for the factors, other than race and Bermudian status, which are associated with earnings. For example, young Black Bermudian men who work in fast-growing industries may receive lower pay than young White Bermudian men who work in the same industries. Labor market policies would be needed to address these inequities.

Young Black men may also receive lower gains from completing secondary school than young White men. One explanation for this is wage discrimination, pure and simple. Employment-focused policies again seem most appropriate to remedy this problem. However, an alternate explanation is that young White and Black Bermudian men attend very different schools, and rightly or wrongly, employers value the certificates from the schools Black men attend much less than they value the certificates from the schools White students attend.<sup>4</sup> In this case, education-focused policies are needed to provide remedies.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Between 1991 and 2000, Bermuda experienced an increase in the proportion of students attending private vs. public schools, especially at the senior secondary level. This change was especially dramatic among White students. Only 12 percent of White students attended public, senior secondary schools, while 70 percent of Black students did so. This means that race is a fairly good proxy for a private vs. a public school education (Census Office, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> Strictly speaking, cross sectional studies such as this one can merely establish associations between variables; they cannot establish causal relationships, which are the optimal guides to policymaking. However, in the near future, we do not expect to have the types of longitudinal surveys of labor force market outcomes among young Bermudians or random control experiments that would be required to establish causal relationships between race and education on the one hand and unemployment and earnings on the other. Nevertheless, there are well established theories of human capital and discrimination that have been rigorously tested for decades, mostly with cross sectional data (Becker 1965, Ashenfelter & Oaxaca 1987, and Mincer, 1974). In the absence of better data, this body of work can be used to guide our interpretation of labor market data from the Census of Population and Housing in Bermuda in

The final section of the paper summarizes our findings and suggests their implications for future research and policy.

### **The Labor Force/Enrollment Status of Bermudian Youth and Young Adults**

Bermudians often express concerns that too many young Black men are idle. The colloquial expression is "On the Wall." We tried to translate this concern into its labor market and educational dimensions. The concern could be that too many young Black men are out of the labor force and not enrolled. Or it could be that too many are unsuccessful in their attempts to look for work (i.e., unemployed). Finally, the concern could be that many young Black men are working, but many have earnings that are too low to support a family. For these young men crime, especially drug trafficking, may be a way of supplementing their incomes.

To see if Black Bermudian men if young Black Bermudian are more disadvantaged than their same age peers in any of these ways, this section describes the distributions of young Black Bermudian men by labor market and enrollment status in comparison to their same-age peers. We calculate these distributions and display them graphically, leaving detailed tables to the Appendix.

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ways that provide previously unavailable insights about the achievement gaps between Black Bermudian men and their same-age peers. We are confident that these insights will put policymakers in Bermuda in a better position to address these gaps than they are now.

**Table 1: Labor Force/School Enrollment Status of Persons 16-30 Years Old**

	All Young Adults	Black Bermudian Males	White Bermudian Males	Black Bermudian Females	White Non-Bermudian Males
Employed-Not Enrolled	62%	62%	57%	57%	80%
Employed-Enrolled	10%	9%	12%	15%	5%
Full-Time Student	15%	15%	23%	16%	10%
Unemployed	7%	11%	6%	9%	3%
Not in Labor Force	5%	3%	2%	3%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Persons aged 16 to 30 years will heretofore be referred to as "young adults."

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of young Bermudians by labor market/enrollment status. Most young Bermudians between 16 and 30 years old are employed and about ten percent combine work with school (column 1). Just over a fifth are not in the labor force, but of these most are full time students. About seven and a half percent are unemployed.

Columns 2 and 3 present these distributions for young Bermudian men separately by race. Young Black Bermudian men are somewhat more likely to be employed than their White Bermudian peers. The former are also somewhat less likely to be full-time students than the latter. Among those who are not in the labor force, most young Bermudian men are full-time students (15%), though the proportion of young White men who are full time students is higher (23%). If being ‘on the wall,’ means not looking for work and not enrolled, this describes the status of only a small proportion (3 %) of young Black Bermudian men; just one percentage point higher than the proportion of young White Bermudian men who are not in the labor force and not enrolled. For this reason we believe the concern must be with young Black Bermudian men who are unable to find work at prevailing wages, the unemployed, and with young Bermudian male workers with low earnings. We postpone discussion of the latter until the next section.

About the former we can say that the proportion of young Black Bermudian men who are unemployed (11 %) is almost twice as high as the corresponding proportion among young White Bermudian men (6%). So there does appear to be some reason for concern about a racial unemployment gap among young Bermudian men. What about a gender unemployment gap? Do young Black Bermudian men have higher unemployment rates than their female peers?

Columns 2 and 4 show that the labor force/enrollment status of young Black Bermudian men and women are similar. Most Black Bermudian men and women are employed. Three percent of Black Bermudian men and women are not in the labor force and not enrolled. The largest gender difference is that young Black Bermudian men are less likely to combine school and work than their female peers (9 percent vs. 15 percent, respectively). However, the proportion of young Black Bermudian men who are unemployed is just 2 percentage points higher than the corresponding proportion of young Black Bermudian women.

Finally, an underlying concern is that many of the most lucrative jobs in Bermuda are going to persons without Bermudian status (hereafter, non-Bermudians), who are recruited to work in international businesses. Column 5 shows that the labor force status of young White non-Bermudian men is very different from that of young people with Bermudian status, who have been the focus of discussion thus far. The overwhelming majority (80 percent) of White non-Bermudian men are employed and not enrolled in school. These men are much less likely to be unemployed (3 percent) than their Black Bermudian male peers (11 percent). Like White Non-Bermudians men, most Black Bermudian men are employed (62 percent), however the former are less likely to combine work with school or to be enrolled as full time students than the former.

**What does it mean to be “On the Wall?”**

Young Black Bermudian men work more than White Bermudian men and almost as much as Black Bermudian women. If being “On the Wall” means not looking for work or not being enrolled in school, they are only one percent more idle than White Bermudian men and just as idle as Black Bermudian women. The largest differences between young Black Bermudian men and their same age peers are that larger proportions of young Black Bermudian men are unemployed and smaller proportions are full or part-time students. These differences need closer scrutiny for several reasons.

First, the proportion of a group that is unemployed is a very poor gauge of a group’s performance in the labor market. This is especially true for youth and young adults because many are studying or, if they are young mothers, caring for children. The benefits they, and society, derive from these alternatives to work or looking for work, could easily exceed their earnings or the value of what they produce if they worked. Instead, labor economists focus on the unemployment rate, which is the ratio of members of a group who are unsuccessful in searching for work to members of a group who are available for work. This latter sub-group, called the labor force, consists of members of the group who are either employed or unemployed, but looking for work.

Second, since women are the primary caregivers for most young children, there is one universally accepted alternative to work (or looking for work) in which a young man’s time could produce greater value for himself and society, attending school (or enrollment) full time (Becker, 1965). Put differently, if teenagers or young men are enrolled full time, they are certainly not “On the Wall” or idle. If they are neither in the labor force (working or looking for work), nor full-time students (or enrolled full time), it seems fair to conclude that they are “On the Wall” or idle.

Third, there is a very important, and insightful, relationship among these alternative activities and the ways labor economists measure them (Freeman 1979). The employment-population ratio, shown in Table 1, is the simple product of the proportion of the population employed to the proportion of the population in the labor force. This relationship also involves the unemployment rate. Because of this relationship we know that employment population ratio differences are related to two labor market outcomes: 1) the proportion of a group who are not in (or who withdraw from) the labor market and 2) the length of time it takes members of a group to search for jobs. The first is related to labor supply behavior, which reflects an individual's willingness to work at prevailing wages. The second is related to employer's willingness to hire individuals with certain qualifications at prevailing wages.

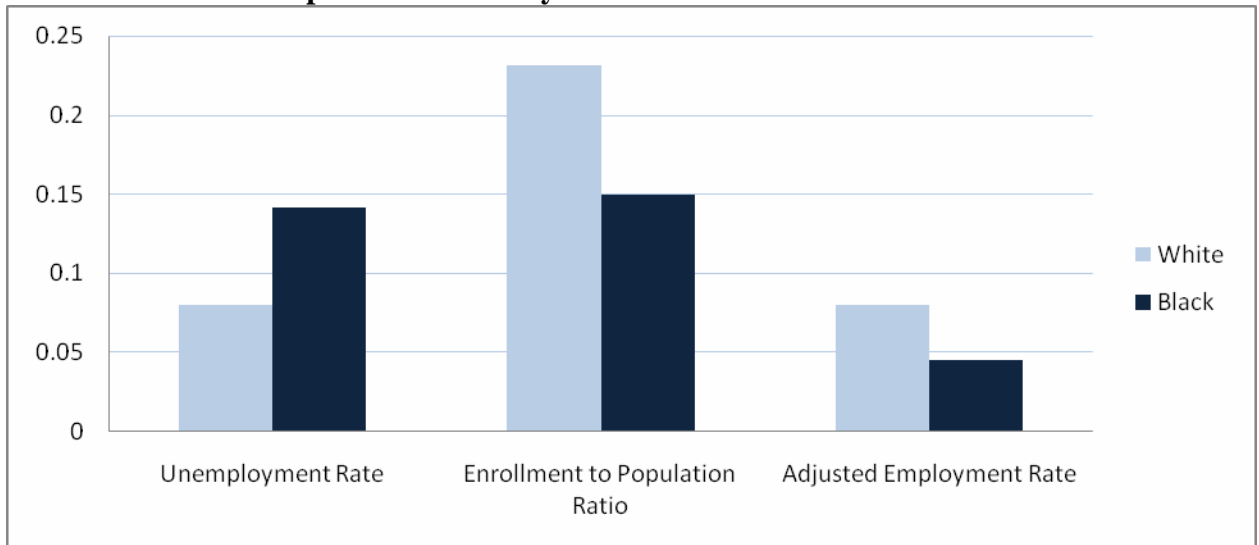
As table 1 shows, there are virtually no differences between the proportions of young White Bermudian males and young Black Bermudian males who are employed. This means that the unemployment rates and labor force participation rates of the two groups are in offsetting relationships to one another. To keep the employment population ratios of the two groups about the same, as the unemployment rate of Black Bermudian males rises relative to the unemployment rate of White Bermudian males, the labor force participation rate of the former must fall relative the labor force participation rate of the latter.

These relationships are illustrated in figure 1. The first two bars show the unemployment rates for young Black and White Bermudian men (the ratio of the number of unemployed to the number of people in the labor force). The Black Bermudian male unemployment rate is 14 percent, while the White Bermudian male unemployment rate is just 8 percent. Since the employment population ratios of Black and White Bermudian men are about the same, the labor



force participation rate of the White Bermudian men must be lower than the labor force participation rate of Black Bermudian men.

**Figure 1: Young Bermudian Male Unemployment Rates and Enrollment to Population Ratios by Race Bermudian**



Recall that there are two primary alternatives to labor force participation for young men, being idle or enrolled. These are the two primary reasons that the labor force participation rate of White Bermudian men could be lower than the labor force participation rate of Black Bermudian males. Table 1 shows that idleness is about the same, but the enrollment-population ratio of White Bermudian males is 8 percentage points higher than the enrollment rate of Black Bermudian males. As a consequence of the relationships just described, their unemployment rates are different as well.

The third two bars in figure 1 show what the unemployment rates of these two groups would have to be if the employment rates and proportions idle remained the same (and nearly equal), but Black Bermudian males had the same enrollment population ratio as White Bermudian males. Interestingly, if this were true the unemployment rate of Black Bermudian males would fall by about 10 percentage points, and become half the unemployment rate of

White Bermudian males. In other words, a large part of the difference between the unemployment rates of Black Bermudian males and White Bermudian males has nothing to do with idleness. To the contrary, the unemployment rate gap is related to the higher enrollment population ratios of White Bermudian males.

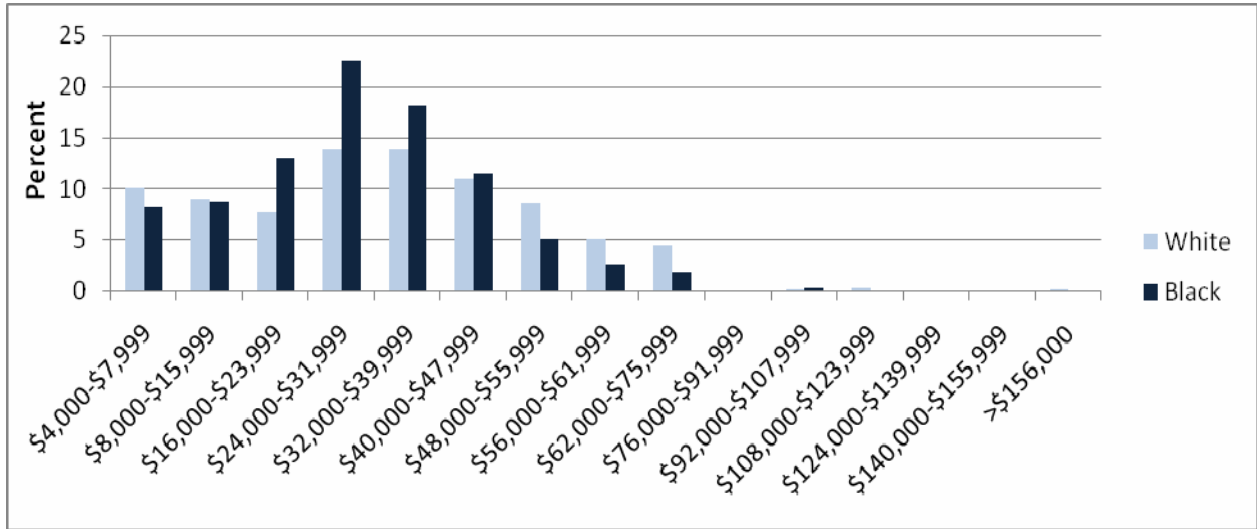
The remainder of the difference between the unemployment rates of these two groups is related to search. It must be that Black Bermudian men take longer to find suitable employment than White Bermudian males. This could be because they receive fewer job offers per unit of time spent searching or they decline offers at prevailing wages and prolong their search in (vain) hopes of being offered jobs at wages higher than the prevailing wage. However, it is clear that job search behavior largely reflects employer behavior. At prevailing wages, employers are more likely to offer jobs to young White Bermudian men, young Black Bermudian women, or other workers. They could be discriminating against Black Bermudian men in favor of other workers or believe that Black Bermudian men contribute less to their profits than these other workers. About this we are uncertain.

We can infer, however, from these data that much of the unemployment-rate gap between Black Bermudian men and White Bermudian men is that the former are less willing to join the labor force at prevailing wages. They choose to enroll as full-time students instead. Therefore, we focus on unemployment rates later in the study.

### **Underemployment among Young Black Bermudian Men and Their Same Age Peers**

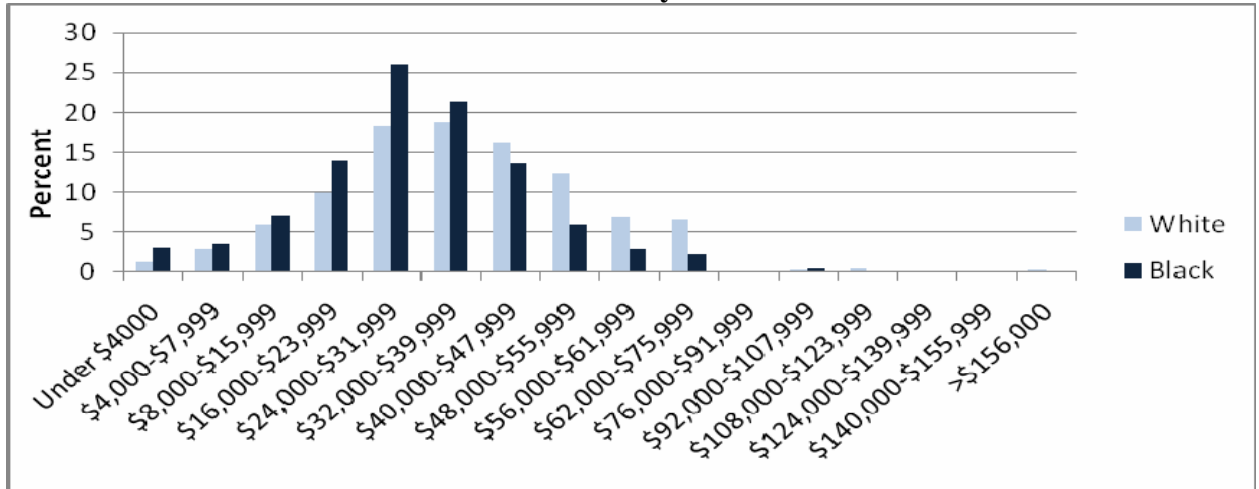
While we have no information about the wages at which unemployed youth and young adults would accept job offers, we do have information about earnings of those who are employed. This information can inform another possible interpretation of being “On the Wall.”

**Figure 2: Earnings Distributions of Employed Young Bermudian Men by Race**



Concerns about young Black Bermudian men could be anchored in the belief that they are more likely to be employed, but at very low wages than their White male peers. This is called underemployment. Figure 2 casts doubt on this belief. It shows that about 35 percent of young White Bermudian men workers have earnings below \$16,000, while only about a quarter of young Black Bermudian men have such low earnings. However, young White Bermudian male workers are more likely than their Black Bermudian peers to combine work with schooling. Therefore, the higher concentration of low-earning White Bermudian men may reflect voluntary investments by student-workers, through foregone earnings, while low earnings among young Black men may reflect the inability of non-student workers to find higher paying jobs.

**Figure 3: Earnings Distributions of Employed and Not-Enrolled Young Bermudian Men by Race**



To examine this possibility, figure 3 shows the distribution of earnings among young Bermudian male workers who are not-enrolled. The resulting earnings distributions are much more similar and it is clear that non-enrolled Black Bermudian men are somewhat more highly concentrated among the lowest earners. Thus, 13 percent of young Black Bermudian male workers earn below \$16000, while only 10 percent of their White counterparts do so. This 3 percentage point difference pales by comparison to the racial differences in arrests rates for drug trafficking and violent crime, suggesting that racial differences in underemployment are hardly an explanation for the racial differences in anti-social behavior about which Bermudians are so concerned.

Two considerations could help us understand why Black Bermudian men must receive fewer job offers or earn less than White Bermudian males. Black Bermudian men have less human capital (essentially education) or when employed, they must work in lower paying industries. Therefore, we explore the distribution of education and industry by race and gender below.

**Education Distribution of Young Bermudians**

Table 2 provides some evidence that Black Bermudian men generally have less educational attainment than White Bermudian males, but the explanation is not straight forward. For an economy with highly educated workers in much demand, too many (more than a quarter of) young Black Bermudian men have no or low educational credentials (row 1).<sup>6</sup> However, the proportion of young White Bermudian men with low or no educational credential is nearly as high. In many other respects, the educational credentials of young Black and White Bermudian men are quite different. Black Bermudian men are much more likely to obtain RSA's and BSSes (9 percent and 29 percent, respectively) than their White-male peers who are more likely to obtain GCEA's (20 percent). Approximately 24 percent of Black Bermudian men have some post-secondary education as do 33 percent of White Bermudian men. However, a quarter of White Bermudian men have an associate degree or more; while only 15 percent of Black Bermudian men do so.

Columns 1 and 3 show that young Black Bermudian men and women have similar educational credentials, except that the proportion of the former with no or low education (28

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<sup>6</sup> No or low education refers to people who have not obtained a high school certification of any kind, not passed any educational examination, nor achieved any academic qualification. RSA is the abbreviation for Royal Society of Arts. Level 1 and is the lowest form of a high school degree in Bermuda. BSSC is the abbreviation for the Bermuda Secondary School Certificate and the numbers stand for the grade point average. A BSSC 0 to 2 stands for Bermuda Secondary School Certificate with a grade point average less than 2.0. GCEO stands for the Cambridge School Certificate, 3<sup>rd</sup> class. GCEA stands for the Cambridge School Certificate, 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> class; this is equivalent to a high school diploma. Technical, Associates and Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate degree are equivalent to American educational system.

**Table 2: Educational Attainment Distribution of Young Adults**

Credential	Black Bermudian Males	White Bermudian Males	Black Bermudian Females	White Non-Bermudian Males
No, or low, education	28%	23%	15%	13%
RSA	9%	6%	7%	6%
BSSC	29%	12%	30%	4%
GCEO	4%	20%	6%	4%
GCEA	6%	6%	6%	11%
Technical Degree	9%	8%	11%	16%
Associate's Degree	6%	7%	9%	6%
Bachelor's Degree, or more	9%	18%	16%	40%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

percent) is almost twice large as the latter (15 percent). Moreover, young Black Bermudian women are more likely to have completed higher education (36 percent) than young Black Bermudian men (24 percent). Most Black Bermudians obtained BSS's (29 percent for men, 30 percent for women) as opposed to RSA's, GCEO's or GCEA's.

Column 4 shows that the educational credentials of White non-Bermudian men are distinct from those of the other groups. They are more than four times as likely to have a college degree or more than Black Bermudian men. They are approximately twice as likely to have a technical degree as Black Bermudian men as well. This is not surprising as most non-Bermudian men are recruited because of their education and work experience.

Industrial Distribution of Employed Young Bermudians

Besides lower levels of educational attainment, lower earnings among Black Bermudian men could be the result of their concentration in lower-paying industries. To explore this possibility, we must examine the distribution of employment by race, gender, and industry. But before doing so we note that youth and young adults are not employed evenly across all

industries.<sup>7</sup> According to Table 3 (column 1), which illustrates the industrial distribution of all employed young Bermudians, most young Bermudians work in the construction industry, then international companies, the hotel industry and in the retail industry. Approximately 7 percent of young Bermudians did not respond to the question about their industry of employment.

**Table 3: Industrial Distributions of Employed Young Bermudians**

Industries	All Young Adults	Black Bermudian Males	White Bermudian Males	Black Bermudian Females	White Non-Bermudian Males
Business Services	10%	4%	8%	8%	20%
Construction	10%	25%	23%	1%	9%
Education/Health Services	8%	3%	1%	15%	3%
Hotel Industry	6%	8%	4%	6%	7%
International Company	8%	2%	6%	8%	17%
Other Services	6%	3%	5%	5%	2%
Retail & Wholesale Trade	10%	8%	11%	12%	7%
Other Industry	34%	37%	34%	37%	33%
Missing Responses	7%	10%	8%	7%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: "Other Industry" is a category made up of industries in which 4% or fewer, young adults were employed.

In columns 2 and 3, we can see that young Black and White Bermudian men are employed in similar industries. Not surprisingly, construction industries are the single largest employer of young Bermudian men. While few young Bermudian men work in international corporations, the proportion of White Bermudian men who do so is three times the proportion of Black Bermudian men. The proportion of Black men who work in the hotel industry is twice the proportion of White Bermudian men who do so.

Column 4 displays differences in the industrial distribution of employment that reflect gender differences in occupations. While many men seek employment in construction, few women do. By contrast, young Black Bermudian women are more likely to be employed in international business than their male counterparts. Black Bermudian women are five times more likely to work in education and health services than Black Bermudian men. Black Bermudian

<sup>7</sup> Only a few industries employ more than 5 percent of young Bermudian workers. We combined the others into one category called "other" industries.

men and women have similar employment rates in the hotel industry (8 percent and 6 percent respectively); women are slightly more represented in the retail industry than Black Bermudian men (12 percent vs. 8 percent).

Column 5 shows that the proportion of young White non-Bermudian men employed in international companies is almost nine times the proportion of young Black non-Bermudian men employed in this high-paying sector. So the under-representation of Black Bermudians in this high-paying industry begins quite early. A quarter of Black Bermudian men are employed in construction; while less than ten percent of White non-Bermudian men are employed in this industry.

### **Explaining Unemployment and Earnings Gaps between Black Bermudian Men and their Peers**

If the crime, violence and the growing concentration of Black Bermudian men in prisons have an economic basis, it must be the difficulty in finding a job, not how little Black Bermudian men earn when they work. Young White Bermudian men also have low earnings, but many are foregoing higher earnings so they can continue schooling and those who are not enrolled are much less involved in criminal behavior. But, other than enrollment rate differences, we are still unclear about the independent association between race and unemployment and earnings gaps, after controlling for other factors that are also associated with these gaps. We are also unclear about the independent associations between gender and these outcomes.

In particular, there are two questions of interest. To what degree do race and gender gaps in the unemployment probabilities and earnings between Black Bermudian men and their same age peers remain, after taking account of other ways in which they differ from their same age peers, especially educational attainment? Second. do Black Bermudian men receive the same rewards for obtaining educational credentials (and other characteristics) as their same age peers?



To answer these questions, this section estimates empirical models of unemployment and earnings.

## **Data and Methods**

### **Data**

The data for these models came from a micro-database created of the 2000 Census of Population and Housing (Census Office, 2002). Through this dataset we had access to labor market information for all people on the island. We limited our sample to people between the ages of 16 and 30 because we wanted to focus on young people in the labor market. Our analysis is based on 11760 young men and women living in Bermuda who responded to the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, who provided information on all of the variables indicated below.

### **Measures**

#### ***Outcomes***

The outcomes of interest were earnings and unemployment probabilities. Our primary outcome measure was the self-report of how much a respondent earned last week from his or her primary job. We did not include earnings from second jobs, because the Census included information only about a respondent's main job. In the Bermuda Census, earnings were coded in categorical ranges, (e.g., under 4000 and 16000-23999), so unfortunately, we did not have a continuous measure of weekly earnings. Our measures of unemployment were also self-reported. Respondents indicated if they were unemployed, employed but not enrolled in school, employed and enrolled in school, or not in the labor force during the week before the survey.

#### ***Control Variables***

We included the same controls that usually appear in the standard Mincer-type earnings equation (Lemiex, 2006). These include age, its square and 9 dummy variables to represent

various levels of educational attainment, including: BSSC with a GPA of 0 to 2, BSSC with a GPA of 2-3, BSSC with a GPA of 3, GCEO, GCEA, technical degree, Associates degree, Bachelors degree; and more than a Bachelors). Our omitted educational category was no or other degree. In addition, we included dummy variables for health status, Bermudian status, school-enrollment status, and marital status (first or remarriage equals one; divorced, separated, widowed and never married equals zero). We created dummy variables for gender and two race categories (White and other race).<sup>8</sup> Approximately 87 percent of respondents reported that they were either White or Black, so we defined other race to include those who identified themselves as Asian, Black-White mixed, Black-other mixed, White-other mixed and other race. Our omitted race category was Black. Finally, we created dummy variables for specific industries in which more than 5 percent of the sample worked (retail-trade, hotel, construction, business services, international companies and education and health services) and combined the rest of the industries into the “other” category.

## **Methods**

Many studies of economic disparities measure the degree to which a presumed disenfranchised group falls short of the mainstream group, using indices of dissimilarity or inequality, which are calculated from Census tabulations of group values of a measure of economic well-being (Chapple & Rea, 1998; Darrity & Nembhard, 2000). There are many such indices, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. However, even if such studies are able to establish the existence and magnitude of disparities, it is difficult to use such measures to

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<sup>8</sup> We thank William Rodgers, III for detailed comments on an earlier draft. Because of time constraints we were unable to respond to all of his comments. Errors remain our responsibility. In particular, because of time constraints we were unable to control for the number of children or industry. This may bias our estimates of the predicted earnings of women and differentials between women and men.

estimate associations between the measure of economic well-being and a variety of factors that might be used to reduce the disparities.

Our primary interest is in gaps in labor market outcomes, especially earnings and unemployment. We want to know if Black Bermudian men earn less than their White Bermudian male and Black Bermudian female counterparts and if race (and gender) remain important predictor of earnings, even after accounting for other factors such as educational attainment and health status. We also want to know if the association between education and earnings (or unemployment) is roughly the same for young Black and White Bermudian men. Earnings equations are the staple among labor economists for answering these types of questions (Mincer, 1974).

In these equations, the natural log of weekly earnings is regressed on education and a quadratic function of years of potential experience, which in turn is a function of age and education.<sup>9</sup> As a result, the coefficient of education represents the rates of return to education (Lemieux, 2006). While we have taken the additional step of obtaining the Census Microdata files, unfortunately, not even these data include observations of individual earnings. Instead, we can only observe earnings in categorical ranges. While there are 16 earnings categories, taking the natural logarithms, even of interpolated values of these earnings categories, would not give us comparable estimates of the rates of return to education and experience. Still, we use OLS to regress these earnings categories on race, educational attainment, and other control variables. The resulting estimates can still shed light on our core questions about the magnitude of earnings gaps, their association with age and education, and other variables usually included in earnings

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<sup>9</sup> Our measures of educational attainment are education credentials, rather than years of schooling, so we will be unable to measure years of potential experience.

equations, and whether or not these associations are similar for young Black and White Bermudian men and similar for young Black Bermudian men and women.

To examine if Black and White Bermudian men experience idleness – being “on the wall” – differently, we use a bivariate logit model to regress a dummy variable indicating whether or not a respondent is unemployed on a subset of variables included in our earnings equation. The sample we use to estimate this model excludes full-time students and those not in the labor force and the list of controls excludes industry dummies enrollment status.

We focus on unemployment, rather than employment, because we now know that young Black and White Bermudian men have nearly identical rates of employment and non-labor force participation. They differ more substantially in their unemployment and enrollment rates.<sup>10</sup>

## **Results**

To make our results accessible to the general reader, we show predictions of unemployment probabilities and earnings, based upon our logit and OLS regression models of unemployment and earnings, respectively. These predictions are illustrated graphically, but tables appear in the Appendix.

### **Does the Education Explain the Racial Gap in Unemployment?**

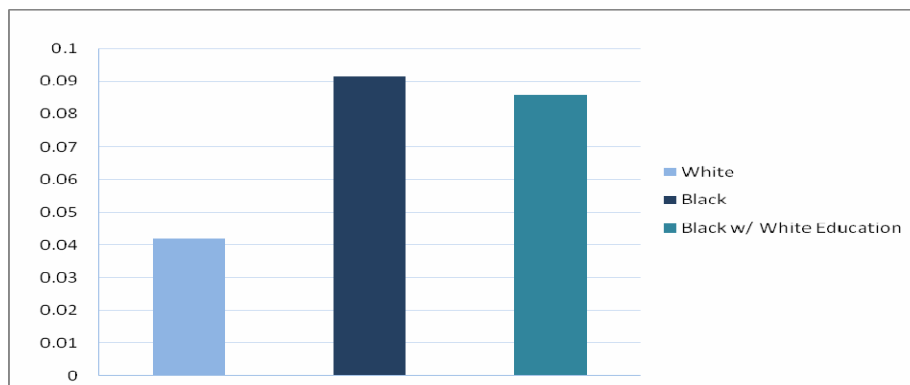
Young Black and White Bermudian men have similar employment, enrollment, and labor force participation rates. The big difference is unemployment. The proportion of young Black Bermudian men who are looking, unsuccessfully, for work is 14 percent; while the proportion of White Bermudian men who are looking, unsuccessfully, for work is 8 percent. To explore how much of the racial unemployment gap is explained by the education, we used a logit (see Appendix Table 2) regression model to predict the probability that a healthy, married young man

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<sup>10</sup> We estimate enrollment and educational attainment gaps in chapter 3 of the study.

is unemployed, assuming he is: (1) White, with the same average characteristics of all young White non-enrolled, Bermudian men in the labor force, (2) Black, with the same average characteristics of all young Black, non-enrolled Bermudian men in the labor force, and (3) Black, with the same average characteristics of all young *White* non-enrolled men in the labor force<sup>11</sup>. In other words, we asked: By how much would the probability of unemployment among young Black Bermudian men fall, if they had the same educational achievement as their young White peers? The answer is: not much (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Predicted Unemployment Probabilities of Bermudian Males by Race**



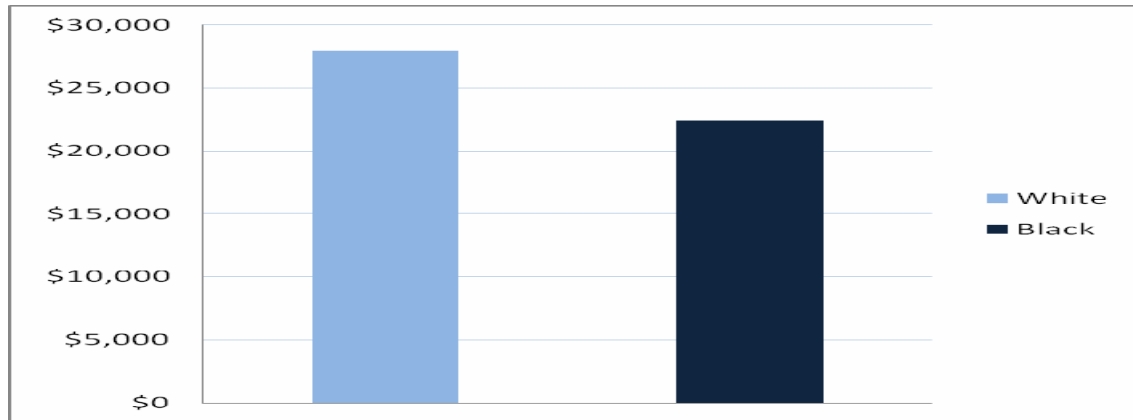
We found that if young Black men had the same education as young White men, their unemployment probability would drop from 0.0914 to 0.0857, which is still about twice the predicted unemployment probability of their White counterparts (0.0420)<sup>12</sup>. Thus, much of the racial gap in unemployment is due to factors that we could not measure with the Census.

<sup>11</sup> Predictions for this figure used the logit regression in Appendix: Table 2.

<sup>12</sup> The predicted unemployment probabilities are different than the unemployment rates shown in Figure 4 because the men in the prediction scenario are healthy and married, whereas the men in the figure are composite averages.

## The Black/White Earnings Gap for Young Bermudian Men

**Figure 5: Predicted Average Earnings of Young Bermudian Males by Race**



To study racial gaps in earnings more generally, we predicted the annual earnings of young Black and White Bermudian men earning at least \$4000, using Census data on the major determinants of earnings usually included in Mincer-type earnings equations (education, industry of employment, marital status, health status, and other characteristics).<sup>13</sup> According to these predictions, the average young Black Bermudian male earns \$5,600 less than the average White Bermudian male (shown in Fig 5)<sup>14</sup>.

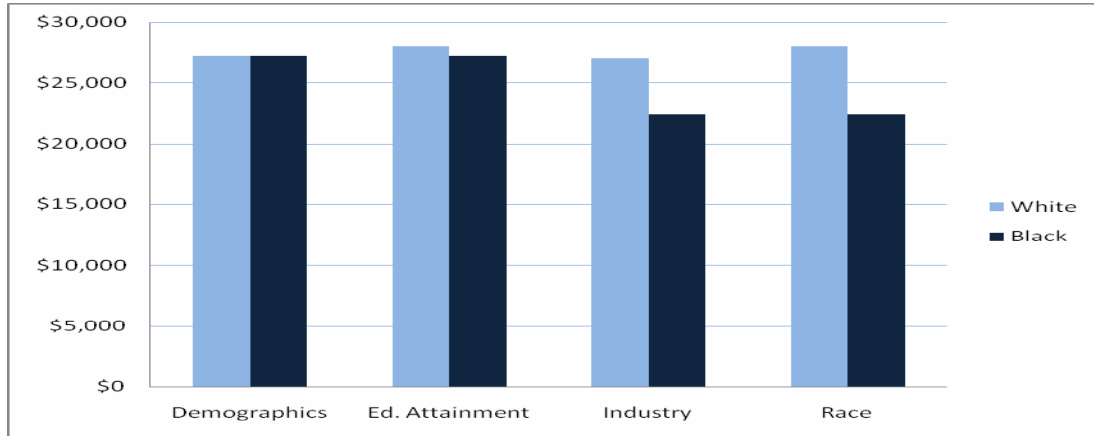
To examine how much of this predicted earnings gap was associated with race and other factors; we assumed that demographic characteristics (age, marital and health status, but not race) were the only determinants of earnings. Then, we predicted the average annual earnings of two types of young men: those with the same average values of these variables as Black Bermudian men and White Bermudian men. The first two bars in figure 6 illustrate the prediction; \$27,200 for the two groups. Based upon demographic characteristics (other than race) alone, there would have been no earnings gap between Black and White Bermudian men.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> This section excludes respondents in the first earnings category (under \$4000), which includes respondents with zero earnings.

<sup>14</sup> The predictions in this figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 3.

<sup>15</sup> The predictions in this figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 3.

**Figure 6: Predicted Earnings for Young Bermudian Males by Race**



*Note: "Demographics" refers to Age, Age Squared, Marital Status, Health Status, and Enrollment*

We repeated these predictions, after adding estimated associations between earnings and education, again using the values of all included variables for the two groups (Black Bermudian men and White Bermudian men). The predicted earnings of Black Bermudian men were unchanged, but those of White Bermudian men rose by \$800. Thus, about 14 percent of the racial gap in the predicted earnings of young Bermudian men was associated with higher levels of educational attainment among the latter. After adding estimated associations between earnings and industry, the predicted earnings of Black Bermudian men fell to \$24,000 while those of White Bermudian men remained unchanged. This suggests that an additional \$3,200 (about 57 percent) of the predicted earnings gap was associated with the higher proportion of the former who worked in low-paying industries (such as hotels and retail trade) and the higher proportion of the latter who worked in high-paying jobs in international or business services companies<sup>16</sup>.

Finally, we estimated the model allowing for an association between race and earnings. The predicted earnings of Black Bermudian men were unchanged, but those of White Bermudian

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<sup>16</sup> Recall that the proportion of young Black Bermudian men employed in the low paying hotel sector is twice the proportion of White Bermudian men employed in this sector. By contrast, the proportion of White Bermudian men employed in high-paying hotel international companies is twice the proportion of Black Bermudian men employed in this sector.

men grew by an additional \$1,600. Thus the pure association between earnings and race was about half as important as the racial composition of employment in accounting for the racial gap in the predicted earnings of young Bermudian men.

To be sure, some of the association between race and industry of employment is due to education, because jobs in high-paying international or business services companies require more education than low-paying hotel or retail trade jobs. To further examine the importance of race, education, and industry of employment in the Black-White male predicted earnings gap, we ranked industries by the average annual earnings of young Bermudian men and separated them into three groups<sup>17</sup>:

1. high-paying industries (international companies and business services);
2. midrange-paying industries (construction, education and health, other services, are compelled our composite other industry, and industry not reported); and
3. low-paying industries in which Black Bermudian men were overrepresented (hotels, retail trade, and wholesale trade)

The proportion of Black Bermudian men employed in high-paying industries was lower than the proportion of White Bermudian men employed in those industries and, with the exception of retail and wholesale trades, the reverse was true of the proportions of Black and White Bermudian men employed in low-paying industries. Also there was little difference (less than .03) between the proportions of Black and White Bermudian men employed in mid-range paying industries. So, we estimated the probability of employment in a high-paying rather than a low-

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<sup>17</sup> See Appendix Table 5.



paying industry, after controlling for all, but the industry variables including in our earnings equation and excluding young men for whom no industry was reported<sup>18</sup>.

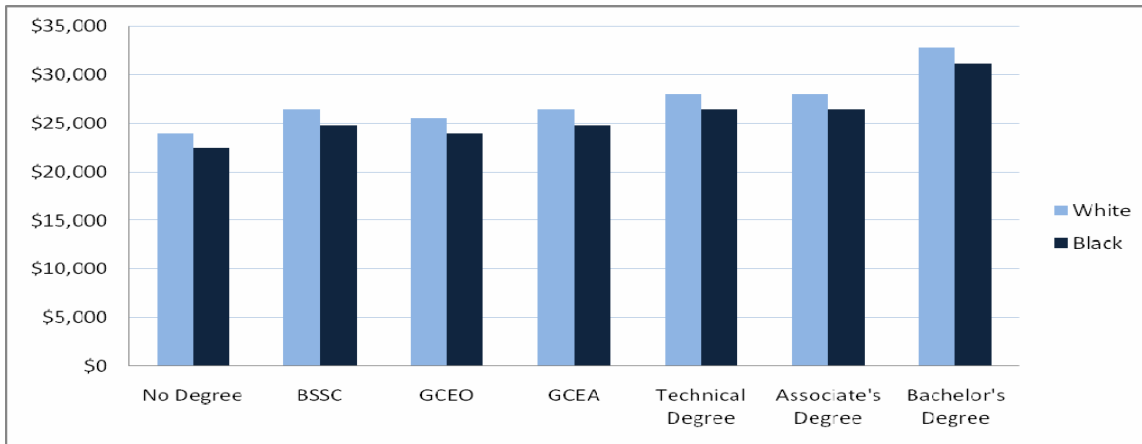
The results show that some of the association between industry and the predicted earnings gap operated through the lower rate at which Black Bermudian men acquire post-secondary education. The probability that a young Black Bermudian man with a Technical degree was employed in a high-paying rather than a low-paying industry was 33 percentage points higher than the probability that a Black Bermudian man who had a no or low educational certification. The corresponding probability for a Black Bermudian man with the Bachelors' degree was 53 percentage points higher than the probability that a Black Bermudian man who had no or low educational certification. While similar proportions of Black and White Bermudian men had Technical degrees, the proportion of the latter with Bachelors' degrees (18 percent) was twice the proportion of the former (9 percent).

Still, race played a direct and indirect role in the predicted earnings gap for young Black and White Bermudian men. Recall that 29 percent of the predicted earnings gap was accounted for by race alone. In addition, after accounting for education and other factors, the probability that Black Bermudian men were employed in high paying vs. low-paying industries was 7 percentage points lower than the corresponding probability for White Bermudian men. Both of these associations could have been caused by factors not measured by the Census, but associated with race. Given the history of racism in Bermuda, discriminatory hiring practices is likely to be one of those unmeasured factors, but so are occupational segregation and soft skills (Clark, 1978; Hodgson, 1997).

***Figure 7: Predicted Earnings of Young Bermudian Males by Race and Educational Attainment***

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<sup>18</sup> See Appendix Table 6. Young men for whom no industry was reported (missing industry) had the lowest annual earnings, but we excluded them from the analysis, because we could not identify the industry.



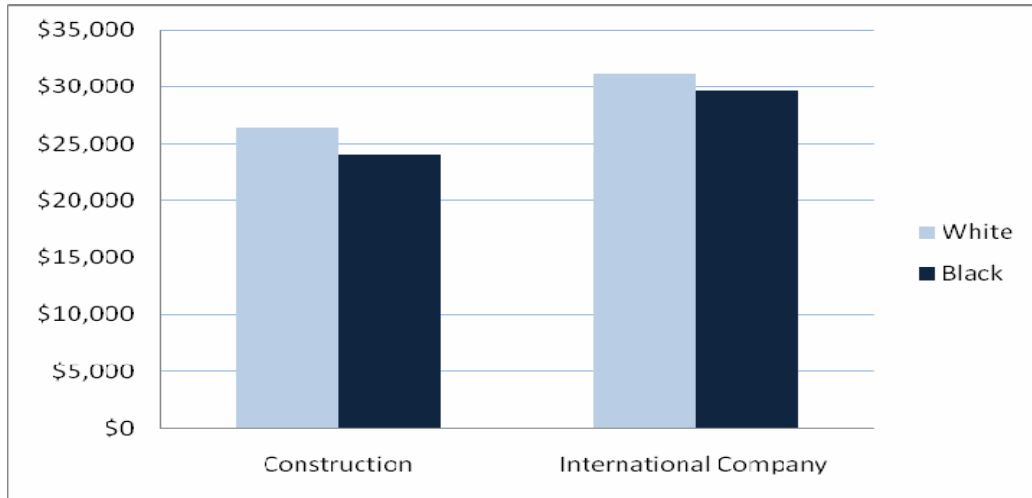
To get another perspective on what accounts for earnings differences between young Black and White Bermudian men, we predicted the annual earnings of two more hypothetical young Bermudian men, one Black and one White. Figure 7 shows the predicted annual average earnings of single young men (one Black and one White) with some health limitations, who were employed in our composite “other industry category.”<sup>19</sup> Neither of these young men combined school and work. Then we asked: What would happen if these young men had more education? While young Black Bermudian men with more education have higher predicted earnings than their less-educated counterparts, the Black/White Bermudian earnings gaps (about \$1600) remains at every level of education.

Next we asked: What would happen if these young men were employed in a high paying industry (construction or international company) instead of our composite “other industry category.” Figure 8<sup>20</sup> illustrates this example. A hypothetical young Black Bermudian man

**Figure 8: Predicted Earnings of Young Bermudian Males by Race and Industry**

<sup>19</sup> The predictions for this figure used the estimating equation in Appendix: Table 3.

<sup>20</sup> The predictions for this figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 3.

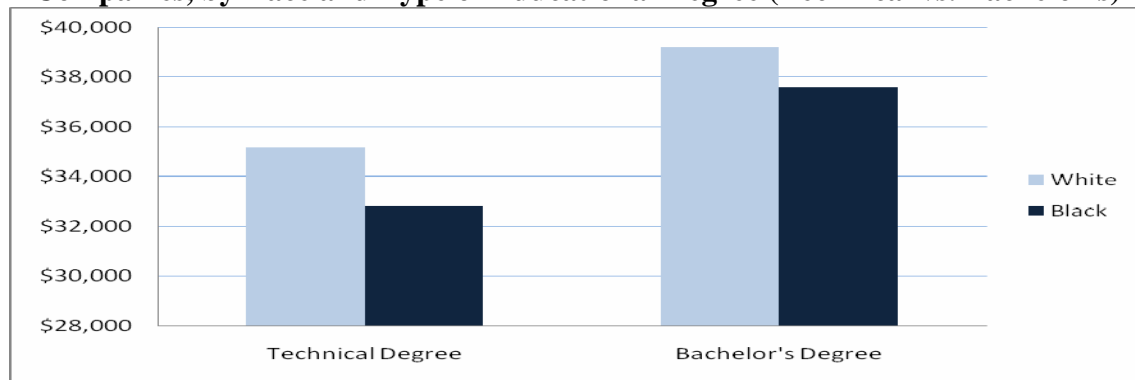


working in an international company has predicted annual earnings of \$29,600 while his White Bermudian peer has predicted annual earnings of \$31,200. If they worked in construction the Black man would have predicted annual earnings of \$24,000 while his White Bermudian peer would have predicted annual earnings of \$26,400. These predictions are unrealistic, because we assumed these men have no education certificate, but few men employed by international companies have so little education.

Figure 9<sup>21</sup> (below) displays our more realistic predictions for hypothetical young men with more education who are employed by an international company. The hypothetical young Black Bermudian male employee of an international company with a Technical degree would

<sup>21</sup> The predictions in this figure used the OLS regression: Table 3

**Figure 9: Predicted Earnings for Young Bermudian Males Employed in International Companies, by Race and Type of Educational Degree (Technical vs. Bachelor's)**



have predicted annual earnings of \$32,800, while his White Bermudian peer would have predicted annual earnings of \$35,200. The hypothetical young Black Bermudian male employee of an international company with a Bachelor's degree would have predicted annual earnings of \$37,600, while his White Bermudian peer would have predicted annual earnings of \$ 39,200.

#### ***Gender Gaps in Earnings for Bermudian Black Youth and Young Adults***

Given the differences in their education, industry of employment, marital status, and other characteristics, the average Black Bermudian man earned about \$1,600 less than the average Black Bermudian female confirming concerns often expressed by Bermudians that young Black Bermudian women were doing better than young Black Bermudian men (Figure 10, below <sup>22</sup>).

<sup>22</sup> The predictions in this figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 7.

**Figure 10: Predicted Average Earnings of Young Black Bermudians by Gender**

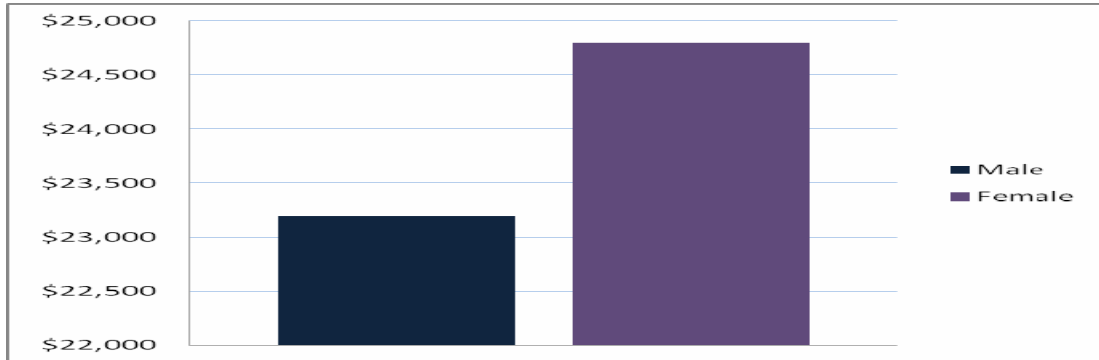
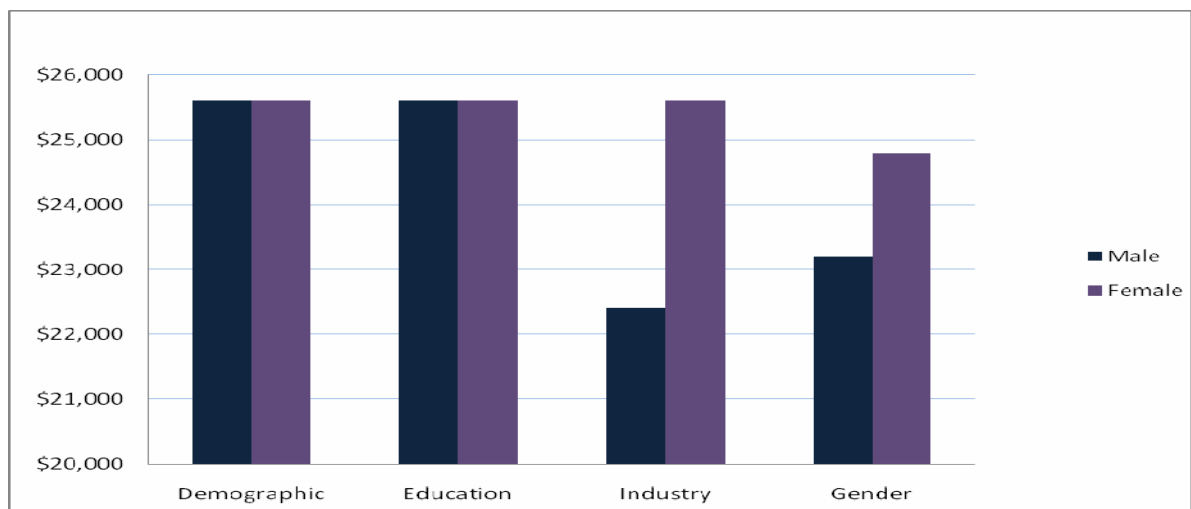


Figure 11 (below) explores this gap using the predicted earnings of young Black Bermudian men and women, after assuming the average characteristics of these two groups and no association between gender and earnings. We follow a procedure similar to our examination of the Black/White Bermudian male earnings gap. First, we estimate the model to take account of associations between demographic characteristics (age, marital and health status), but not gender. We use these estimated associations to predict earnings for two groups of young

**Figure 11: Predicted Earnings for Young Black Bermudians, Controlling for Demographics , Education, Industry, and Gender**



*Note: "Demographics" refers to Age, Age Squared, Marital Status, Health Status, and Enrollment.*

Bermudians, those with the same average values of these variables as young Black Bermudian men and women. We repeat these predictions two more times, after adding estimated associations between earnings and education and between earnings and industry, each prediction uses the values of all included variables for the two groups.

Not surprisingly, young Black Bermudian men and women had very similar demographic characteristics, so there was no difference between the predicted earnings (\$25,600) after accounting for demographic characteristics alone (the first-two bars in Figure 11 <sup>23</sup>). Interestingly, taking account of the association between education and earnings had almost no effect on predicted earnings of either group, so the predicted earnings gap did not change, despite the higher educational attainment of the person with the average values of characteristics of Black Bermudian women. However, after accounting for the association between industry and earnings, the predicted earnings of the hypothetical young person with average characteristics of Black Bermudian women was \$3,200 higher than the predicted earnings of the hypothetical young person with average characteristics of Black Bermudian males.

Finally, we estimated the model allowing for an association between gender and earnings, and then predicted earnings for the two groups. The predicted earnings of Black Bermudian men increased by \$800 and the predicted earnings of Black Bermudian women fell by the same amount. Thus, the association between gender and earnings offset about half the predicted earnings advantage that Black Bermudian women derived, because they were more likely than their male peers to work in higher paying industries. These results suggest that while education alone conveyed little advantage to Black Bermudian women, education may have resulted in greater female than male employment rates in higher paying industries, which in turn, lead to higher earnings for women than men.

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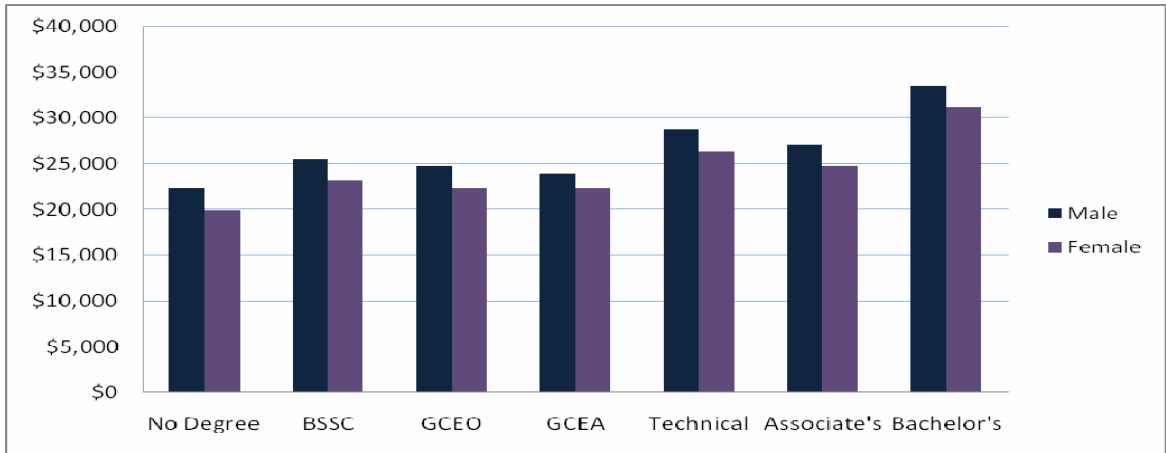
<sup>23</sup> The predictions in this figure used the OLS regression Appendix: Table 8.

However, as with race, these associations between industry and gender and gender and earnings of young Black Bermudians also involve factors associated with gender, but not included in the Census. Gender-based job-seeking networks or occupational/industrial segregation are good examples of such factors. For example, after accounting for education and other factors, the probability that Black Bermudian men are employed in high paying vs. low-paying industries was 17 percentage points lower than the corresponding probability for Black Bermudian women.<sup>24</sup> Pure gender discrimination in hiring policies and occupational segregation are associated with gender, but neither is measured in the Census. Both are also likely to play some role in two ways. Employers in international or business service companies are likely to prefer Black Bermudian women for administrative jobs in these industries. To the extent that lower level administrative jobs (e.g., secretaries and administrative assistants) are occupied by women, Bermudian men are likely to avoid these jobs. While employers in industries requiring less education (e.g., construction) are likely to prefer male employees. Further men are likely to prefer these jobs and women are likely to avoid them. In the absence of such discrimination or occupational segregation, the overall gender-gap in predicted earnings would be larger.

***Figure 12: Predicted Earnings for Young Black Bermudians by Gender and Educational Attainment***

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<sup>24</sup> See Appendix table 8.



This was suggested by the predictions illustrated in figure 12<sup>25</sup> (above), which showed that if a Black Bermudian man and woman had the same demographic characteristics and educational attainment, the Black Bermudian man would still earn more than the female at every educational level. Interestingly, the difference in predicted earnings would be least (\$1600) for Black Bermudian men and women with GCEA certification, for all other levels of education the difference is \$2400.

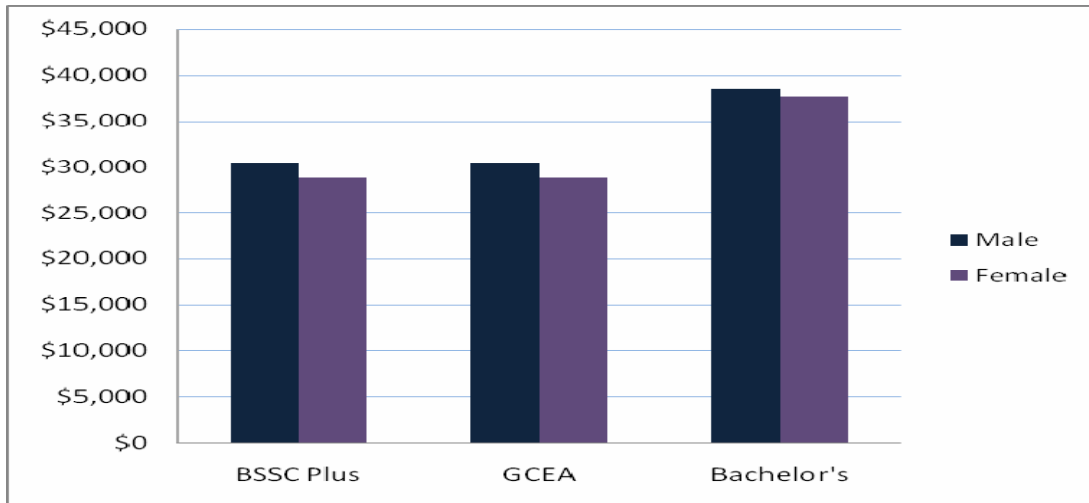
Figure 13<sup>26</sup> (below) illustrates this point further. Black Bermudian women are more likely than Black Bermudian men to be employed by international companies. However, no matter what his level of education, a Black Bermudian man employed by an international company would earn more than an otherwise, identical Black Bermudian woman. This predicted earnings gap is more pronounced at lower educational levels, but persisted up to higher education.

**Figure 13: Predicted Earnings for Young Black Bermudians Employed in International Companies by Educational Attainment**

<sup>25</sup> The predictions in this figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 7.

<sup>26</sup> The predictions in the figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 7.

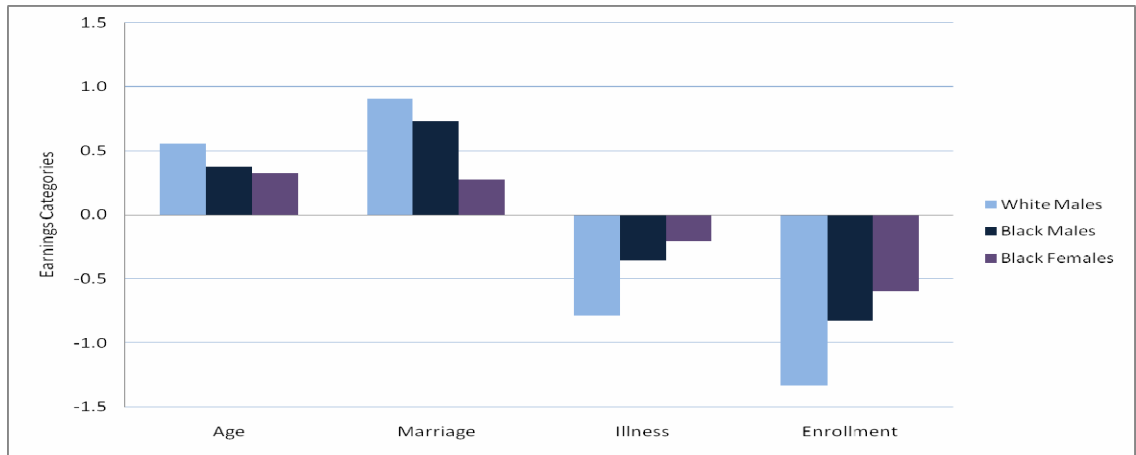




***Do Black Bermudian Men Receive the Same Rewards for Attributes that Affect Productivity?***

Until now we have assumed that employers determine the earnings of young Black Bermudian men using the same rules to determine the earnings of their same-age peers. However this need not be the case. For example, employers may reward educational achievements of young White Bermudian men more than they reward the same educational achievement of Black Bermudian men. This could represent a different kind of disenfranchisement than we discuss above, or a judgment on the part of employers, that White and Black male workers with the same education certificate have different levels of productivity. The latter interpretation is not unreasonable, because most young Black Bermudians attend public schools, while most young White Bermudians attend private schools. Employers may be making the judgment that an educational certificate from a private school makes workers more productive than the same certificate from a public school. Unfortunately, the Census does not include information on whether the school attended by respondents was public or private.

***Figure 14: Associations between Earnings and Age; Marital Status; Illness; and Enrollment, by Race and Gender***



To examine if the earnings of young Black Bermudian men were determined by the same processes that influence the earnings of their same-age peers, we estimated earnings equations separately for Black Bermudian men, White Bermudian men, and Black Bermudian women. The results suggested that young Black Bermudian men received higher returns than their same-age peers for some productivity-related attributes or qualifications and lower returns than their same age peers for other attributes or qualifications. In particular, increases in age were associated with higher increases in earnings for young White Bermudian men than for Black Bermudian men and women (figure 14 <sup>27</sup>).

In earnings equations, age is a proxy for work experience, so this finding is innocuous if at any given age, young White Bermudian workers have more work experience than their Black male and female counterparts. However, the finding is troubling if young Black Bermudians earn lower rewards for the work experience they have, even though, on average, the productivity gains from previous work experience do not vary by race or gender for young people. Finally, the finding is also troubling to the extent that young adults between 16 and 30 years old are more likely to be raising families. If the rise in earnings with age is slower for Black Bermudian men

<sup>27</sup> The results in the figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 10.

and women than for White Bermudian men; the result is likely to be fewer marriages, more single-parent families, and lower family incomes among Black than White Bermudians.

In a related finding, figure 23 also shows that the marriage premium is much higher for both White and Black Bermudian men than for Black Bermudian women, but for the three groups the premium is highest for White Bermudian men. These findings are consistent with a wide range of studies on marriage premiums for men and motherhood (rather than marriage) penalties for women (Grossbard- Schechtman, 2003, Rogers and Stratton 2002, and Waldfogel, 1997). Finally, illness and being enrolled in school results in larger earnings penalties (or more foregone earnings) for White Bermudian men than for their same age peers. Put differently, the losses (or foregone earnings) associated with being out of work because of illness (or schooling) are higher for White Bermudian men, than for Black Bermudian men, and least for Black Bermudian women. The last two results may explain why Black Bermudian women invest more heavily in education than Black Bermudian men. The former may not be more interested in learning (or more willing to delay gratification) than the latter, but they face lower opportunity costs when they invest in education. In other words, the lower educational attainment of Black men may be a rational response to the Black male/female earnings gap, which we report above.<sup>28</sup>

Figure 15<sup>29</sup> (below) shows that young White Bermudian men have very different returns to secondary schooling than young Black Bermudian men and women. For Black Bermudian men and women, academic achievement in secondary school means earning more than acquiring “other education or training, our omitted education category, but for White Bermudian men it means earning less. Two interpretations are available. White Bermudian men must have access

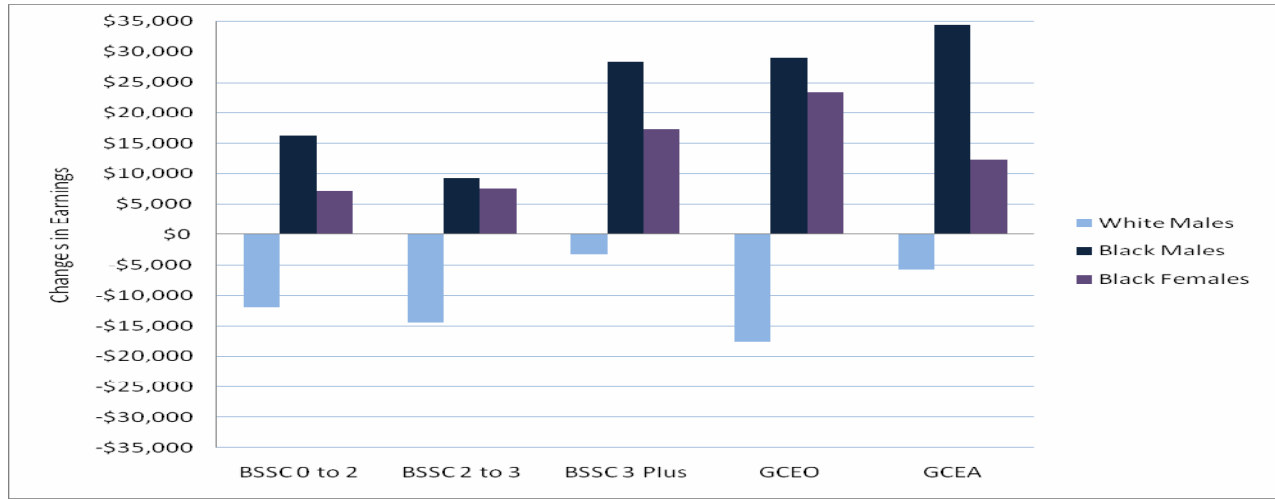
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<sup>28</sup> Black Bermudian men also have lower educational attainment than White Bermudian men, even the latter face higher opportunity costs. Still the reason may be that Black Bermudian families are less able to subsidize the education costs for their sons. We will explore this possibility in a subsequent study.

<sup>29</sup> The results for the figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 10.

to educational or training opportunities, perhaps in family-owned businesses, to which Black Bermudians do not. Alternatively, these results suggest that young Black Bermudians are victims of discrimination. Moreover, the Black Bermudian men earn higher returns to academic achievement in secondary school than Black Bermudian women.

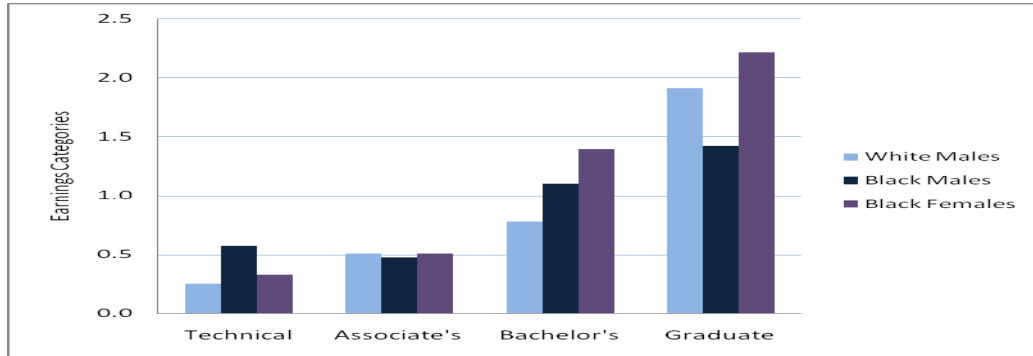
**Figure 15: Returns to Secondary Education by Race and Gender**



However, figure 16<sup>30</sup> (below) shows that race and gender differences in returns to postsecondary education are associated with the level of education. Black Bermudian men earn higher returns to investments in technical certificates than either White Bermudian men or Black Bermudian women. These higher returns to technical degrees help to explain why Black Bermudian men are more likely to invest in this form of postsecondary education than in any other form. Interestingly, there is almost no variation in the returns to an Associate degree among the three groups. More importantly, Black Bermudian men receive substantially lower returns from a Bachelor's degree than Black Bermudian women, but somewhat higher returns to this degree than White Bermudian men. Finally, graduate degrees among Bermudians are rare and returns to this highest level of education are least for Black Bermudian men.

<sup>30</sup> The results for the figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 10.

**Figure 16: Returns to Post-Secondary Education by Race and Gender**



Along with our earlier results on Black Bermudian male-female earnings gaps, these results may help to explain why Black Bermudian men are less likely to invest in most forms of post-secondary education than their same-age peers. Because they earn more than Black Bermudian women with the same characteristics and gain more from performing well in secondary school, the opportunity cost of investing in higher education is higher for men. In addition, they gain less than Black Bermudian women-in terms of the increase in earnings above what they would earn if they do not obtain higher education. As a result, Black Bermudian men may obtain less college and university education than Black Bermudian women, not because they are less interested in learning or because they are less willing or able to postpone gratification, but because they are behaving rationally. A cost benefit-analysis of any investment would lead to the same conclusion about post-secondary education that young Black Bermudian men reach: it's just not worth it!

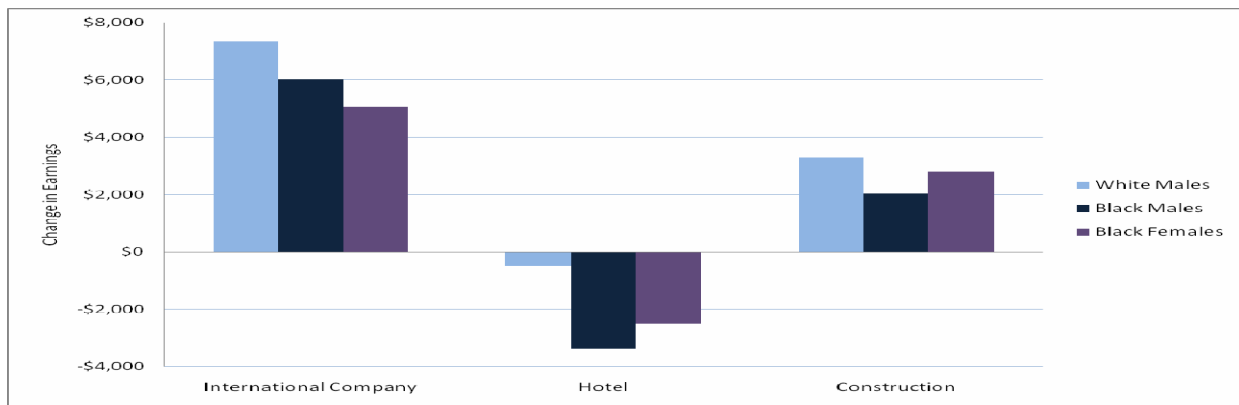
The problem with this conclusion is its present orientation. As our analysis relies upon only one time period, young Black Bermudian men may also be relying upon the present in making their calculations. We do not see these longer-term consequences because of data limitation; young Black Bermudian men do not see them, because they focus primarily on the present. If they contemplated the effects of investments in education on lifetime earnings, they

might reach different conclusions. It is important to emphasize, however, that Black Bermudian women do not have to contemplate the future to see that post-secondary schooling is a good investment. A cost benefit analysis based upon the present justifies investment in post-secondary education for Black Bermudian women.

Finally, these results may also help to explain the performance of young Black Bermudian men in secondary school. If post-secondary schooling (other than a technical degree) appears to be an unwise investment, so is the extra effort and cost associated with obtaining the certifications required to enter college, namely the GCEO and GCEA. Without these certifications, they could probably obtain entry to a technical post-secondary program, from which they would accrue higher returns than their same-age peers.

Finally, figure 17 <sup>31</sup> reinforces some of our previous findings. Black Bermudian men (and women) gain less than White Bermudian men from employment in high-paying sectors, such as construction or international companies, rather than employment in industries that hire

**Figure 17: Returns to (Select) Industries of Employment by Race and Gender**



most young people. However, Black Bermudian men (and women) lose more than White Bermudian men from employment in a low-paying industry, hotels, rather than employment in industries that hire most young people. This result could occur because White Bermudian men

<sup>31</sup> The results for the figure used the OLS regression in Appendix: Table 10.

hold jobs in high-paying occupations in whatever industry they work; while Black Bermudian men and women hold jobs in low paid, service sector jobs, especially in the hotel industry.<sup>32</sup>

### **Conclusions and Implications for Policy, Youth Service, and Future Research**

Bermudians are right to be concerned that the unemployment rate among young Black Bermudian men is almost twice as high as the corresponding rate among their White counterparts, especially because the predicted racial gap in unemployment would be unchanged if there were no racial gap in educational achievement. Nevertheless, unemployment does not adequately frame the labor market challenges among young Black Bermudians. The overwhelming majority of these young men work or look for work, but they are less likely than their White Bermudian male or Black Bermudian female peers to combine work with education. Moreover, among non-enrolled young workers, Black Bermudian men are somewhat more likely than their White male peers to have low earnings. However, racial differences in underemployment are so small, that they could hardly account for the disproportionately high rates at which Black Bermudian men are arrested for criminal activities, which some observers believe are intended to supplement low-earnings.

Unemployment would be lower and earnings higher among young Black Bermudian men if they had more education, partly because more education would increase their chances of employment in high-paying international and business services companies, rather than low-paying hotel. Black Bermudian men are less likely than their White male and Black female peers to obtain GCEO and GCEA certificates and higher education. They may be less likely to pursue college or university education than Black Bermudian women, because the earnings gain for women is higher, and the costs, in terms of foregone earnings, are lower. Finally, at every level

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<sup>32</sup> We did not control for occupation, because it is available in the Census of Population and Housing, only for occupation in a respondents' major job, while earnings are available for all jobs. Employment in multiple jobs is common among Bermudians.

of education, including college, and in every industry, including construction and the international sector, Black Bermudian men earn less than comparable White Bermudian men. These persistent gaps may discourage some young Bermudian men from obtaining more education or seeking employment in higher-paying industries, which require more education. They may also encourage Black Bermudian men with higher education to leave the island in search of fair returns on their investments in education.

Strictly speaking, these gaps in unemployment and earnings could be associated with a wide variety of factors associated with race (and gender), which the Census does not measure. Discrimination in the hiring and compensation policies of private-sector firms, which employ most young workers, is likely to be one of these factors. Occupational segregation is another possible explanation, reflecting both employer and worker preferences. Therefore, efforts to identify and root out such discriminatory policies appear to be warranted by these findings. At least as difficult would be efforts to encourage Black Bermudian men to seek employment in entry level administrative jobs, where they could earn higher wages in jobs traditionally occupied by women.

However, tackling discrimination and occupational segregation may not be enough, because unemployment and earnings gaps between young White and Black Bermudian men may reflect other productivity-related characteristics associated with race, but not measured by the Census. These characteristics may be related to the sense of disappointment in young Black Bermudian men we hear from educators, statisticians, policymakers and youth-service workers in Bermuda.

To many, young Black Bermudian men appear to be taking less than full advantage of the opportunities available to them. They do not apply themselves as diligently as young Black



Bermudian women in secondary school. Fewer Black Bermudian men go college, while many young Black Bermudian women do, often while working. Some observers also believe that lower academic achievement among Black Bermudian men produces wider gaps in the occupational status and world views of young Black Bermudian men and women. These gaps may contribute to the decline in marriage rates among young Black Bermudians and the consequent increase in Black Bermudian female-headed families.

While this study does not investigate the implications of gaps in educational achievement for marriage and family formation, our study confirms the other stylized facts we hear from leaders in Bermuda, with one important exception. The gains from performing well in post-secondary school are higher for Black Bermudian men than women, but men gain less from post-secondary schooling. This means that Black Bermudian women do not have to look to the future to justify investments in higher education. Put differently, to earn a decent living in Bermuda, Black Bermudian women have no other choice. Those who do get more schooling continue to derive benefits, which they may not have anticipated.

Black Bermudian men, by contrast, do have choices. They can earn more than their female counterparts without rigorous academic training, and avoid higher education altogether. Doing so may reduce their future earnings, prospects for marriage, and their ability to help sustain their families in the future. But all these adverse consequences are difficult to perceive, while they are young and making decisions about work, education, and childbearing. This presents a critical challenge for Bermudian educators, policymakers, and youth-service workers. How does one get young Black Bermudian men to be more forward-looking when making these critical decisions?

Our next step is to examine the Census data to further explore the factors (especially family income and parental education) that are associated with the gap in educational credentials between young Black Bermudian men and their same-age peers. However, the Census does not ask young Black men about their perceptions of the educational achievement gaps, nor about the possible effects of such gaps on their employment, earnings, or educational aspirations. Nor did the Census explore the reasons why those who were unemployed could not find jobs. We will explore these issues in the qualitative phase of our study.

**Appendix to Chapter One****Table 1: Summary Statistics (Standard Errors in parenthesis)**

	All Young Adults	Black Bermudian Men	White Bermudian Men	Black Bermudian Women
Age	24.389 (4.204)	23.861 (4.212)	23.100 (4.504)	23.835 (4.208)
Age Squared	612.509 (198.574)	587.098 (198.014)	553.880 (208.408)	585.823 (197.709)
Male	0.490			
Female	0.510			
Black	0.550			
White	0.324			
Other Race	0.123			
Married	0.202	0.120	0.186	0.132
Currently in School	0.224	0.208	0.337	0.277
No or Other Education or Training	0.139	0.213	0.209	0.097
RSA	0.075	0.097	0.07	0.076
BSSC 0 to 2	0.058	0.102	0.032	0.082
BSSC 2 to 3	0.107	0.162	0.049	0.159
BSSC 3 plus	0.049	0.055	0.044	0.074
GCEO	0.050	0.047	0.064	0.062
GCEA	0.094	0.066	0.186	0.059
Technical Degree	0.125	0.095	0.099	0.12
Associates Degree	0.084	0.061	0.078	0.097
Higher Education	0.214	0.097	0.167	0.168
Income	5.090	4.935	4.913	4.713
Employed	1.267 (0.699)	1.213 (0.691)	1.393 (0.797)	1.316 (0.725)
Construction	0.097	0.232	0.204	0.01
Retail & Wholesale Trade	0.099	0.083	0.107	0.118
Business Services	0.093	0.04	0.068	0.071
Education & Health	0.077	0.034	0.011	0.139
Other Services	0.059	0.034	0.049	0.053
International Companies	0.076	0.02	0.05	0.073
Hotel Industry	0.062	0.074	0.036	0.061
Other Industries	0.317	0.351	0.304	0.35

Appendix to Chapter One

Missing Responses (for Industry)	0.119	0.132	0.171	0.125
	N=9077	N=2078	N=618	N=2296

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**Table 2: Logit Regression Of Unemployment Probabilities on Race, Other Demographic Information and Educational Attainment (Created Figure 4)**

Variables	Full Sample Coefficient	Black Bermudian Men Coefficient Marginal	White Bermudian Men Coefficient Effects	Black Bermudian Women Coefficient
<b>Race</b>				
White	-0.047 (0.008)			
Other Race	-0.019 (0.009)			
<b>Other Demographics</b>				
Age	0.014 (0.008)	0.016 (0.015)	-0.009 (0.021)	-0.003 (0.014)
Age Squared	-0.001 (0.000)	-0.001 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Currently Married	-0.057 (0.016)	-0.099 (0.037)	-0.055 (0.039)	-0.012 (0.022)
Physical Condition	-0.003 (0.008)	0.007 (0.016)	0.023 (0.019)	-0.008 (0.014)
<b>Education*</b>				
RSA	-0.005 (0.010)	-0.019 (0.019)	0.016 (0.029)	0.013 (0.018)
BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2	-0.012 (0.010)	-0.033 (0.019)	0.023 (0.034)	0.014 (0.017)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3	-0.026 (0.009)	-0.06 (0.017)	-0.011 (0.044)	0.008 (0.014)
BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	-0.044 (0.013)	-0.091 (0.030)	0.043 (0.025)	-0.016 (0.019)
GCEO	-0.029 (0.012)	-0.063 (0.028)	-0.035 (0.042)	0.012 (0.018)
GCEA	-0.032 (0.010)	-0.07 (0.024)	0.015 (0.019)	-0.005 (0.019)
Technical Degree	-0.062 (0.014)	-0.072 (0.025)	-0.025 (0.044)	-0.078 (0.027)
Associates Degree	-0.058 (0.014)	-0.072 (0.029)	-0.001 (0.034)	-0.032 (0.023)
Bachelors Degree or more	-0.024 (0.011)	-0.085 (0.031)	0.024 (0.026)	0.001 (0.019)
Constant Term	-0.178	-0.188	0.057	0.002

Appendix to Chapter One

	(0.086)	(0.167)	(0.223)	(0.147)
Observations	7752	2656	774	2814
Prob > chi2	0	0	0.004	0
Log Likelihood	-2179.055	-888.801	-163.037	-775.699
LR chi2 (df_m)	500.53	195.61	37.34	180.32
df_m	15	13	13	13

Standard errors in parentheses

\*The omitted education category is No or Other Education or Training

**Table 3: Ordinary Least Squared Regression of Earnings by Race, Other Demographic Variables, Educational Attainment, and Industry (Created Figures 5 , 7, 8 and 9)**

Variables	Full Sample Coefficients
<b>Race</b>	
White	0.207 (0.079)
Other Race	0.064 (0.107)
<b>Other Demographics</b>	
Age	0.375 (0.099)
Age Squared	-0.004 (0.002)
Married	0.793 (0.089)
Physical Condition	-0.431 (0.100)
Currently in School	-0.987 (0.092)
<b>Education*</b>	
RSA	-0.025 (0.119)
BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2	0.112 (0.124)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3	0.067 (0.106)
BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	0.277 (0.144)
GCEO	0.201 (0.153)
GCEA	0.216 (0.126)
Technical Degree	0.492 (0.119)
Associates Degree	0.498 (0.137)
Bachelors Degree	1.017 (0.126)
Graduate Degree or More	1.821

## Appendix to Chapter One

	(0.320)
Other Education or Training	-0.805
	(1.543)
<b>Industries</b>	
Construction	0.194
	(0.079)
Retail	-0.355
	(0.112)
Business Services	0.076
	(0.142)
Education and Health Services	-0.461
	(0.185)
Other Community Services	-0.627
	(0.164)
International Companies	0.819
	(0.185)
Hotel	-0.468
	(0.128)
Missing Industry	-1.201
	(0.117)
Constant	-1.148
	(1.156)
<hr/>	
Observations	2681
R-squared	0.443

Standard errors in parentheses

\*The omitted education category is No Education



**Table 4: Ordinary Least Squared Regression of Earnings by Race, Other Demographic Variables, Educational Attainment and Industry (Created Figure 6)**

Variables	Demographics Coefficients	Add Education Coefficients	Add Industry Coefficients	Add Race Coefficients
<b>Race</b>				
White				0.207 (0.079)
Other race				0.064 (0.107)
<b>Other Demographics</b>				
Age	0.529 (0.102)	0.407 (0.102)	0.369 (0.099)	0.375 (0.099)
Age Squared	-0.007 (0.002)	-0.005 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.002)
Married	0.979 (0.094)	0.903 (0.092)	0.817 (0.089)	0.793 (0.089)
Physical Condition	-0.462 (0.106)	-0.437 (0.103)	-0.430 (0.100)	-0.431 (0.100)
Currently in School	-1.131 (0.092)	-1.244 (0.092)	-0.982 (0.092)	-0.987 (0.092)
<b>Education*</b>				
RSA		0.017 (0.123)	-0.025 (0.119)	-0.025 (0.119)

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BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2	0.089 (0.109)	0.093 (0.124)	0.112 (0.124)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3	0.086 (0.109)	0.048 (0.106)	0.067 (0.106)
BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	0.280 (0.149)	0.272 (0.144)	0.277 (0.144)
GCEO	0.173 (0.158)	0.218 (0.153)	0.201 (0.153)
GCEA	0.243 (0.129)	0.255 (0.125)	0.216 (0.126)
Technical Degree	0.587 (0.122)	0.503 (0.119)	0.492 (0.119)
Associates Degree	0.505 (0.140)	0.512 (0.137)	0.498 (0.137)
Bachelor Degree	1.146 (0.123)	1.045 (0.126)	1.017 (0.126)
Graduate Degree	1.883 (0.324)	1.842 (0.321)	1.821 (0.320)
Other Education or Training	-0.843 (1.598)	-0.856 (1.544)	-0.805 (1.543)
<b>Industry</b>			
Construction		0.197 (0.079)	0.194 (0.079)
Retail		-0.341 (0.112)	-0.355 (0.112)
Business Services		0.092	0.076

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			(0.142)	(0.142)
Education and Health Services			-0.489	-0.461
			(0.185)	(0.185)
Other Community Services			-0.613	-0.627
			(164)	(0.164)
International Companies			0.846	0.819
			(0.185)	(0.185)
Hotel			-0.483	-0.468
			(0.128)	(0.128)
Missing Industry			-1.123	-1.201
			(0.117)	(0.117)
Constant	-3.181	-1.676	-1.023	-1.148
	(1.200)	(1.188)	(1.155)	(1.156)
Observations	2681	2681	2681	2681
R-squared	0.368	0.400	0.442	0.443

\*The omitted education category is No Education

**Table 5: Industry Rankings by Average Earnings of Young Bermudian Men**

Variables	Observations	Industry Earnings Mean	Black Men Distribution	White Men Distribution	Industry Rank Classification
<b>Industry</b>					
International Companies	81	\$43,000	0.02	0.06	High-Paying
Business Services	142	\$34,000	0.04	0.08	High-Paying
Education and Health Services	77	\$31,000	0.03	0.01	Mid-range
Construction	648	\$31,000	0.25	0.23	Mid-range
Composite Other Industry	972	\$31,000	0.37	0.34	Mid-range
Other Community Services Retail and Wholesale	97	\$25,000	0.03	0.05	Mid-range
Trades	244	\$24,400	0.08	0.11	Low-paying
Hotel	172	\$23,000	0.08	0.04	Low-paying
Missing Industry	248	\$10,000	0.1	0.08	Low-paying
Observations	2681				

**Table 6: Logit Regression of Employment in a High-Paying vs. Low-Paying Industry\***

Variables	Marginal Effects Coefficient
<b>Race</b>	
Black	-0.069 (0.035)
Other Race	0.051 (0.051)
<b>Other Demographics</b>	
Age	-0.014 (0.049)
Age Squared	0.000 (0.001)
Married	0.057 (0.043)
Physical Condition	-0.029 (0.050)
<b>Education**</b>	
Currently in School	-0.148 (0.040)
RSA	0.141 (0.072)
BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2	0.080 (0.081)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3	0.211 (0.063)
BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	0.131 (0.081)
GCEO	0.111 (0.089)
GCEA	0.220 (0.069)
Technical Degree	0.334 (0.064)
Associates Degree	0.309 (0.067)
Bachelors Degree	0.534 (0.063)
Graduate Degree or More	0.544

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Constant Term	-0.250 (0.573)
Observations	887

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Standard errors in parentheses

\*The category "Missing Industry" is not included among the low-paying industries for this regression.

\*\*The omitted educational variable is No or Other Education or Training

**Table 7: Ordinary Least Squared Regression of Earnings by Gender, Other Demographic Variables, Educational Attainment, and Industry (Created Figures 10, 12 and 13)**

Variables	Full Sample Coefficients
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	0.226 (0.051)
<b>Other Demographics</b>	
Age	0.349 (0.078)
Age Squared	-0.004 (0.002)
Married	0.472 (0.070)
Physical Condition	-0.274 (0.074)
Currently in School	-0.648 (0.066)
<b>Education*</b>	
RSA	0.037 (0.100)
BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2	0.153 (0.098)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3	0.111 (0.086)
BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	0.3292 (0.110)
GCEO	0.329 (0.120)
GCEA	0.304 (0.116)
Technical Degree	0.447 (0.096)
Associates Degree	0.521 (0.106)
Bachelors Degree	1.344 (0.100)
Graduate Degree or More	2.222 (0.175)
Other Education or Training	-0.025 (1.020)

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<b>Industry</b>	
Construction	0.198 (0.079)
Retail	-0.521 (0.083)
Business Services	-0.028 (0.101)
Education and Health Services	-0.282 (0.089)
Other Community Services	-0.637 (0.116)
International Companies	0.555 (0.110)
Hotel	-0.433 (0.096)
Missing Industry	-1.394 (0.091)
Constant	-0.811 (0.916)
<hr/>	
Observations	3962
R-squared	0.437

Standard errors in parentheses

\*The omitted education category is No Education.



**Table 8: Ordinary Least Squared Regression of Earnings by Gender, Other Demographic Variables, Educational Attainment, Industry and Interaction Variables (Created Figure 11)**

Variables	Demographic Coefficients	Add Education Coefficients	Add Industry Coefficients	Add Gender Coefficients
<b>Gender</b>				
Female				0.226 (0.051)
<b>Demographics</b>				
Age	0.505 (0.084)	0.375 (0.081)	0.344 (0.078)	0.349 (0.078)
Age Squared	-0.006 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.002)	-0.004* (0.002)	-0.004 (0.002)
Married	0.531 (0.077)	0.498 (0.073)	0.472 (0.070)	0.472 (0.070)
Physical Condition	-0.323 (0.080)	-0.298 (0.068)	-0.283 (0.074)	-0.274 (0.074)
Currently In School		-0.927 (0.068)	-0.689 (0.066)	-0.648 (0.066)
<b>Education*</b>				
RSA		0.018 (0.104)	0.011 (0.100)	0.037 (0.100)
BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2		0.110 (0.102)	0.127 (0.098)	0.153 (0.098)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3		0.088 (0.089)	0.080 (0.085)	0.111 (0.086)

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BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	0.319	0.246	0.3292
	(0.114)	(0.110)	(0.110)
GCEO	0.261	0.286	0.329
	(0.124)	(0.120)	(0.120)
GCEA	0.232	0.284	0.304
	(0.121)	(0.116)	(0.116)
Technical Degree	0.452	0.405	0.447
	(0.098)	(0.095)	(0.096)
Associates Degree	0.500	0.472	0.521
	(0.109)	(0.105)	(0.106)
Bachelors Degree	1.350	1.310	1.344
	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.100)
Graduate Degree or More	2.090	2.164	2.222
	(0.175)	(0.175)	(0.175)
Other Education or Training	-0.195	-0.047	-0.025
	(1.068)	(1.022)	(1.020)
<b>Industry</b>			
Construction		0.298	0.198
		(0.076)	(0.079)
Retail		-0.540	-0.521
		(0.083)	(0.083)
Business Services		-0.058	-0.028
		(0.101)	(0.101)
Education and Health Services		-0.345	-0.282
		(0.088)	(0.089)
Other Community Services		-0.659	-0.637

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			(0.116)	(0.116)
International Companies			0.495	0.555
			(0.109)	(0.110)
Hotel			-0.425	-0.433
			(0.096)	(0.096)
Missing Industry			-1.374	-1.394
			(0.091)	(0.091)
Constant	-3.189	-1.543	-0.846	-0.811
	(0.982)	(0.951)	(0.918)	(0.916)
Observations	3962	3962	3962	3962
R-squared	0.322	0.380	0.434	0.437
Standard errors in parentheses				

\*The omitted education category is No Education.

**Table 9: Logit Regression of Employment in High-Paying vs. Low-Paying Industries for Black Bermudian Men and Women**

Variables	Demographic Coefficients
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	-0.175 (0.027)
<b>Demographics</b>	
Age	0.029 (0.044)
Age Squared	0.000 (0.001)
Married	0.059 (0.038)
Physical Condition	-0.025 (0.043)
<b>Education*</b>	
Currently In School	-0.118 (0.033)
RSA	0.059 (0.070)
BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2	0.086 (0.068)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3	0.205 (0.057)
BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	0.290 (0.063)
GCEO	0.229 (0.069)
GCEA	0.147 (0.077)
Technical Degree	0.349 (0.059)
Associates Degree	0.340 (0.062)
Bachelors Degree	0.591 (0.062)
Graduate Degree or More	0.553 (0.123)
Constant	-0.850

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Observations	(0.518)
*The omitted educational variable is No or Other Education or Training	1457

**Table 10: Ordinary Least Squared Regression of Earnings on Demographic Variables, Educational Attainment, and Industry Assuming Variation in Associations by Race and Gender (Created Figures 14-17)**

VARIABLES	Black Males	White Males	Black Women
<b>Demographics</b>			
Age	0.374 (0.116)	0.556 (0.235)	0.324 (0.105)
Age Squared	-0.004 (0.002)	-0.008 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.002)
Currently Married	0.732 (0.110)	0.904 (0.198)	0.270 (0.090)
Physical Condition	-0.356 (0.116)	-0.785 (0.244)	-0.207 (0.094)
Currently in School	-0.824 (0.108)	-1.335 (0.217)	-0.596 (0.082)
<b>Education*</b>			
RSA	0.055 (0.134)	0.112 (0.313)	0.003 (0.154)
BSSC with GPA of 0 to 2	0.204 (0.134)	-0.149 (0.422)	0.090 (0.150)
BSSC with GPA of 2 to 3	0.117 (0.117)	-0.180 (0.351)	0.095 (0.133)
BSSC with GPA of 3 or more	0.354 (0.164)	-0.039 (0.400)	0.216 (0.157)
GCEO	0.362 (0.183)	-0.221 (0.340)	0.292 (0.166)
GCEA	0.430 (0.160)	-0.072 (0.263)	0.153 (0.175)
Technical Degree	0.575 (0.139)	0.255 (0.287)	0.328 (0.142)
Associates Degree	0.473 (0.163)	0.512 (0.323)	0.509 (0.149)
Bachelors Degree	1.100 (0.153)	0.780 (0.283)	1.391 (0.143)
Graduate Degree or More	1.421 (0.392)	1.911 (0.677)	2.218 (0.200)
<b>Industry</b>			
Construction	0.255 (0.090)	0.411 (0.195)	0.350 (0.295)
Retail	-0.417	-0.237	-0.515

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	(0.134)	(0.248)	(0.101)
Business Services	0.217	-0.293	-0.049
	(0.180)	(0.298)	(0.116)
Other Community Services	-0.406	-0.778	-0.681
	(0.194)	(0.353)	(0.140)
International Companies	0.751	0.918	0.632
	(0.253)	(0.337)	(0.115)
Hotel	-0.421	-0.060	-0.314
	(0.139)	(0.405)	(0.130)
Missing Industry	-1.069	-1.369	-1.593
	(0.132)	(0.317)	(0.123)
Constant	-1.219	-3.185	-0.653
	(1.364)	(2.729)	(1.236)
Observations	1915	521	2047
R-squared	0.405	0.548	0.476

Standard errors in parentheses

\* The omitted educational variable is No or Other Education or Training

Table 11: Conversion of Earnings Categorical Variable to Dollar Figures

Category Range	Salary Range	Variable	Dollar Equivalent	Notes
1.0-1.9	Under \$4000	1.0	\$0	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$400.
		1.1	\$400	
		1.2	\$800	
		1.3	\$1,200	
		1.4	\$1,600	
		1.5	\$2,000	
		1.6	\$2,400	
		1.7	\$2,800	
		1.8	\$3,200	
		1.9	\$3,600	
2.0-2.9	\$4,000 - \$7,999	2.0	\$4,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$400.
		2.1	\$4,400	
		2.2	\$4,800	
		2.3	\$5,200	
		2.4	\$5,600	
		2.5	\$6,000	
		2.6	\$6,400	
		2.7	\$6,8000	
		2.8	\$7,200	
		2.9	\$7,600	



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3.0-3.9	\$8,000 - \$15,999	3.0	\$8,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$800.
		3.1	\$8,800	
		3.2	\$9,600	
		3.3	\$10,400	
		3.4	\$11,200	
		3.5	\$12,000	
		3.6	\$12,800	
		3.7	\$13,600	
		3.8	\$14,400	
		3.9	\$15,200	
4.0-4.9	\$16,000 - \$23,999	4.0	\$16,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$800.
		4.1	\$16,800	
		4.2	\$17,600	
		4.3	\$18,400	
		4.4	\$19,200	
		4.5	\$20,000	
		4.6	\$20,800	
		4.7	\$21,600	
		4.8	\$22,400	
		4.9	\$23,200	
5.0-5.9	\$24,000 - \$31,999	5.0	\$24,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$800.
		5.1	\$24,800	
		5.2	\$25,600	

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		5.3	\$26,400	
		5.4	\$27,200	
		5.5	\$28,000	
		5.6	\$28,800	
		5.7	\$29,600	
		5.8	\$30,400	
		5.9	\$31,200	
6.0-6.9	\$32,000 - \$39,999	6.0	\$32,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$800.
		6.1	\$32,800	
		6.2	\$33,600	
		6.3	\$34,400	
		6.4	\$35,200	
		6.5	\$36,000	
		6.6	\$36,800	
		6.7	\$37,600	
		6.8	\$38,400	
		6.9	\$39,200	
7.0-7.9	\$40,000 - \$47,999	7.0	\$40,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$800.
		7.1	\$40,800	
		7.2	\$41,600	
		7.3	\$42,400	
		7.4	\$43,200	
		7.5	\$44,000	

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		7.6	\$44,800	
		7.7	\$45,600	
		7.8	\$46,400	
		7.9	\$47,200	
8.0-8.9	\$48,000 - \$55,999	8.0	\$48,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$800.
		8.1	\$48,800	
		8.2	\$49,600	
		8.3	\$50,400	
		8.4	\$51,200	
		8.5	\$52,000	
		8.6	\$52,800	
		8.7	\$53,600	
		8.8	\$54,400	
		8.9	\$55,200	
9.0-9.9	\$56,000 - \$61,999	9.0	\$56,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$600.
		9.1	\$57,200	
		9.2	\$57,800	
		9.3	\$58,400	
		9.4	\$59,000	
		9.5	\$59,600	
		9.6	\$60,200	
		9.7	\$60,800	
		9.8	\$61,400	

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10.0-10.9	\$62,000 - \$75,999	10.0	\$62,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$1,400.
		10.1	\$63,400	
		10.2	\$64,800	
		10.3	\$66,200	
		10.4	\$67,600	
		10.5	\$69,000	
		10.6	\$70,400	
		10.7	\$71,800	
		10.8	\$73,200	
		10.9	\$74,600	
11.0-11.9	\$76,000 - \$91,999	11.0	\$76,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$1,600.
		11.1	\$77,600	
		11.2	\$79,200	
		11.3	\$80,800	
		11.4	\$82,400	
		11.5	\$8,4000	
		11.6	\$85,600	
		11.7	\$87,200	
		11.8	\$88,800	
		11.9	\$90,400	
12.0-12.9	\$92,000 - \$107,999	12.0	\$92,000	As variables increase by 0.10, we add \$1,600.
		12.1	\$93,600	
		12.2	\$95,200	

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	12.3	\$96,800	
	12.4	\$98,400	
	12.5	\$100,000	
	12.6	\$101,600	
	12.7	\$103,200	
	12.8	\$104,800	
	12.9	\$106,400	
	13.0	\$108,000	

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The text of the report discusses the descriptive statistics reported in Appendix Table 1, so no additional comment is needed here.<sup>33</sup> Appendix Table 2 shows the results of the logit regression model used for the predictions used in Figure 4 (page 28). Here a young man's unemployment status is regressed on his race, other demographic characteristics and education. Marginal effects are shown in the table. The full sample results indicate that Black Bermudian men have unemployment-probabilities that are about five percentage points higher than White Bermudian men and about two percentage points higher than Bermudian men of other racial groups. However, columns two and three indicate substantial differences across subgroups in the associations between unemployment and most control variables. For Black men, age was positively associated with unemployment but for White Bermudian men and Black Bermudian women, age was negatively associated with unemployment. Having a physical condition (illness) was positively associated with unemployment for Black and White Bermudian men, but not Black Bermudian women. For Black Bermudian men, every level of educational attainment was negatively associated with unemployment. However this was not the case for White Bermudian men or Black Bermudian women. For the former, obtaining a BSSC with a GPA of 2 to 3, a GCEO, Technical or Associate's Degree were all negatively associated with unemployment. For the latter, obtaining a BSSC with a GPA 2 to 3 or more, a GCEA, Technical Degree or Associates Degree were all negatively associated with unemployment. It is interesting to note that higher education was positively associated with unemployment for White Bermudian men and Black Bermudian women, yet these groups are more likely to obtain higher education than Black Bermudian men.

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<sup>33</sup> We report standard errors, but not tests of significance because the data are from the Census of the Population, not a sample survey of the population.

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Appendix Table 3 shows the regressions results used to create Figures 5, 7, 8 and 9. This equation includes the same control variables as a Mincer-type earnings equation: age and aged squared, educational attainment dummies variables and industry of employment. We excluded occupation, because the earnings categories referred to earnings for all jobs, while occupation data referred to earnings for the primary job. In this equation we assumed that the associations between control variables and earnings were the same for all young Bermudian men, whatever their race. The model also included a dummy variable indicating if the young person was currently enrolled in school. The signs of the coefficients of all control variables were expected. Being White was associated with higher earnings. All levels of education were positively associated with higher earnings, except for having an RSA and having “Other Education or Training”. Young men who worked for a construction, business services, or an international company earned more than young men who worked in our composite other industry, which is omitted, while those who in the retail sector, hotels, education and health or other community services earned less. Those who did not report their industry of employment also earned less than those employed in our composite other industry.

The regression models in Appendix Table 4 were used to create Figure 6. In column 1, which was used to create the first two bars of Figure 6, only demographic characteristics (excluding race) were controlled. As in table 2, the coefficients of all variables had the expected signs. Column 2, which was used to create the second- two bars of Figure 15, included educational attainment dummy variables. Except for men with Other Education or Training, men with all levels of education earned more than those with No Education, our omitted education category. Column 3, which was used to create the third two bars of Figure 15, added industry to the regression. Of the 7 industry categories, only three (construction, business services and

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international companies) were positively associated with higher earnings than the omitted industry category. Column 4, which was used to create the fourth two bars of Figure 6, added race. Both White Bermudian men and Bermudian race of other races earned more than Black Bermudian men, the omitted category. These results were the same as in Appendix Table 2.

Appendix Table 5 ranked industries by the average earnings of young Bermudian men to determine the industry categories that were used in Appendix Table 6, where the dependent variable took a value of one for young men employed in one of the high paying industries and a value of zero for young men employed in one of the low-paying industries. Young men employed in one of the mid-range paying industries and those who failed to report their industry of employment were excluded from this model. All variables had the expected signs. In particular, even after controlling for education, Black Bermudian men were less likely than White Bermudian men

The regression in Appendix Table 7 was used to create Figures 10, 12 and 13. This was also a Mincer-type earnings regression, estimated for young Black Bermudian men and women. We assumed that the associations between control variables and earnings were the same for Black Bermudian men and women. Being a female was positively associated with earnings, confirming concerns often expressed by stakeholders in Bermuda. Other demographic characteristics had the expected signs. All levels of educational attainment were associated with higher earnings than our omitted industry category no or low education. As in Appendix Table 4, only three industries were positively associated with earnings.

The regressions in Appendix Table 8 were used for Figure 110. The first column, which was used for the first two bars of Figure 11, included only demographic characteristics,



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excluding gender and each coefficient had the expected sign. The second column, which was used for the second-two bars of Figure 20, included educational attainment dummy variables. Except for “Other Education or Training,” each educational credential was associated with higher earnings. The third column, which was used for the third -two bars, added industries. As in previous models, young people employed in construction, business services and international companies had higher earnings than those employed in the omitted industry category. Those employed in retail and wholesale trades and the hotel industry had lower earnings. The fourth column, which was used for the last-two bars, added gender. These results were also reported in Appendix table 7.

In Appendix Table 9, the dependent variable took a value of one for young Black Bermudians employed in one of the high paying industries and a value of zero for young Black Bermudians employed in one of the low-paying industries. Young Black Bermudians employed in one of the mid-range paying industries and those who failed to report their industry of employment were excluded from this model. Even after controlling for education, Black Bermudian men were less likely to be employed in a high-paying industry than Black Bermudian women. Otherwise, all variables had the expected signs.

The regressions in Appendix Table10 were used for Figures 14 through 17. These models allowed for differences in the associations between included variables and the earnings by race and gender. Most demographic characteristics had the expected signs in each of the models, although there are clear variations across groups, which were discussed in the text of the report. For Black Bermudian men and women, all levels of educational attainment were associated with higher earnings; however, for White Bermudian men, all three BSSC degrees, as well as the GCEO and GCEA were negatively associated with lower earnings. White Bermudian

## Appendix to Chapter One

men must have had access to “other education or training,” perhaps in family-owned businesses to which Blacks did not. Otherwise, these results suggest that young Bermudians were victims of discrimination. Young Black Bermudians employed in construction and international companies earned more than those employed in the omitted industry category, whatever their race or gender. Curiously, employment in business services was positively associated with earnings for Black men but negatively associated with earnings for White men and Black women, suggesting a pattern of industrial segregation that merits further study.

Appendix table 11 lists the dollar values we assigned to the 16 income categories respondents are given for the purposes of reporting their incomes. We used the values in column 4 to make predictions based upon the coefficients in our regressions.

## **CHAPTER TWO: Review of the Education Literature**

**By Ronald B. Mincy and Monique Jethwani-Keyser**

Our analysis of the 2000 Bermudian Census data in Chapter One revealed that the unemployment rate of young Bermudian Black men is almost double the unemployment rate of young White Bermudian men. Young Black Bermudian men are also much less likely than same-age White Bermudian men or Black Bermudian women to find employment in Bermuda's higher paying industries. Their lower levels of educational attainment help to explain why they are less likely to secure employment in high paying industries and why their earnings are generally lower than the earnings of their same-age peers<sup>34</sup>. To increase earnings among Black Bermudian males and decrease employment gaps, closing the educational attainment gaps is essential. This chapter presents a review of the literature on how the school and family context can affect the development of youth and young adults, particularly their education and career choices. Information from the review guides our examination of the educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and their same age peers, and how Black Bermudian males form their career and educational aspirations, in Chapters 3 and 4 respectively.

Educational theory suggests that families and schools are critical contexts for development and prepare adolescents for adulthood, including the amount of education they receive (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Croninger & Lee, 2001). Bronfenbrenner (1979) identified the social environment as a primary context for development and explains that the individual develops within his or her immediate interpersonal relationships but also within the various environmental settings to which he or she is exposed. Home and school are critical environmental settings. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), various contexts of development

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<sup>34</sup> Chapter One of this report defines 'same age peers' as Black Bermudian females and White Bermudian males and defines 'higher paying industries' as...

are like circles within circles, with the individual being at the center. The outermost circle is the macrosystem, which holds the values and beliefs of the culture in which the individual lives. The next level inward, the exosystem, includes the socioeconomic context of the society in which the individual lives. And finally, the mesosystem represents the immediate contexts to which the individual is exposed such as families and schools and the relationships between them. Chapter 3 focuses on how factors in the exosystem of family socioeconomic context are associated with educational attainment gaps. Chapter 4 aims to understand the experiences of Black Bermudian males within the mesosystem of their school and family environments and in particular, how the messages they receive in this system contribute to their career and educational aspirations.

### **Family Characteristics that Determine Educational Attainment**

Since *Equality of Educational Opportunity* was published in 1966, (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Weinfeld, & York) we have known that family characteristics, particularly parental resources and family processes, are major determinants of educational attainment. Because parents with greater means can purchase more materials and better circumstances that help their children learn (e.g., books, a quiet space for study) several socioeconomic characteristics of families should influence educational attainment. These characteristics include: family income, parental education, parental occupation, and parental employment status (Coleman, Campbell, et al., 1966). Additional influential parental characteristics include parents' marital status, home environment, language use, parent-child interaction, parental warmth, discipline and mental health (Brooks-Gunn, Klebanov & Duncan, 1996; Cooksey, 1997; Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1997; Farkas & Beron, 2001; Hart & Risley, 1995, 1999; Phillips, Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Klebanov, 1998; Smith, Brooks-Gunn & Klebanov, 1997). These studies suggest that prevailing differences in family resources and

parenting behaviors/practices could account for a large share of racial and ethnic differences in cognitive development in early childhood, which are later manifested in racial and ethnic differences in educational attainment

One particular characteristic that may help to explain educational attainment gaps between young Black and White Bermudian males is marital status<sup>35</sup>. Black Bermudian males are less likely to live with married parents than White Bermudian males and studies show that educational attainment is positively associated with parents' marital status. This association may occur because marriage can be a proxy for parental characteristics that are positively associated with high parental investments in children. These include (1) a warm trusting relationship with their children; (2) minimal use of punishment and scolding and a corresponding reliance on explanation as a method of control; (3) the provision of intellectually stimulating activities and toys; (4) making time to talk and listen to children; and (5) an emotional commitment between parents and their children (Barber, 2000). Single parents may find it particularly difficult to exhibit some of these qualities (Amato, 2005; Amato & Keith, 1991). In addition to increased quality of parenting, marriage is associated with benefits to children including higher family stability, family functioning, and family well-being; increased social and emotional well-being; higher cognitive gains and higher academic performance (Barber, 2000; Carlson, 2007; Osborne, 2007). Of course marriage (and living in with two parents, even if unmarried) is also associated with higher income, which is positively associated with educational attainment.

Given the importance of family characteristics, especially household type (i.e., living with a single parent or two parents) and parental marital status, resources, and parental

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<sup>35</sup> As we will see in chapter 3 the proportion of teenagers and young adults who live with two parents is lower among Black Bermudian males than among White Bermudian males, and even among Bermudian teenagers and young adults who live with two parents, the marriage rates of the parents are lower for Black Bermudians than for White Bermudians

educational attainment, chapter 3 focuses on the degree to which such characteristics help to explain education gaps between young Black Bermudian men and their same-age peers. One important question is: Are the differences between the educational attainments of young Black and White Bermudian men simply a legacy of the long struggle for educational opportunity that has taken place in Bermuda (Hodgson, 1997)? For example, the incomes of Black Bermudian families may be lower than the incomes of White Bermudian families because parents in the former have lower educational attainment, are more often the victims of employment discrimination, and are more likely to be single parents. Thus, some of the education gap between Black Bermudian males and White Bermudian males must arise because the former have fewer resources to devote to their sons' education. For all of these reasons we would expect the Black-White male educational attainment gap would narrow if we statistically controlled for parental characteristics. But how much narrower would the gap become?

If controlling for parental educational attainment, work opportunities, and household income were to decrease the gap between Black and White Bermudian males, how would we explain the educational gap between Black Bermudian males and females? Researchers have long observed gender differences in parental investments (care, time, money, and so on), and argue that such differences occur when parents (consciously or unconsciously) predict that investments in one offspring will yield greater returns than investments in another offspring (Freese & Powell, 1999). Clutton-Brock (1991) and Hardy (2002) identified circumstances that promote gender bias in parental investments. Quinlan (2006) finds support for his hypothesis in societies, such as the Dominican Republic, where parents are aware that their sons will be marginalized, they are, sadly, correct in predicting that investments in their daughters will be more (financially) rewarding. Another circumstance that increases the likelihood that daughters

will receive a greater investment of parental time and other resources is in households in which the head is also a female. This can occur if a mother senses that her daughter will be more likely to provide a return on this investment in future contributions to the household (Quinlan, 2005). Although Bermudian culture differs significantly from the (various) Caribbean culture(s), Bermuda shares with these Islands many Black males who are marginalized and many who are raised in female-headed households.

However, differential parental investments are not the only or the primary explanations of the educational attainment gaps between young Black Bermudian men and women. There is a literature in the U.S. suggesting that children, especially boys, in single mother families are at greater risk for behavior problems, which may reduce their academic achievement (Buchmann, Diprete, & McDaniel, 2008). This literature suggests that children in single mother families experience less parental control, supervision or monitoring and less family cohesion. However, Florsheim, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith (1998) argue that there is no firm dichotomy among the important dimensions of parenting between single-mother and two parent families. Instead, boys in single-parent families may be at higher risk for behavioral problems because they are less likely than boys in two-parent families to have high quality relationships with male role models and because, under the stress of parenting without the support of another parent, some single mothers are unable to maintain a vigilant response to their sons' anti-social behavior.

This suggests that boys and girls may experience single-mother families differently. Girls in single-mother families have an adult-female role model, so they are constantly able to observe behavior that presumably promotes or retards their career or educational and growth. Boys in single-parent families are also constantly observing their mothers, but it is unclear if their mothers' career or educational experiences provide models that boys want to emulate. Second,

single mothers have experienced their own youth to adult transitions and the experiences of their peers. As a result, they may have very high expectations for their daughters and be very firm about the types of behavior they want their daughters to exhibit or avoid. Even if they have clear expectations for their sons, however, they may be less certain about how males negotiate the transition to adulthood and how they deal with the pressures from their peers. This uncertainty may produce less resolve or consistency in their efforts to discipline and set and enforce boundaries for their sons' behavior, especially in the presence of resistance. This uncertainty or inconsistency, which allows boys to exhibit more serious or more frequent anti-social behavior, may in turn increase the risk of low-academic achievement or disciplinary problems in school.

### **School Characteristics and Educational Attainment**

In Bermuda, examining the dimension of the exosystem that may affect educational attainment is not straight forward. Most White Bermudians attend private schools, while most Black Bermudians attend public schools. According to the recent report of the Education Commission, private schools are of higher quality than public schools (Hopkins, Matthews, Matthews, Olajide, Smith, & Woods-Smith, 2007). Chapter 3 relies upon Census data to estimate educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and their same age peers, but we are unable to observe school characteristics in the Census. We are able to observe race and many of the socioeconomic advantages (e.g. parental income, education, and marital status) White Bermudians enjoy over Blacks Bermudians, including some characteristics that predict greater private school attendance among Whites. This means that school quality will be positively correlated with being White in our data. As a result, our estimates of the educational attainment gaps between White and Black males in Bermuda will be upward biased. They will reflect the



pure association between race and educational attainment and an association due to higher quality schools, which unfortunately, we will be unable to isolate.

Because they attend the same public schools, we might expect our inability to observe school characteristics in the Census to have no effect on our estimates of educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and females, if males and females experience schools in the same way. There is reason to believe that they do not. Instead, there is a well-documented female advantage in educational attainment across all racial and ethnic groups in the U.S, which researchers attribute to gender differences in behavior and the way teachers and school authorities respond to those differences (Buchman & DiPrete, 2006). Girls appear to perform better in secondary school because they are more attentive and organized and less likely to engage in disruptive behavior. As a result, teachers view them as more serious students, who are likely to gain from instructional attention. These performance advantages (i.e. better grades) appear as early as kindergarten and later emerge in higher rates of college completion for women, as compared with men (Buchmann, Diprete, & McDaniel, 2008). Women from families with fathers lacking a college degree or families with absent fathers appear to enjoy the greatest advantage in college completion, mostly because of declining college completion among males in these families. Finally, the advantage in college completion rates for women is occurring throughout Europe; in Australia, Canada, New Zealand; and in most OECD countries (Buchmann, Diprete, & McDaniel, 2008).

In summary, besides race and gender, family and school characteristics also affect educational attainment, but relationships among these variables may produce biased estimates of race and gender educational gaps that rely upon Census data. Race and school characteristics are highly correlated, but we cannot observe school characteristics in the Census. This will tend to

bias estimates of educational attainment gaps between White and Black Bermudian males. Though they are members of the same families and attend the same schools, young Black Bermudian males and females may experience families and schools differently. We are also unable to observe the family and school experiences that mediate the association between gender and educational attainment. This may bias our estimates of the educational attainment gaps between and Black Bermudian females and males. While we will be mindful of these sources of bias in interpreting our results, we also thought it was important to get make some direct observation of the way Black Bermudian males experience their families and schools and the ways in which these experiences are related to their educational (and career) aspirations.

### **Links Between Family and School Experience and Educational and Career Aspirations**

Theories of risk and protective factors suggest that family support and positive school relationships are aspects of what Bronfenbrenner calls the mesosystem that can protect adolescents from various risks, including socio-economic disadvantage, and positively impact educational and career decisions and outcomes (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Resnick, et al., 1997; Roeser, Eccles & Sameroff, 2000; Rumberger, Ghatak, Poulos, Ritter & Dornbusch, 1990). Few studies have highlighted the perspectives and experiences of Black Bermudian high-school students to understand how teachers and family members contribute to their educational and professional attainment and goals. To frame our qualitative study in chapter 4, we review the literature on the associations between family and school support and educational outcomes and the associations between family and school support and career outcomes.

### **Family Relationships**

In the U.S., few would deny the critical nature of family support for adolescent development. Family support has been found to promote academic achievement and positive expectations for the future and to prevent students from dropping out of high school (Dubow et al., 2001; Jackson & Meara, 1977; Roderick, 2003; Rumberger et. al, 1990). When parents and extended family are involved in the education of their children, an invaluable bridge is established between their lives at school and at home. Day to day family discussions about school in a supportive and encouraging context sends the message that education is a high priority, that expectations for academic achievement and educational attainment are high and that they do indeed believe their children can succeed in school (Roderick, 2003).

In a study of high school males in the U.S., Jackson and Meara (1977) revealed that paternal relationships with high degrees of communication and warmth predicted greater occupational and educational achievement 5 years later. As seniors in high school, boys with these engaged fathers were more optimistic about their futures than those without highly engaged fathers. Five years later, these boys held professional or managerial positions, exhibited long term and ambitious professional aspirations and high levels of educational achievement. In a study by Dubow et al., (2001) of urban adolescents in the U.S., perceptions of family support, including the perception that family members were available for personal advice, were associated with positive expectations about the future such as the ability to handle schoolwork, make healthy decisions or experience positive social relationships. Rumberger et al. (1990) reveal that high school students are less likely to drop out of school when their parents help them make decisions about proper behavior and activities and are actively involved in their educational lives. Educationally engaged families monitor and help with homework, attend school conferences and functions and provide a supportive learning environment at home. These

engaged families are likely to help adolescents make sense of their educational experiences and inform their decisions both in school and about the future. Adolescents who receive this support are more likely to achieve academic achievement and higher educational attainment.

### **School Relationships**

In the U.S., feelings of belonging and positive teacher-student relationships have been identified as important dimensions of school experience that contribute to academic achievement and educational attainment among Black males (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Booker, 2006). The need for teacher support in particular has been identified in a wealth of developmental literature that defines school climate as the quality of interactions among and between adults and students in the school community (Connell and Wellborn, 1991; Roeser, et al., 2000; Osterman, 2000). Researchers have commonly found that perceptions of interpersonal relationships in school predict academic adjustment and educational attainment throughout the middle school and high school years, even after accounting for demographic factors such as age and socio-economic status (Brand, Felner, Shim, Seitsinger, & Dumas, 2003; Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Faircloth & Hamm, 2005; Goodenow, 1993; Osterman, 2000; Roeser, Eccles & Sameroff, 2000).

For example, in a large scale study of more than 2,000 U.S. schools, Brand et al. (2003) revealed that positive peer and teacher interactions were directly related to students' grades. Faircloth and Hamm (2005) revealed that a sense of belonging and interpersonal relationships in school explained the academic achievement among over 5,000 high school students in the United States. In a study of 353 middle school students, Goodenow (1993) found that teacher support was the strongest predictor of students' expectations to succeed in school and was also significantly associated with students' interest and motivation in school and their academic effort and performance. Students' perceptions of the support, interest, and respect they received from

their teachers was the most influential component of belonging and support in terms of association with effort and achievement (Goodenow, 1993, p. 37).

According to Croninger & Lee (2001), high school student's beliefs about how much their teachers encourage and support their efforts to succeed in school can reduce the likelihood that they drop out of high school by nearly half. Furthermore, "Students who come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and who have had academic difficulties in the past find guidance and assistance from teachers especially helpful (p. 548)". Students who experience positive relationships with their teachers might access a multitude of resources including, but not limited to, encouragement to stay in school, information and guidance about professional or academic decisions, and assistance with schoolwork. Students who access these resources are more likely to achieve good grades and are less likely to drop out of school (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Fine, 1991).

For example, teachers guide and 'scaffold' student understanding by exchanging and clarifying ideas, thereby promoting academic understanding and achievement (Vygotsky, 1978). Positive teacher attention also makes students feel cared for, thereby inspiring motivation and a commitment to learning (Noddings, 1992). When students perceive their teachers as not available to help them with schoolwork or as not interested in how well they do in school, they are more likely to experience poor academic outcomes (Fine 1991; Jethwani-Keyser, 2008). For example, Fine (1991) found that the likelihood of students dropping out of school was decreased when students perceived their teachers to be supportive and encouraging of academic success. In sum, developmental theory highlights the importance of schools and families as important contexts for development and the experience of positive interpersonal relationships within those contexts have been identified as fundamental developmental needs (Bronfenbrenner, 1979;

Faircloth & Hamm, 2005; Osterman, 2000). Interpersonal relationships help students through the process of learning, thereby protecting students from the academic risks associated with demographic disadvantages (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Booker, 2006). How students experience interpersonal relationships in school may vary across contexts and cultures (Arnett, 2008; Shweder & Sullivan, 1993). Using census data, Chapter 2 explores the educational attainment gaps between Bermudian Black males and their same age peers and examines the effect of race, socioeconomic status, parental resources and family processes. Using qualitative interviews, Chapter 4 explores the educational and career aspirations of Black Bermudian male high school students and how their relationships at home and in school are influencing those aspirations.

## **CHAPTER THREE: The Quantitative Education Study**

**By Ronald B. Mincy and Eva C. Haldane**

This chapter explains and estimates models of educational attainment for Black Bermudian males in comparison to their same-age peers. Our analyses are particularly focused on investigating the degree to which specific characteristics of young people, and their parents, are associated with educational attainment gaps. Because the decision to drop out of secondary school is markedly different from decisions about post-secondary education, we have conducted separate analyses for two separate groups: individuals between the ages of 16 and 18 (teenagers), and young adults (ages 19 through 30). As in most industrialized countries, education in Bermuda is compulsory until age 16; most teenagers live with at least one parent, and can expect to receive support from their parent(s) while they are still enrolled in school. For teenagers, the primary question arising from chapter 1 is: What factors are associated with whether teenagers dropout, remain enrolled, or graduate from secondary school, without further education?

Young adults face a different set of decisions. Once they leave secondary school, with or without a certificate, they are typically expected to support themselves, at least partially, even if they live with their parents. Many do so because the sheer beauty of the Island and its reputation as one of the leading tourist locations in the world, make land and housing prices quite high.

Thus, young adults are making decisions about schooling, marriage, child-bearing, labor force participation, and independence from the support of their parents, all at the same time. The earnings that they would forego if they remain in school and their expected future earnings, if they chose to pursue higher education (Becker, 1993) play critical roles in education decisions.

For young adults, our primary research question is: What factors are associated with the highest educational certification young adults receive?

The next section of the chapter discusses our data, how we measure enrollment and educational attainment for teenagers and young adults, methods for estimating enrollment and educational achievement gaps. The following section reports the results of our estimation. The final section discusses limitations of the study, and summarizes the results.

## **Data and Methods**

### **Data**

We created a special micro-database from the 2000 Bermuda Census of Population and Housing (Census Office, 2002). This dataset provided us with education and labor market data for 24,473 people in Bermuda, 11,740 were teenagers and young adults between the ages of 16 and 30 years old. The other people were the parents of these teenagers and young adults who resided with their children. Matching all co-resident parents to children provided us with three sub-groups for each of our age groups (16-18 and 19-30): all teens and all young adults; teens and young adults who lived with a single parent; and teens and young adults who lived with two parents.

### ***Measures***

#### **Outcome Variables**

The outcome of interest was the educational attainment of young Bermudians, but we measured this differently for teenagers (16 to 18 years old) and young adults (19 to 30 years old). For teenagers, we defined mutually exclusive and exhaustive indicator, or “dummy,” variables: (1) dropout (has not attained a secondary school diploma, or equivalent, but is not enrolled in school); (2) enrolled (is currently enrolled in school, whether it is secondary or post-secondary);



and (3) not-enrolled (has attained a secondary school certificate, or equivalent, and is not enrolled in school).

For young adults, we began with the 11 measures of educational attainment available in the Census: (1) no degree; (2) RSA; (3) BSSC with a grade point average of greater than zero, but less than two; (4) BSSC with a grade point average of two or greater, (5) BSSC with a GPA of 3 or higher (6) GCEO; (7) GCEA; (8) technical degree (or certificate); (9) associate's degree; (10) bachelor's degree; and (11) more than a bachelor's degree.

We used these categories to define our measure of educational attainment for young adults by dividing the 11 levels of educational attainment the into four “dummy” variables : (1) No or Low Education, (did not complete secondary school, or highest degree is RSA, or one of the three BSSC options); (2) GCEO/GCEA (is highest degree); (3) Technical or Associate's Degree (is highest degree); and (4) Bachelor's Degree or more (is highest degree). This condensed variable was established to facilitate our analysis of the study's primary question: Why are Black Bermudian males so much less likely to pursue higher education than their same-age peers?

### **Control Variables**

Our primary interest was in estimating educational attainment differentials between young Black Bermudian males and their same-age peers. We disaggregated youth and young adults by race, gender, ethnicity, Bermudian status (Bermudian or non-Bermudian). This resulted in the following categories: (1) Black Bermudian male (BBM); (2) White Bermudian male (WBM); (3) Black Bermudian female (BBF); (4) White Bermudian female (WBF); (5) Black Non-Bermudian male (BNM); (6) White Non-Bermudian male (WNM); (7) Black Non-Bermudian female (BNF); (8) White Non-Bermudian female (BNF); (9) “Other” Race or

Ethnicity Bermudian male (OBM); (10) “Other” Race or Ethnicity Non-Bermudian male (ONM); (11) “Other” Race or Ethnicity Bermudian female (OBF); and (12) “Other” Race or ethnicity Non-Bermudian female (ONF). The category “Other” race or ethnicity includes people who defined themselves as Black/White mixed; Black/Other mixed; White/Other mixed; Asian; or “Other” race or ethnicity). Our teenage sub-group is significantly smaller ( $n= 2095$ ) than the young adult sub-group, therefore we collapsed the aforementioned 12 categorical variables into four categories for their analyses: (1) Black Bermudian male (BBM); (2) White Bermudian male (WBM); (3) Black Bermudian female (BBF); and (4) Other Teenagers OT).

Additional control variables included: age; age squared; young adults’ marital status (single or married); and a number of variables related to the [co-resident] parents of teenagers and young adults. Data on parents who were the heads-of-households (Parent 1) included the parents’ age, race/ethnicity, gender, educational attainment, marital status, and Bermudian status (Bermudian or non-Bermudian), and a proxy for total parental income, using the income categories available in the Census. We also measured the educational attainment of Parent 1 using the 12 indicators of educational attainment described above. For youth and young adults in two-parent households, we measured the difference between the educational attainments of Parent 1 and Parent 2, the other parent. Finally, we included a *household structure* variable from data on whether the household included (1) teenagers or young adults living independently; (2) teenagers or young adults living with a single parent; or (3) teenagers or young adults living with both of their [biological] parents.

## **Methods**

We used multinomial logit regression to analyze the teenagers’ data and chose Black Bermudian males (BBM) as the base category. Given the way we define the outcome variable,

results show the odds that same-age peers have more education than Black Bermudian males. This provides a direct measure of educational attainment gaps. While we report the full results in our appendix tables, the following section focuses on the results of our analyses of educational attainment gaps and their associations with household, parental (and other) characteristics. In other words, after we take account of a variety of factors that are associated with educational attainment (e.g. the characteristics of individual teenagers, their parents, and the type of household in which teenagers live) how much larger (or smaller) are the educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and their same-age peers?

We used a specialized form of logit regression, generalized ordered logit (GOL), analysis to examine the association between our (categorical) measure of young adults' educational attainment and our control variables. GOL is an appropriate estimator for ordinal variables such as the four collapsed categories we created to measure young adults' educational attainment. As before, we use Black Bermudian males (BBM) as the base category. The GOL results show the odds that same-age peers have more than a specified level of education than Black Bermudian males. Again, we report the full results in appendix tables, but our narrative focuses on this measure of the educational attainment gap and the degree to which it is associated with parental (and other) characteristics.

### ***Odds Ratios and Educational Attainment Gaps***

Studies show that educational credentials are more important determinants of earnings than the number of completed years of schooling (Belman & Haywood, 1991). For example, the increase in earnings associated with graduating from secondary school is higher than the increase in earnings associated with each increment of schooling from the 9th grade to the 10th grade and the 10th grade to the 11th grade. For this reason, we focus on education credentials, rather than

the number of completed years of schooling. However, earning a credential is a discrete event, making the analysis of educational attainment using credentials less intuitive than the analysis of educational attainment using the number of completed years of schooling. When there are many credentials, the analysis is even less intuitive, especially when the credentials are ordinal (i.e. when graduating from secondary school with a GCEO/GCEA certificate is better than graduating from secondary school with a BSSC certificate or when a Bachelors degree is worth more than an Associates' Degree).

We analyze educational attainment by focusing on relative probabilities, which are called odds. For example, we focus on the probability that a teenager is enrolled in secondary school relative to the probability that a teenager drops out. This is called the odds in favor of enrollment vs. dropping out or, knowing the alternative is dropping out, the odds of enrollment. Black Bermudian males are the primary focus of our study, so we compare educational attainment of all groups to educational attainment of Black Bermudian Males. Thus, the enrollment gap between White Bermudian Males and Black Bermudian males is simply the ratio of the odds of enrollment for the two groups. If they have the same odds of enrollment, this ratio is 1. If White Bermudian males have higher odds of enrollment, this ratio exceeds 1. If Whites have lower odds of enrollment, this ratio is less than 1.

Sometimes it makes sense to arrange educational credentials in ordinal categories, but not always. For example, for young adults a Bachelor's degree is better than a Technical or Associates degrees, which are better than graduating from secondary school with a GCEA certificate, and so on. Moreover, many young adults are in each of these categories. In this case an ordinal arrangement of educational credentials makes sense.

However, most teenagers are enrolled in secondary school, but a few teenagers are enrolled in a Technical or Associates degree program. Still others complete secondary school with a BSC or a GCE0/GCEA certificate and get no more schooling. Teenagers are very unevenly distributed across these four categories. Because of this unevenness, we create 3 categories to analyze educational attainment among teenagers: (1) drop out; (2) enrolled in secondary school, technical school, or a college leading to an Associate's degree; and (3) not enrolled, which means completed secondary school with a certification and not enrolled in any additional educational program. Teenagers are fairly evenly distributed across these three categories, but the categories are not ordinal. Dropping out is least preferred, but not enrolled is no better than being enrolled. So we choose dropping out as the base category, and study the odds of being enrolled (vs. dropping out) and the odds of being not enrolled (vs. dropping out).

Technically we should be using language like the following to describe differences in educational attainment: “the odds that a White Bermudian Male teenager is enrolled in school are 24 percent higher than the corresponding outcome for a BBM teenager.” While this is correct, such language is cumbersome and makes the report less accessible to the non-technical reader. For ease of exposition, we could say “White Bermudian male teenagers are more likely to be enrolled (OR =1.24)<sup>36</sup> than Black Bermudian male teenagers.” While this would help, it does not convey the size of the enrollment gap between White and Black Bermudian male teenagers. To add this size dimension, while maintaining a non-technical narrative, we will say “White Bermudian male teenagers are *more likely* to be enrolled than Black Bermudian male teenagers,” if the odds ratio is greater than one, but less than 2. If the odds ratio is greater than or equal to 2, but less than, we will say the former are *much more likely* than the latter to be enrolled in school.

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<sup>36</sup> Where OR means odds ratio.

Finally, if the odds ratio is greater than or equal to 3, we will say the former are *far more likely* than the latter to be enrolled in school.

Since the young adult educational attainment categories are ordinal, we collapse the categories into a few educational category variables that are meaningful in terms of their earnings and over which young adults are evenly distributed. These categories are: (1) the BSSCPlus or less, (2) GCEO/GCEA certification, (3) Associates and Technical Degree, and (4) Bachelors degree or more. We then focus on the odds of having an educational credential *higher* than a BSSCPlus, GCEA, or Technical/Associates degree. A person who has an educational credential *higher* than a Technical/Associates degree is in the highest educational credential category, a Bachelors degree or more.

To simplify the exposition instead of saying "the odds of having more than a BSSCPlus" we will say "has at least an advanced secondary certificate." Instead of saying "the odds of having more than GCEA certificate" we will say "has a Technical degree or more". Instead of saying "the odds of having more than a Technical or Associates degree" we will say "has a Bachelor's degree or more".

## **Results**

### **Household Structure and Educational Attainment**

It was not surprising that only 1 percent of teenagers (ages 16 to 18) lived independently (see Appendix Table 1, column 1). Almost one third (31 percent) of all teenagers lived with one parent (column 2) and the remaining 70 percent lived with both parents (column 3). Black Bermudian males and females each represented about one third of the teenagers living with a single parent, Other teenagers represented under just under one third (27 percent) of the teenagers living with a single parent, while White Bermudian males represented just 6 percent of

the teenagers living with a single parent. a somewhat higher proportion of teenagers living with two parents, rather than one parent.

On average, teenagers who lived independently had more education and were much less likely to be currently enrolled (45 percent) and slightly older (17.31) than other teenagers. White Bermudian males represented only 3 percent of teenagers who lived independently, while Black Bermudian males (17 percent) and Black Bermudian females (24 percent) represented larger proportions of teenagers who lived independently. More than half of all teenagers (55 percent) who lived independently were Other teenagers.

Marriage among teenagers was rare, no matter what the household structure. Unmarried mothers headed the households of almost all teenagers who lived with a single parent, while women headed just over one third (36 percent) of the households of teenagers who lived with two parents. Almost all (91 percent) of those who headed the households of teenagers who lived with both parents were married. Further, the parents of teenagers who lived with a single parent had less than half the income of the parents of teenagers who lived with two parents, but the household heads had nearly the same level of education. Among the heads of single-parent families, and Whites (11 percent) and parents of other races were underrepresented (15 percent). Similarly, 78 percent of the heads of families of teenagers who lived with single parents were Bermudians; 65 percent of the heads of families of teenagers who lived two parents were Bermudians.

Racial inequality was double-edged among Bermudian teenagers (Appendix Table 1). First, the proportion of Black Bermudian teenagers who lived with two parents (62 percent) was lower than the proportions of White Bermudian males (81 percent) and Other teenagers (76 percent) who did so. Second, among teenagers who lived with single parents (columns 3-6),

Black Bermudian teenagers had household heads that were somewhat younger and had less education than White Bermudian males and Other teenagers. Consequently, the earnings of the household heads of Black Bermudian teenagers were somewhat lower than the earnings of the household heads of White Bermudian male teenagers, but about the same as the earnings of the household heads of Other teenagers.

Interestingly, Black Bermudian teenagers who lived with two parents had household heads that were in some ways more on par with the household heads of other teenagers (columns 7-9). On average, the household heads of Black Bermudian teenagers were only 3 years younger than the household heads of White Bermudian male teenagers and a year younger than the household heads of Other teenagers. However, the household heads of Black Bermudian teenagers had less education and were far less likely to be married than the household heads of White Bermudian males and Other teenagers. Total parental earnings for Black teenagers who lived with two parents were lower than total parental earnings of White Bermudian male teenagers, but about the same as total parental earnings for Other teenagers.

Taken together, these data place Black Bermudian teenagers, particularly males, in a context that may have adverse consequences for their educational attainment. First, Black Bermudian teenagers are more likely than White Bermudian and Other teenagers to live with unmarried mothers in households with *half* the total parental earnings of teenagers (Black and White) who live with two parents. Studies show that marital disruption increases the likelihood of dropping out of school and that income differences account as much as half of the difference between secondary school completions of children in one-parent and two-parent families (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994; Astone & McLanahan, 1991).



As expected (column 4), young adults were much more likely to live independent of their parents (42 percent); just over a fifth of young adults lived with a single parent; and the remaining 37 percent lived with two parents. Young adults who lived independently were also much more likely to be married (40 percent) than those who lived with one (5 percent) or two (17 percent). In other respects, the distribution of young adults by household type was similar to what we found among teenagers.

### **Educational Attainment among Teenagers**

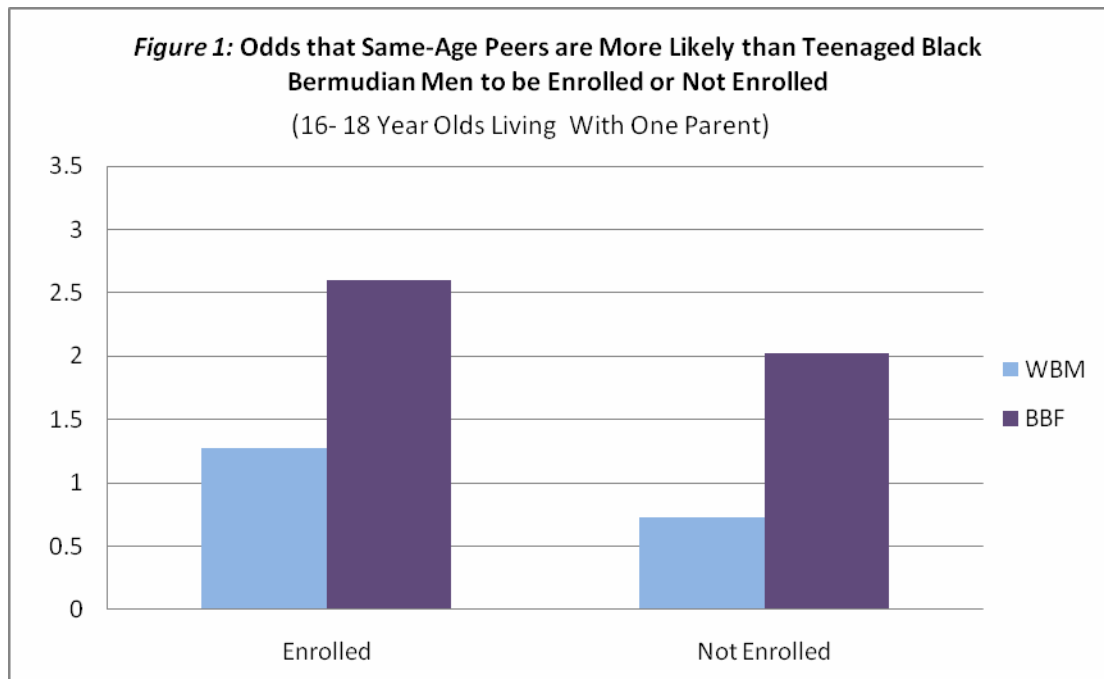
Figure 1 shows estimated educational attainment gaps between teenaged BBMs and WBMs who live with a single parent and between BBM and BBF teenagers who live with a single parent.<sup>37</sup> Although we focus on three demographic groups WBMs, BBMs, and BBFs we have only two bars, because we are comparing the educational attainment of WBMs and the educational attainment of BBFs to the educational attainment of the same group, BBMs. Thus, the light bar shows the enrollment gap between WBMs and BBMs, while the dark bar shows the enrollment gap between BBFs and BBMs. These bars show educational attainment gaps after taking account of all other parent and teenager characteristics in the model (e.g., age, marital status, and parents' earnings and education).

The first light bar shows that WBM teenagers who live with a single parent are more likely to be enrolled than BBM teenagers who live with a single parent. The second light bar shows that WBMs teenagers are less likely than BBM teenagers who live with a single parent to be not-enrolled. Recall that the educational categories for teenagers are not ordinal. Enrolled means enrolled in secondary school, a technical degree, or an Associates' Degree program. Not-enrolled means having a secondary school certificate, but not enrolled in any further educational program. WBM teenagers are probably less likely to be not-enrolled than BBM teenagers,

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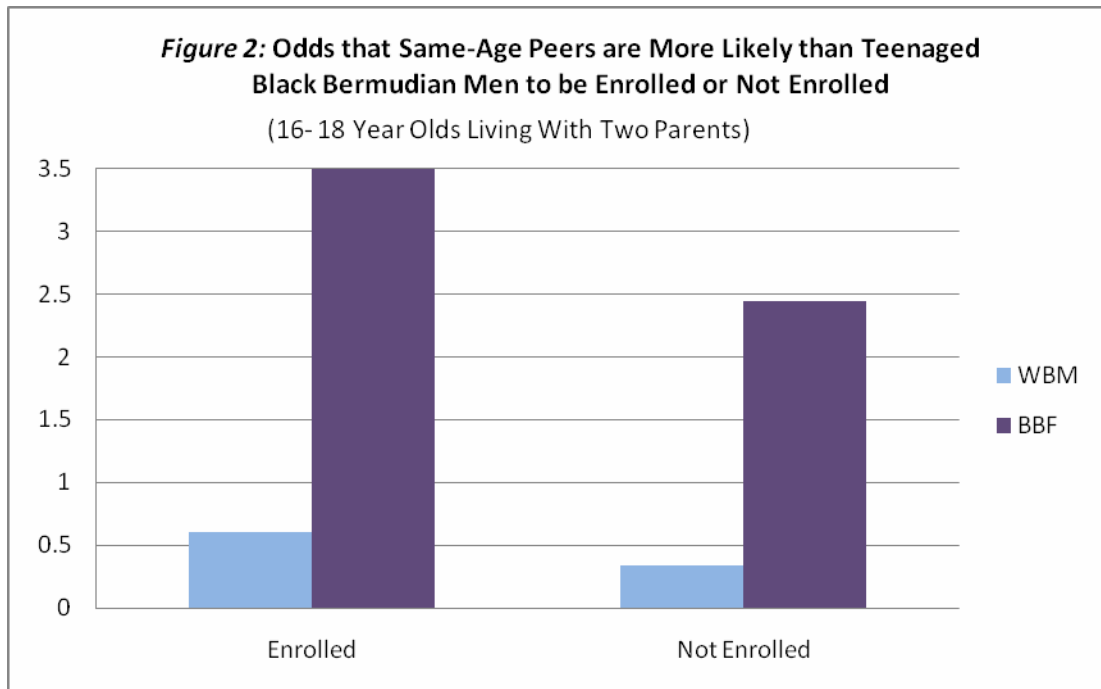
<sup>37</sup>We ignore teenagers who live independently because so few do so.

because WBM teenagers are more likely to continue schooling after completing secondary school.



The dark bars show that BBF-BBM teenagers' educational attainment gaps are substantially larger than WBM-BBM educational attainment teenagers' gaps. While the first dark bar shows that BBF teenagers are much more likely than to be enrolled than BBM teenagers in single parent families. The second dark bars show similar results for the probability that BBF and BBM teenagers are not enrolled.

According to Figure 2 for teenagers in two-parent families, Black Bermudian male teenagers are not at a disadvantaged with respect to White Bermudian male teenagers, but are at a greater disadvantage with respect to Black Bermudian female teenagers. WBM teenagers living with two parents are less likely to be enrolled and not-enrolled than BBM. As compared with teenagers in single-parent families, this may be due to greater parental resources, greater support for education in two-parent families, or both. .



However, BBF teenagers in two-parent families are far more likely to be enrolled and not enrolled than BBM teenagers. Thus, the educational advantages that BBFs enjoy over BBMs are exacerbated in two-parent families.

Before turning to educational attainment gaps for young adults we want to explore which of the parent or teenager characteristics have independent associations with the educational attainment gaps. We do so by examining the results for the parent and teacher characteristics in more closely. Interestingly, it appears that after we take account of the marital status of the household head, which has a large association with teenagers' education, the association between parent's education and teenagers' education is larger than the association between parental income and teenagers' education. This does not mean that parents' marital status is more important than parents' income or education. Instead it means that parents' 'marital status and income are so closely related that it is difficult to sort out their independent associations with their teenagers' educational attainment of their teenagers. The educational attainment of the

household head has a somewhat larger association with teenager's educational attainment, even after taking account of other variables, such as the parents' income and marital status.

The estimated BBM-BBF educational attainment gaps for teenagers who live in two-parent households are larger than the corresponding gaps for teenagers who live with a single parent. To investigate which control variables could be driving the increase in the enrollment gap, we estimated a different form of the model, which allowed us to examine if the BBF-BBM enrollment gap was greater in households in which the household head was married and in households in which the household head was female (not shown).<sup>38</sup> The results are startling. In households headed by unmarried women, BBF's were 14 times more likely to be enrolled than BBMs. Interestingly, the results also suggest that the gap was smaller for BBFs living in two-parent families with married parents and those living in two parent households headed by men. This suggests that BBFs enjoy an educational advantage over BBMs when they live with single parents (mostly mothers), a larger advantage when they live with two parents, but much of the latter result could be associated with those Black Bermudian teenagers who live in two-parent households headed by an unmarried mother.

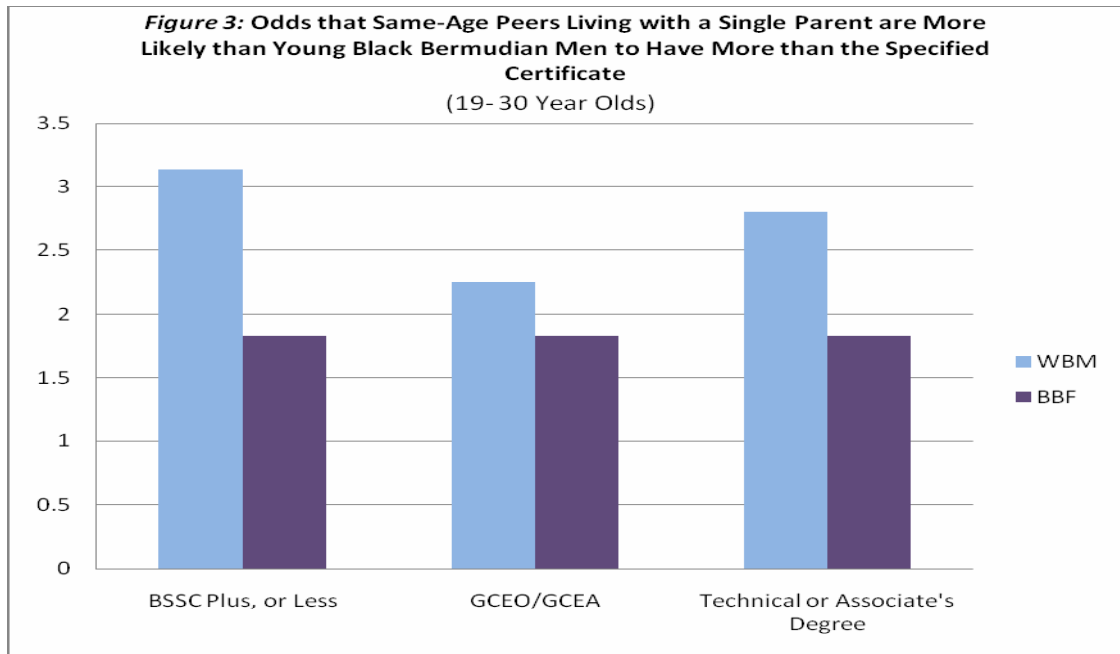
### **Educational Attainment Gaps among Young Adults**

Figure 3 shows estimated educational attainment gaps between young adult WBM and BBMs who live independently, as well as estimated educational attainment gaps between young adult BBFs and BBMs who live independently. Again we focus on three demographic groups WBM, BBMs, and BBFs, but we need only two bars, because we are comparing the educational attainment of WBM and the educational attainment of BBFs to the educational attainment of the same group, BBMs. Thus, the light bars show the educational attainment gaps between WBM

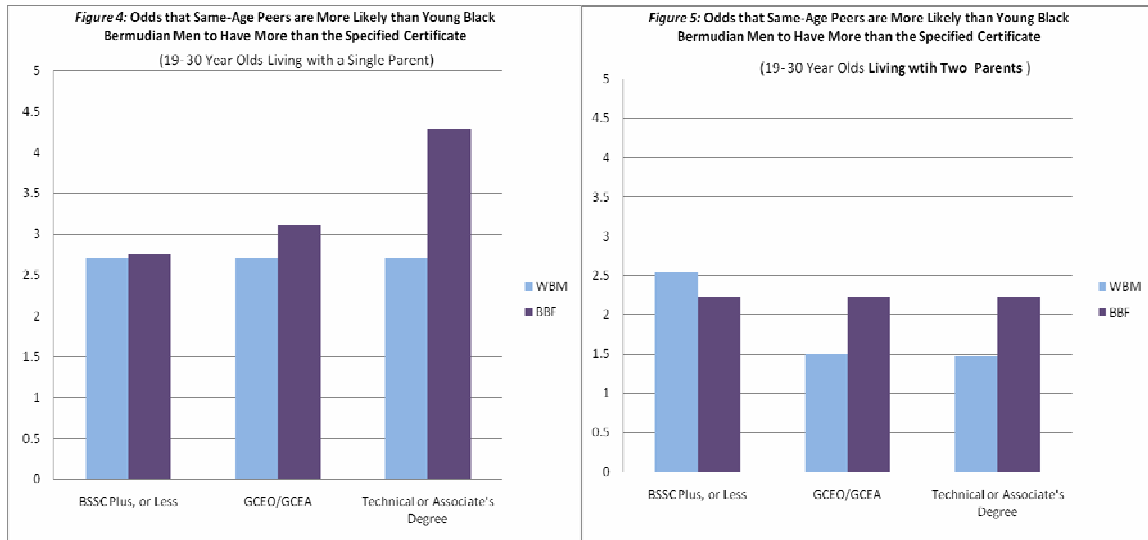
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<sup>38</sup> We did not estimate the interaction with parental income, because it played almost no role in the estimated BBM-BBF enrollment gap.

and BBMs, while the dark bars show the educational attainment gaps between BBFs and BBMs. Again, we illustrate these gaps only for the fully controlled models, which include peer group (WBM, BBF), parent and young-adult characteristics.



The interpretation of these charts is not straightforward. GOL estimates show the association between a characteristic and the odds that a young adult has more than a specified level of education. For example, the first light bar shows that young adult WBMs who live independently are far more likely to have an advanced secondary certificate than young adult BBMs who live independently. The second and third light bars show that the former are also much more likely than the latter to have a technical degree or more and a Bachelor's degree or more. By contrast, the dark bars show that educational attainment gaps between BBFs and BBMs who live independently do not increase with the level of educational attainment. The former are more likely than the latter to have to an advanced secondary certificate, a technical degree or more, and a Bachelor's degree or more.



The light bars in figure 4 (on the left) show that for young adults who live with a single parent, WBM-BBM educational attainment gaps also remain constant as educational attainment increases. Thus, young adult WBMs who live with a single parent are much more likely than BBMs to an advanced secondary certificate, a technical degree or more, and a Bachelor's degree or more. However, the dark bars show that educational attainment gaps between young adult BBFs and BBMs living with a single parent families increase with educational attainment. The former are much more likely than the latter to have an advanced secondary certificate, far more likely to have a technical degree or more, and far (more than four times) more likely to have a Bachelor's degree or more.

Figure 5 on the right, shows that among young adults who live with two parents the educational attainment gaps are less severe, but still large. WBMs who live with two parents are much more likely than BBMs to an advanced secondary certificate. The former are more likely than the latter to have either a technical degree or more, or a Bachelor's degree or more. Among young adults who live with two parents BBF-BBM educational attainment gaps are the same for

all three educational attainment groups. Thus, BBFs are much more likely than BBMs to have an advanced secondary certificate, a technical degree or more, and a Bachelor's degree or more.

To explore the BBM-BBF college gap, which was the largest, at least among young adults living with a single parent, we estimated separate models for BBMs and BBFs. We found educational attainment of BBFs to be highly associated with their marital status and the gender of the household head. Single BBFs were much more likely than married BBFs to have a bachelor's degree or more. In addition, BBFs who lived with a male household head were less likely than BBFs who lived with a female household head to have a bachelor's degree or more. By contrast, neither the marital status of young Black Bermudian males nor the gender of the household head with whom he lived were associated with the likelihood that Black Bermudian males had a bachelor's degree or more (results not shown).

## **Discussion**

Educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and their same age peers vary by age, gender, and household type. Compared with teenagers in single parent households, educational attainment advantage White Bermudian male teenagers enjoy over Black Bermudian male teenagers in two parent households is smaller (or reversed). This is true for the enrollment and non-enrollment gaps between White Bermudian and Black Bermudian male teenagers and the education certification gaps between White Bermudian and Black Bermudian male young adults. It is difficult to account for the lower (or reversed) racial educational attainment gaps in two parent families, because our estimates take account of a variety of ways in which these household types differ, including parents' earnings, marital status, and education.

Educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian females and Black Bermudian males also differ by household type, but not in an orderly or predictable way. Black Bermudian

female teenagers in single parent families are much more likely to be enrolled and to have completed secondary school with a certification and not enrolled in any additional educational program than Black Bermudian male teenagers in single parent families. For Black Bermudian teenagers in two parent families, the gender gaps in enrollment and secondary school completion are even larger; however, the larger gap could be due to daughters in two parent families headed by unmarried mothers.

Young adult Black Bermudian females who live independently are more likely than Black Bermudian males who live independently to have an advanced secondary certificate, a technical degree or more, and a Bachelor's degree or more. The educational attainment gaps between young adult Black Bermudian females and Black Bermudian males living with a single parent increase with educational attainment. The former are much more likely than the latter to have an advanced secondary certificate, far more likely to have a technical degree or more, and far--more than four times--more likely to have a Bachelor's degree or more. Among young adults who live with two parents the gender gaps are the same for all levels educational attainment.

Finally, household structure is differentially associated with educational attainment in two other interesting ways. Black Bermudian females are more likely to obtain higher educational credentials if they are single or live in households headed by their mothers. By contrast, neither sons' marital status, nor the gender of the parent with whom they live is associated with the educational attainment of Black Bermudian males.



## Appendix to Chapter Three

**Appendix Table 1: Summary Statistics of Teenagers**

Proportions

	Indep	Single Parent	Two Parents	Living Independently			Living with a Single Parent			Living with Two Parents		
				BBM & BBF	WBM	OT	BBM & BBF	WBM	OT	BBM & BBF	WBM	OT
	All Teenagers			BBM & BBF	WBM	OT	BBM & BBF	WBM	OT	BBM & BBF	WBM	OT
Ed. Attainment Category (1-11)*	4.552	3.052	3.635	4.417	8.000	4.438	3.009	3.128	3.138	3.464	3.841	3.787
Condensed Ed. Attainment Category (1-4)**	1.379	1.166	1.282	1.417	2.000	1.313	1.138	1.154	1.236	1.199	1.400	1.350
Enrolled	0.448	0.720	0.833	0.417	1.000	0.438	0.700	0.744	0.764	0.792	0.812	0.890
Black Bermudian Male	0.172	0.321	0.245	0.417	0.000	0.000	0.481	0.000	0.000	0.499	0.000	0.000
White Bermudian Male	0.034	0.061	0.119	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
Black Bermudian Female	0.241	0.346	0.247	0.583	0.000	0.000	0.519	0.000	0.000	0.501	0.000	0.000
Other Teens	0.552	0.271	0.385	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.994	0.000	0.000	0.991
Age	17.310	16.969	16.945	17.167	17.000	17.438	16.981	17.026	16.925	16.980	17.006	16.881
Teen is single	0.966	1.000	0.998	1.000	1.000	0.938	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.994	0.998
Parent 1 is married		0.095	0.912				0.099	0.103	0.086	0.872	0.982	0.941
Total Parental Income		\$32,800	\$100,000	0.0	0.0	0.0	\$32,800	\$37,600	\$32,000	\$98,400	\$114,400	\$98,400
Age of Parent 1		45.609	46.971				45.181	50.205	45.626	46.343	48.559	47.279
Parent 1 is a Male		0.114	0.641				0.110	0.179	0.109	0.611	0.694	0.661
Parent 1 is White		0.150	0.347				0.002	0.923	0.339	0.011	0.953	0.586
Parent 1 is "Other" Race		0.117	0.100				0.042	0.026	0.322	0.043	0.047	0.187
Parent 1 is Bermudian		0.778	0.652				0.923	0.513	0.483	0.859	0.706	0.375
Parent 1's Ed. Attainment Category (1-11)		5.770	5.976				5.474	7.231	6.167	5.566	7.053	6.166
Difference Between Parent 1 and Parent 2's Ed. Attainment Category			0.001							0.114	-0.259	-0.063
Total	29	639	1427	12	1	16	426	39	174	702	170	555

\*Ed. Attainment Categories: (1) No degree; (2) RSA; (3) BSSC GPA <2; (4) BSSC GPA 2-, <3; (5) BSSC GPA 3+; (6) GCEO; (7) GCEA; (8) technical degree (or certificate); (9) associate's degree; (10) bachelor's degree; (11) more than a bachelor's degree

\*\*Condensed Ed. Attainment Categories: (1) No or Low Education, (did not complete secondary school, or highest degree is RSA, or one of the three BSSC options); (2) GCEO/GCEA (is highest degree); (3) Technical or Associate's Degree (is highest degree); and (4) Bachelor's Degree or more (is highest degree).

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**Appendix Table 2: Summary Statistics of Young Adults**

Proportions

	Single			Two			Living Independently			Living with a Single Parent			Living with Two Parents		
	Indep	Parent	Parents	Living Independently			Living with a Single Parent			Living with Two Parents					
	All Young Adults			BBM & BBF	WBM	OYA	BBM & BBF	WBM	OYA	BBM & BBF	WBM	OYA			
Ed. Attainment Category (1-11)*	7.936	6.356	7.154	6.771	7.770	8.598	5.989	6.145	7.176	6.675	7.483	7.670			
Condensed Ed. Attainment Category (1-4)**	2.613	1.983	2.237	2.130	2.564	2.885	1.848	1.841	2.291	2.050	2.323	2.445			
Enrolled	0.075	0.223	0.307	0.101	0.099	0.058	0.215	0.275	0.235	0.299	0.430	0.296			
Black Bermudian Male	0.148	0.317	0.259	0.442	0.000	0.000	0.478	0	0.000	0.513	0	0.000			
White Bermudian Male	0.061	0.035	0.074	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000	1	0.000	0.000	1	0.000			
Black Bermudian Female	0.187	0.345	0.246	0.558	0.000	0.000	0.522	0	0.000	0.487	0	0.000			
Other Young Adults	0.601	0.303	0.418	0.000	0.000	0.995	0.000	0.000	0.997	0.000	0.000	0.991			
Age	26.848	24.083	24.065	26.641	26.852	26.963	23.924	23.203	24.528	23.892	22.989	24.461			
Young Adult is Single	0.611	0.952	0.828	0.705	0.527	0.568	23.924	0.986	0.928	0.905	0.966	0.711			
Parent 1 is married		0.102	0.872				0.085	0.130	0.135	0.855	0.951	0.877			
Total Parental Income		\$28,000	\$85,600				\$28,000	\$32,800	\$28,800	\$85,600	\$96,800	\$84,000			
Age of Parent 1		49.972	48.605				51.061	51.565	47.421	50.209	52.646	45.972			
Parent 1 is a Male		0.205	0.672				0.133	0.174	0.363	0.619	0.673	0.736			
Parent 1 is White		0.160	0.306				0.002	0.942	0.413	0.011	0.947	0.546			
Parent 1 is "Other" Race		0.091	0.112				0.033	0.043	0.224	0.042	0.027	0.211			
Parent 1 is Bermudian		0.731	0.623				0.912	0.594	0.354	0.849	0.544	0.367			
Parent 1's Ed. Attainment Category (1-11)		5.161	5.802				4.670	5.957	6.140	5.060	6.156	6.628			
Difference Between Parent 1 and Parent 2's Ed. Attainment Category			0.068							0.071	-0.091	0.092			
Total	3965	2000	3535	1327	243	2395	1323	69	608	1783	263	1489			

\*Ed. Attainment Categories: (1) No degree; (2) RSA; (3) BSSC GPA <2; (4) BSSC GPA 2-, <3; (5) BSSC GPA 3+; (6) GCEO; (7) GCEA; (8) technical degree (or certificate); (9) associate's degree; (10) bachelor's degree; (11) more than a bachelor's degree

\*\*Condensed Ed. Attainment Categories: (1) No or Low Education, (did not complete secondary school, or highest degree is RSA, or one of the three BSSC options); (2) GCEO/GCEA (is highest degree); (3) Technical or Associate's Degree (is highest degree); and (4) Bachelor's Degree or more (is highest degree).

**Appendix Table 3: Multinomial Logit Regression of Teenagers' Educational Attainment by Household Structure**

Educational Status*	Living with a Single Parent		Living with Two Parents	
	Enrolled	Finished with School	Enrolled	Finished with School
White Bermudian Males	0.953 (0.832)	0.715 (0.724)	0.601 (0.384)	0.339 (0.257)
Black Bermudian Females	2.453 (0.890)	2.217 (0.884)	3.832 (1.420)	2.447 (1.009)
White Bermudian Females	1.448 (1.395)	0.492 (0.575)	1.383e+09 (0.000)	6.061e+08 (3.300e+08)
Other Young Adults	1.026 (0.495)	0.708 (0.400)	2.653 (1.225)	1.231 (0.651)
Age	9.79 (103.37)	78602696.78 (9.871e+08)	8929.38 (83038.68)	3884599.76 (48312238.59)
Age Squared	0.913 (0.283)	0.593 (0.218)	0.753 (0.206)	0.664 (0.241)
Teen is married	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Parent 1 is Married	0.639 (0.282)	0.670 (0.349)	2.880 (0.959)	2.527 (1.038)
Parent 1's Income	1.076 (0.048)	1.051 (0.052)		
Parent 1's Age	1.042 (0.018)	1.007 (0.020)	1.054 (0.020)	1.032 (0.022)
Parent 1 is Male	0.913 (0.401)	1.156 (0.566)	0.971 (0.271)	1.398 (0.453)
Parent 1 is White	0.871 (0.610)	1.079 (0.873)	1.222 (0.714)	1.575 (1.078)
Parent 1 is "Other" Race	1.253 (0.671)	1.423 (0.862)	0.658 (0.332)	1.228 (0.697)
Parent 1 is Bermudian	0.583 (0.250)	0.713 (0.356)	0.746 (0.258)	1.532 (0.624)
Parent 1's Ed. Attainment Category	1.217 (0.052)	1.115 (0.052)	1.259 (0.057)	1.115 (0.057)
Parent 1's Income			1.003 (0.026)	1.005 (0.029)
Difference Between Parent 1 and Parent 2's Ed. Attain. Categ.			0.932 (0.036)	1.009 (0.044)
Observations	639	639	1427	1427
chi-square test	0	0	0	0
Log Lik	-432.6	-432.6	-629.0	-629.0

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df_m	28	28	32	32
Lik Ratio	126.2	126.2	325.9	325.9

*Note:* Standard errors are in parentheses.

\*Base educational category is "Dropped Out."

**Appendix Table 4: Generalized Ordered Logit Regression of Young Adults' Likelihood of Having Attained More than a Specified Level Of Education**

Variables	Odds Ratios		
	BSSC Plus, or Less	GCEO/GCEA	Technical or Associate's Degree
White Bermudian Males	3.138 (0.516)	2.251 (0.348)	2.799 (0.465)
Black Bermudian Females	1.833 (0.193)	1.833 (0.193)	1.833 (0.193)
White Non-Bermudian Males	6.943 (0.939)	5.306 (0.642)	5.724 (0.676)
Black Non-Bermudian Males	1.174 (0.212)	1.174 (0.212)	1.174 (0.212)
Black Non-Bermudian Females	2.813 (0.573)	2.347 (0.456)	1.562 (0.363)
White Bermudian Females	4.101 (0.595)	4.101 (0.595)	4.101 (0.595)
White Non-Bermudian Females	9.965 (1.463)	6.459 (0.804)	6.206 (0.738)
Other Bermudian Males	1.463 (0.299)	1.463 (0.299)	1.463 (0.299)
Other Bermudian Females	2.304 (0.436)	2.304 (0.436)	2.304 (0.436)
Other Non-Bermudian Males	2.934 (0.491)	2.934 (0.491)	2.934 (0.491)
Other Non-Bermudian Females	6.816 (1.583)	3.942 (0.754)	4.179 (0.784)
Age	2.023 (0.488)	3.675 (0.908)	7.448 (2.464)
Age Squared	0.989 (0.005)	0.978 (0.005)	0.966 (0.006)
Young Adult is Single	1.042 (0.066)	1.042 (0.066)	1.042 (0.066)
Observations	3965	3965	3965
chi-square test	0	0	0
Log Lik	-4786	-4786	-4786
df_m	28	28	28
Lik Ratio	834.4	834.4	834.4

*Note:* Black Bermudian Male is the omitted demographic group.

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Standard errors are in parentheses.

**Appendix Table 5: Generalized Ordered Logit Regression of Young Adults' Likelihood of Having Attained More than a Specified Level Of Education (Young Adults Living with a Single Parent)**  
Odds Ratios

Variables	BSSC Plus, or less	GCEO/GCEA	Technical or Associate's Degree
White Bermudian Males	2.709 (0.983)	2.709 (0.983)	2.709 (0.983)
Black Bermudian Females	2.761 (0.339)	3.112 (0.399)	4.291 (0.746)
White Non-Bermudian Males	5.325 (1.806)	5.325 (1.806)	5.325 (1.806)
Black Non-Bermudian Males	1.478 (0.357)	1.478 (0.357)	1.478 (0.357)
Black Non-Bermudian Females	2.696 (0.698)	2.696 (0.698)	2.696 (0.698)
White Bermudian Females	5.178 (1.860)	5.178 (1.860)	5.178 (1.860)
White Non-Bermudian Females	12.908 (5.055)	12.908 (5.055)	12.908 (5.055)
Other Bermudian Males	1.677 (0.516)	1.677 (0.516)	1.677 (0.516)
Other Bermudian Females	2.712 (0.842)	2.712 (0.842)	2.712 (0.842)
Other Non-Bermudian Males	3.052 (1.003)	3.052 (1.003)	3.052 (1.003)
Other Non-Bermudian Females	3.443 (1.622)	3.443 (1.622)	3.443 (1.622)
Age	2.886 (0.669)	6.867 (1.731)	19.876 (8.336)
Age Squared	0.981 (0.005)	0.965 (0.005)	0.946 (0.008)
Young Adult is Single	0.859 (0.201)	1.303 (0.304)	1.943 (0.621)
Parent 1 is Married	1.016 (0.157)	1.016 (0.157)	1.016 (0.157)
Parent 1's Income	1.021 (0.015)	1.003 (0.015)	1.058 (0.019)
Parent 1's Age	1.019 (0.005)	1.018 (0.005)	1.038 (0.007)
Parent 1 is a Male	1.146 (0.144)	1.146 (0.144)	1.146 (0.144)
Parent 1 is White	0.877 (0.264)	0.507 (0.152)	0.766 (0.242)

### Appendix to Chapter Three

Parent 1 is "Other" Race	0.839 (0.179)	0.839 (0.179)	0.839 (0.179)
Parent 1 is Bermudian	0.816 (0.113)	0.816 (0.113)	0.816 (0.113)
Parent 1's Ed. Attainment Category (1-4)	1.199 (0.016)	1.199 (0.016)	1.199 (0.016)
Observations	2000	2000	2000
chi-square test	0	0	0
Log Lik	-2050	-2050	-2050
df_m	36	36	36
Lik Ratio	726.2	726.2	726.2

*Note:* Black Bermudian Male is the omitted demographic group.

Standard errors are in parentheses.

**Table 6: Generalized Ordered Logit Regression of Young Adults' Likelihood of Having More than a Specified Level of Education (Young Adults Living with Two Parents)**

Variables	Odds Ratios		
	BSSC Plus, or Less	GCEO/GCEA	Technical or Associate's Degree
White Bermudian Males	2.545 (0.575)	1.504 (0.332)	1.473 (0.360)
Black Bermudian Females	2.226 (0.213)	2.226 (0.213)	2.226 (0.213)
White Non-Bermudian Males	2.205 (0.494)	2.205 (0.494)	2.205 (0.494)
Black Non-Bermudian Males	0.782 (0.169)	0.782 (0.169)	0.782 (0.169)
Black Non-Bermudian Females	1.997 (0.387)	1.997 (0.387)	1.997 (0.387)
White Bermudian Females	4.689 (1.094)	3.169 (0.679)	5.367 (1.199)
White Non-Bermudian Females	5.094 (1.204)	2.868 (0.619)	2.470 (0.551)
Other Bermudian Males	1.388 (0.308)	1.388 (0.308)	1.388 (0.308)
Other Bermudian Females	1.841 (0.363)	1.841 (0.363)	1.841 (0.363)
Other Non-Bermudian Males	1.697 (0.462)	1.697 (0.462)	1.697 (0.462)
Other Non-Bermudian Females	2.964 (0.635)	2.964 (0.635)	2.964 (0.635)
Age	2.510 (0.455)	6.311 (1.167)	26.301 (7.138)
Age Squared	0.984 (0.004)	0.968 (0.004)	0.942 (0.005)
Young Adult is Single	1.536 (0.171)	1.536 (0.171)	1.536 (0.171)
Parent 1's Income	1.006 (0.007)	1.002 (0.007)	1.022 (0.008)
Parent 1 is Married	1.775 (0.192)	1.775 (0.192)	1.775 (0.192)
Parent 1's Age	1.034 (0.004)	1.024 (0.004)	1.039 (0.005)
Parent 1 is a Male	0.831 (0.063)	0.831 (0.063)	0.831 (0.063)
Parent 1 is White	0.979 (0.165)	0.979 (0.165)	0.979 (0.165)



Appendix to Chapter Three

Parent 1 is "Other" Race	0.933 (0.136)	0.933 (0.136)	0.933 (0.136)
Parent 1 is Bermudian	0.843 (0.070)	0.843 (0.070)	0.843 (0.070)
Parent 1's Ed. Attainment Category	1.345 (0.018)	1.246 (0.015)	1.311 (0.021)
Difference between Parent 1's Ed. Attainment Category and Ed. Attainment Category of Parent 2	0.816	0.855	0.843
Observations	3535	3535	3535
df_m	41	41	41
chi-square test	0	0	0
Lik Ratio	1790	1790	1790
Log Lik	-3813	-3813	-3813

*Note:* Black Bermudian Male is the omitted demographic group.

Standard errors are in parentheses.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: The Qualitative Study: *We're Graduating, What Next? The Educational and Career Aspirations of Black Bermudian Adolescent Males***

**By Monique Jethwani-Keyser**

Chapter 1 reveals that Black Bermudian males have higher unemployment rates, lower earnings, and lower employment rates in high-paying industries than White Bermudian males. Chapter 2 demonstrates that when compared with their same age peers, Black Bermudian male teenagers are less likely to be enrolled in school and Black Bermudian male young adults have less educational attainment than both Black Bermudian females and White Bermudian males. Black Bermudian females experience the highest returns for education (compared to both White and Black Bermudian males) and are more likely than Black Bermudian males to be employed in higher paying industries. Family structure and parents' education are associated with some of these enrollment and educational attainment differences. For example, Black Bermudian children are less likely than White Bermudian children to be raised in married families, and marital status is positively associated with enrollment among teenagers and educational attainment among young adults. Moreover, among Black children in single-parent families, teenage girls have higher enrollment than teenage boys and young-adult females attain more education than young-adult males, especially if they are unmarried. Since White, married, and more-educated families are more likely to send their children to private schools, some of the racial differences in educational attainment could be associated with greater private school attendance among White Bermudian males. But differences in private school attendance are unlikely to explain the gender differences in high school and college enrollment and educational attainment among Black Bermudian youth and young adults. To explain this finding, we must look within families and schools. Looking within families and schools may help us understand

why the employment outcomes of Black Bermudian males are so different from those of their same-age peers.

This chapter looks within families and schools through the lens provided by Black Bermudian boys in their senior year of public secondary school. Structured one-on-one interviews explored students' educational and professional goals and identified their specific plans for the following year. Interviews also explored the messages that these boys receive at home and in school regarding their goals for the future.

## **Methods**

### **Research Setting**

In a brief visit to Bermuda in October 2008, the Minister of Education encouraged us to work with high school students at one of the two public high schools. The selected high school serves approximately 650 students, ages 12-18. The principal of the school was very accommodating and offered access to the school and to the students for this study.

### **Participants**

Students in S4 (senior year) were selected for this study so that they could definitively speak about their plans after high school and reflect upon why they have the educational and employment aspirations that they do. Once on site in Bermuda, we learned that more than 50% of Black Males leave the public high schools prior to completion<sup>39</sup>. The graduating class of 2009 at our selected research site started with 111 Black Males in S1 and as of May 2009, there were 52 remaining in this school<sup>40</sup>. Consequently, the sample for this study consists of Black Males that are on track to graduate from high school.

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<sup>39</sup> Ministry of Education, Department of Education, Curriculum and Assessment 2008-2009 Graduation data report results: <http://www.moed.bm/resources/Curriculum%20Library/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> Of the 54 males that left the high school, 55.5% pursued their GED, 22.2% went overseas, 14.8% went to the Technical high school, and 7.4% were either home schooled or transferred to a private high school.

Students range in age from 17-19 (m=18). The overwhelming majority of the students report living with their mothers (83.3%), 27.8% live with their fathers, and 27.8% live with their grandmothers. One third of the sample (33.3%) lives only with their mothers and one sixth of the sample (16.6%) lives with both their mothers and their fathers<sup>41</sup>. All students know the type of work their mothers do and 88.9% of students are aware of the type of work their fathers do. When asked about their parents' education, 83.3% are aware of their mother's educational attainment and 61.1% of the students are able to report on how far their fathers went in school. Students' reports about their parents' education and employment are consistent with the findings reported in chapters 1 and 3. According to these student reports, mothers were more likely to attend college than fathers with 27.8% of the mothers in our sample achieving some college degree (associates, bachelors or masters) with another 16.7% attending some college classes. None of the students report that their fathers received a college degree although 33.3% report that their fathers attended some college classes. More females worked in banks or as accountants (33.3% vs. 5.6%) and in the health or education industries (22.2% vs. 0%). More fathers were involved in the trade occupations (38.9% vs. 0%)<sup>42</sup>.

## **Procedures**

In this study, a cross-sectional design was used to examine the professional and educational aspirations of Black male high school students. All Black male students in their final year of high school were invited to participate in the study (n=52). A presentation was made to these students in the auditorium where they were informed of the study and had the opportunity to voice any questions or concerns. The purpose of the study was also explained in presentations to the school administration at the start of the study. A sealed box was left in the Main office so

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<sup>41</sup> Some fathers had passed away and some live overseas.

<sup>42</sup> Trade industries include jobs as a mason, mechanic, electrician, construction worker, carpenter, etc.

that students could return consent forms if they were interested in participating. Students voluntarily returned assent forms and those under 18 years old also submitted parental consent forms (n=18, mean age=18).

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews explored students' educational and professional goals and specific plans for next year and the messages that they receive at home and in school regarding these plans (see Appendix A for the student interview protocol). The interview protocol was used as a guide but specific areas of exploration and probing varied based on the unique interests of each student. Each interview was conducted and audio taped by the lead qualitative researcher and took approximately 45 minutes. Interviews took place in a pre-determined private location at the school to ensure confidentiality. All interviews were conducted during student's free periods or elective classes, with the teacher's permission. Each student was given a pen and a highlighter for their time. Boys frequently said that they appreciated the opportunity to participate in the interview and express themselves. Several students also mentioned that they enjoyed practicing their interview skills. When asked how he felt during the interview, David, age 18, states, "*It's cool, I like little interviews. It gets me ready for the work world for when I have to do different interviews.*"<sup>43</sup> After each interview, initial impressions and thoughts about the interview were audio taped along with a notation about physical characteristics and the students' body language during the interview. These notes helped the principle researcher recall the interview and its interpersonal dynamics months later when analyzing the data.

## **Analyses**

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<sup>43</sup> Each participant was given a pseudonym to protect confidentiality. Throughout the report, italics indicate that one of the 18 participants is speaking and brackets indicate that the interviewer is speaking. These illustrative quotes are drawn from the interview texts and stay true to the language of both the participants and the interviewer.

Coding of the qualitative data was nested in an interpretive approach, which aims to “understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” (Schwandt, 1988, p.221). Therefore, data analysis relied upon the qualitative methodology of open coding; a strategy that divides the data into discrete units of analysis reflective of the major themes that are embedded in the words of study participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Verbatim transcripts of the interviews (amounting to more than 360 transcribed pages) were read multiple times and coded with Atlas ti software. Overlapping themes and patterns that identified student aspirations and the messages they receive at home and in school were identified across transcripts. Networks were created to summarize, consolidate and organize the central themes that were described by at least 30% of the participants. Themes are presented in this report with illustrative quotes drawn from the interview texts, staying true to the language of both the participants and the interviewer<sup>44</sup>.

## **Results**

The outline of this presentation of results is as follows. Part one of the results presents the educational aspirations of Black Bermudian males in this study (Graduation from high school is likely to result in some participation in college; Bermuda College provides a stepping stone for entry into colleges overseas; College overseas: The ultimate aspiration). Part two presents some of the obstacles between these high school seniors and their educational goals (Maturity; What next?). In part three, their employment aspirations are presented (Working with our hands; Being my own boss and having a flexible schedule). Part four presents some of the limitations to boys’ professional aspirations (Gender and exposure). Part five presents the advice that boys receive from their families (Mom: High Expectations; Dad: Go to college, preferably overseas,

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<sup>44</sup> Participants have been given pseudonyms to protect confidentiality.

and stay out of trouble; Extended Family: Stay focused on school). Finally, part six presents the school advice and guidance themes ('Stick with it' and don't give up; Work and try hard and my teachers will like me; Real life college and career tips make a difference but this advice is too late).

### **Educational Aspirations**

Black Bermudian male high school seniors in this study report that they are likely to attend some college, either at Bermuda College or overseas, or both. Boys explain that Bermuda College offers a free associate's degree and provides a stepping stone for entry into colleges overseas, which is the ultimate educational aspiration.

#### ***Graduation from high school is likely to result in some participation in college***

All 18 of our study participants were high school seniors in one of the two Bermudian public high schools and intended to graduate in June, 2009. Considering the reality that over 50% of the Black males in the graduating class already left the school, finishing high school has been the foremost aspiration for these boys. Now, all but one student plans to attend college in Bermuda, overseas, or both.

#### ***Bermuda College provides a stepping stone for entry into colleges overseas***

Eleven out of the eighteen participants are definitively planning to attend Bermuda College in the upcoming academic year (2009-2010). Three additional students plan to attend classes at Bermuda College this year or next year if they do not get in to the international colleges to which they applied, and/or if they do not receive scholarships<sup>45</sup>. Although students generally prefer to attend college overseas in the US, England or Canada, most will first attend

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<sup>45</sup> Of the remaining four students, one has been accepted to attend college in Canada for power engineering through a government scholarship and will be attending in the fall; one student plans to work for a year before he goes to college overseas; one student plans to take AP courses at a private high school for one year to prepare for college overseas; and one student plans to attend EMT training and will most likely not attend college.

Bermuda College<sup>46</sup> to take entry level college classes, to raise their grades and build their resumes, to take classes in their fields of interest, to prepare their overseas college applications and find the financing, and/or to simply take the time to figure out what they really want to do. Bermuda College recently started offering free tuition for Bermudians in the fall semester of 2008, making it a realistic option for most students.

Kyle, age 17, is considering the field of marine biology and the possibility of taking over his father's restaurant business. Both of his parents attended college in Bermuda and he explains that Bermuda College will allow him to take the preparatory classes he needs, for free<sup>47</sup>.

*Next year I plan to go to Bermuda College just to get my entry level college classes, like basic English and Math, so when I travel overseas, I won't have to do those basic courses, because here it's free, and if I don't have to spend the next year doing those courses, it's just beneficial to me. [Right, so you'll get the basic courses at Bermuda College, and then you're going to apply to go to school overseas?] Yes, I've applied already. It just seems to get a long response, because I'm outside the U.S. Yeah, that's about it. [So you applied for this year - for 2009?] Yes. [But even if you get in, you'll postpone for a year?] Yeah. Yup.*

Kyle is taking advantage of the opportunity to save some money and perhaps make himself more eligible for colleges overseas by taking the basic English and math classes that he needs to compete with other high school graduates. Charles, age 18, is interested in playing professional basketball and is thinking of going to Bermuda College so that he can take preparatory classes

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<sup>46</sup> Bermuda College is free and offers a two year associates degree and technical certificates. According to the participants in this study, applicants to Bermuda College take a reading and math exam in order to be placed in the appropriate classes at the College but Bermuda College accepts all students and one can apply as late as the summer before entry.

<sup>47</sup> Throughout this report, brackets indicate that the interviewer is speaking. An ellipses (three dots) is used to indicate that a portion of the text has been omitted.



and bring up his GPA so that he will be in a better position to be recruited by colleges overseas.

He explains,

*Well, right now I'm just trying to get into college, so number one, first thing I have to do is bring my GPA up a little bit higher, because I'm competing with a lot of players, so get it as high as I can before I go away and do some more visits. I'm probably going to go up to Bermuda College and do a year up there. And then after that, I should be in line with getting into a college easily because I'm participating in international games with the Bermuda National team, and I'm going to the IGM Academy at the end of, well for the month of August. And that's like the most recognized program in America when it comes to basketball. So there's a strong chance I could get something like that, but if not, I'll just do community college for a year and then, since I'm part-time, get recruited and stuff to get into college.*

Will, age 18, is a cricket player for the National team and is interested in the field of physiotherapy. He also expects to go to Bermuda College to take preparatory courses to prepare him for entry into college and this field.

*I'm planning on going to Bermuda college for two years, so I can get my Associate's Degree in science, so then I can go abroad - hopefully England - and study physiotherapy.*

Some students plan to pursue trade certificates at Bermuda College before they attend college overseas. For example, Irving, age 17, is interested in owning his own business as a computer technician or to take over his father's carpentry business. He expects Bermuda College to prepare him for each of these options.

*I'm gonna go to Bermuda College first and do the carpentry and the IT courses and then eventually go away to either England or Canada.*

In addition to taking preparatory classes and exploring classes in their fields of interest, several students also plan to use the time that they are at Bermuda College to secure the funding they need to attend college overseas. For example, Anthony, age 19, is interested in film editing and has applied to some schools in New York. However, he also needs a scholarship to attend this year so he expects to have to take courses at Bermuda College until he can find the means of going overseas. He states,

*That would be a good thing for me to get, a nice scholarship, but other than that, I really don't know. [So if that doesn't happen, what would you do?] I'd probably work for a year. I will work for a year and save up some money so that I can help my mother pay for college. [Okay. So you wouldn't go to Bermuda College?] I pro-, yea, I would go, I would go Bermuda College, cause then you could go to Bermuda College and work at the same time.*

Courses, scholarships, applications; these are all things that students need time to sort through. Bermuda College offers students the time, and the coursework, to figure out what it is that they really want to do next. Armel, age 18, is uncertain about his career path. He talks about being a professional football player, a graphic designer, or even a physical education teacher. He visited Bermuda College and was informed that they could offer scholarship advice so he has decided that he will focus on going to Bermuda College where he can explore his career and overseas college options.

*I just think mostly I'm just going straight to Bermuda College for now and that's what I'm focusing on and then when I finish the first year, the second year I want to like focus*

*more on which college I want to go to away. Unless I, um, could get a scholarship and finish the first year and do university three years away... Like I wanted to just be a straight graphic designer, but when I go to Bermuda College I'm gonna see what else they offer there and see if I could find any other colleges away too.*

In summary, Bermuda College offers students time to figure out what they want to do, prepare college applications, identify scholarships, raise their grades, improve their sport, take preparatory classes, and achieve trades certificates, all for free. While pursuing their Associate's degree, they have two years to prepare, raise money, and do whatever they need to do to get a Bachelor's Degree overseas. They do not have the option of getting a Bachelor's Degree on the island but are aware that Bermuda College has agreements with several schools overseas confirming their belief that they will be able to determine their next steps while at Bermuda College. Students overwhelmingly view Bermuda College as a stepping stone to their ultimate aspiration of attending colleges overseas.

***College overseas: The ultimate aspiration***

The students express a preference for going to college overseas because they want to see the world and experience life outside the very small island of Bermuda. They believe the atmosphere of Bermuda College will be 'too laid back' because they know so many of the students and fear they might be distracted by their friends. Some are concerned that Bermuda College lacks rigor and will not prepare students for international work or top paying jobs, and believe that college overseas is the only way to achieve these aspirations.

One student explains that he would go to Bermuda College until he could find the financial means of going to college overseas but he is not pleased with that option. He explains,

*But I would rather go straightaway to get the experience. I don't wanna be, you know, stuck*

*in Bermuda College all laid back. I wanna experience new things. Cuz college ain't just learning in books, it's about learning in life, too. [Why do you think that Bermuda College is laid back?] No, I, not Bermuda College is laid back, like the people that go are like, they have the attitude like yea I stay in Bermuda so you know I have an assignment due next month, so you know just laid back, you know. They probably totally forget about it until like the next day. Cuz I'm hearing a lot of stories about that, a lot of stories.*

He thinks that those who choose Bermuda College are not inspired to experience new things and, consequently, do not take their school work very seriously. Wesley, age 18, dreams of experiencing life overseas but the reality is that he needs to work and raise money<sup>48</sup>. When asked if he would go to Bermuda College if he does not receive a scholarship he says he would but looks disappointed and states, “*I won't like it... Because I'm still in Bermuda. I'm trying to get away from Bermudians.*” He goes on to explain that he would know too many of the other students and that he wants to “*meet new people*” and “*go out there and explore.*” Regino, age 18, is not willing to attend Bermuda College at all. He does not believe he would be able to pursue his interest in dance there and also thinks that he would be distracted by all the people that he knows. He explains,

*I feel like I got distracted cuz I know too much people, and I know almost everybody that goes to Bermuda College. So I would go up there and just - I would do work, my work, but I just wouldn't, I don't know, I get distracted easy. With all them people up there, all my real year and older than me and I know a lot of people, like I'm a very popular person. Like, a lot people down in Bermuda know me. And me going to Bermuda College*

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<sup>48</sup> Wesley is graduating with a ‘leaving certificate’, rather than a high school diploma, and will most likely still need to obtain a GED before he could attend Bermuda College or college overseas.

*- like I'll do my work but I'll get distracted cause that's all my friends that I go to school with and all, cause I'm been from around here it's like oh right. My friends are back.*

Getting distracted by friends has been a problem for Regino in high school and he almost dropped out. Now that he has overcome that hurdle and is on the road to graduate, he fears he would get to Bermuda College and experience the challenges of high school all over again.

In addition to the potential for distraction, perceiving Bermuda College as not very serious leaves students concerned that the academic environment is not rigorous enough to aptly prepare them for their careers. Justin, age 18, explains that he would still want to go away even if Bermuda College offered a four-year degree because he believes that Bermuda College leaves students ill-prepared to compete in a corporate environment.

*I think like Bermuda College is like, I guess, is meant for work in Bermuda. You can't, you know, do your four years at Bermuda College and then expect to work in some big bank or exempt company away, like because it's more, like I said, it's probably more rigorous out there. That's why I believe that if you go away, like to college out there, they teach you like how it is out there, and so you can be more, you know, preferred.*

Colleges overseas are viewed as more competitive and some wonder if graduates of Bermuda College are even ready to enter the work force. Irving states,

*Well my daddy went up there cause he wants to hire somebody else that's young and still upcoming where he can kind of teach them and show them kind of some of the ropes that comes along and he said that it's only like four at Bermuda College that's really ready to go out in the workforce. He said that they're ready, but some of them just not got the mindset to be in the workforce.*

In summary, perceptions that Bermuda College is laid back and lacks rigor, that it will not

prepare students for the workforce, and is full of their friends with seemingly low ambitions, make college overseas the ultimate aspiration. Interestingly, these students may fear distraction at Bermuda College because they also struggle with taking their education seriously and ‘maturity’ is frequently named as an obstacle that can get in the way of their educational goals.

### **Educational Obstacles**

The boys in this sample have dreams of attending higher education, especially overseas. However, there are two primary obstacles in their way: the perception that boys may lack maturity when it comes to their education and an overall lack of clarity about the next steps they need to take in order to accomplish their educational goals.

### ***Maturity***

Students frequently mention ‘maturity’ as something that presented an obstacle to them at some point in their high school career. They explain that when they started high school, they did not take their school work seriously and were likely to joke around or socialize with their peers. Boys report that when they started thinking about what they might do after high school, often under the influence of an adult in their lives, they recognized that they had to get more serious about their academics if they wanted to graduate. They explain that many of their friends did not make this realization and dropped out of high school. Boys also perceive girls as being more mature and committed to school and explain that they have had to distance themselves from many of their male peers if they wanted to accomplish their educational aspirations.

Leon, age 18, did not work too hard when he started high school but with family support, in this case from his Dad, he realized he needed to concentrate on his schoolwork if he wanted to ‘get out’ of high school

*My first year of high school I played around; I didn't do any homework. I just went to*

*class, took notes, and went by that. I didn't study and just flew - just scraped by passing. For my dad - when I talked to my dad for the second time, I realized that hey, this is not a joke. If I don't pass classes, I'm not getting out of here. I just realized that I needed to buckle down and not really worry about social life as much as my school for now.*

Now Leon worries that he still has “*some maturing to do*” and thinks that Bermuda College will give him the time to do that.

[How did you make that decision to go from here to Bermuda College?] *Because me, mentally, I don't think I'm ready to leave the island yet. Because honestly I play a lot. Like I'm a procrastinator, so I'm not going to leave the island yet and waste my parents' money to go away. So I decided to stay here for another two years and mature mentally. Then I'll think of where I want to go after that.*

Regino has also struggled with maturity in high school and worries about getting distracted by peers at Bermuda College. He explains that when he started school, he struggled with his commitment to his education.

*When I first started HS, I was the type of person that didn't care about school. And then, as I got a little older, I started realizing reality, like life supposed to start and you really can't go nowhere without a high school diploma. So, I decided to buckle down and start getting my work done. That's why I'm graduating this year.*

When he considered dropping out of high school, his mother encouraged him to pursue a GED,

*Cuz she didn't think I was going to be able to make it cuz the way my attitude was when I was in S1, S2 - it was like I didn't care about nothing. But, I didn't care, I cared, but I just came to school, and then didn't do nothing; sleep in class, talk, and then once I got in S3 it all stopped.*

Regino's narrative demonstrates ambivalence about school as he fluctuates between caring and not caring. When he got held back in his third year and watched his friends graduate, he decided to start caring and focused on graduating. Now he is proud to be proving his mother wrong as he is on the cusp of graduation. Many boys explain that it was hard to take school seriously until they got to the point in high school where they started thinking about college or careers and suddenly realized that they could not achieve their goals without a high school diploma. Arthur, age 17, regrets the 'goofing off' that he did earlier in his academic career.

*It didn't really seem too real like everything just kinda hit me like last year. Like everything got real all of a sudden thinking about it like I'm outta here in two years and I gotta make some serious decisions. That's when it really hit me and I kinda regret goofing off and just doing enough to get by really. Cause like it hit me real hard. I think coming in from middle school like everything seems like a joke, you know?*

He had trouble taking school seriously until he realized that he needs to make some 'serious decisions' about what he is going to do next. He explains that the importance of his peer relationships outweighed academics.

*Everybody tries to kind of make a name for themselves like right off the bat and then you know you start worrying about other people too much and you, you just lose focus on what you're really there for. I think that's the main issue.*

A focus on peer relationships can be particularly problematic for boys who are frequently exposed to violence or drugs on the island. Some students offered examples of how they have had to distance themselves from good childhood friends that have gotten "caught up in the wrong crowd".

Students suspect that this maturity problem is unique to males and that girls are generally



more mature and committed to school. Wesley, age 18, explains that girls are more intelligent in that they have the maturity and sense to stay focused on school, whereas guys get easily distracted.

*Some guys get caught up. Like, you know, gangs, drugs, girls. [But the women you think stick it through?] Yea. Because they got more intelligence, that's what people say, they say girls got more intelligence. [So people think the girls might be smarter?] Not smarter, they're more mature. [What does that mean, maturity?] Like (pause), not like grown up. Like, I, easily distracted type of thing. Mostly guys are all easily distracted, you know. And they worry about this and that, you know. But girls, ah, they get distracted, but they have more sense type of thing, too, like go to school, do what you gotta do.*

This perception of boys as being less mature than girls is likely to negatively influence their perceptions of themselves as well as their relationships with their teachers, and may even explain why more males leave the school. Arthur explains that boys are more likely to slack off or disrupt the class so the teachers tend to prefer the girls. Arthur states,

*In most of the classes the girls, they get along better with the teachers than most of the boys. Cuz the boys, we tend to slack off the most, first ones to start talking, kinda got a lot of us, we just mess up the whole program at times. [Why do you say that? Why do you think that is?] Well sometimes I might throw a class off or - like if you look at all the class clowns or characters there's mainly males. Every now and then you might have one girl that just disrupts the class, always trying to do something out of the norm, but mainly males disrupt things. You know if you look around the students that like joke around with the teachers, you'll find that the males react better if their teacher is joking around and stuff, but at times they're the ones that get in the most trouble and kicked out the most.*

The perception that ‘boys lack maturity’ is likely to influence boys’ experience of school because they are more likely than their female peers to get in trouble by the teachers. The boys believe that the teachers may not like them as much as their female peers and they have even internalized the belief that they are less likely to take school seriously. These beliefs accompanied by a lack of clarity about colleges and their requirements are likely to present obstacles to their educational aspirations.

### ***What next?***

There was a general lack of clarity regarding the process of applying to and choosing a college that would meet students’ professional interests and financial capabilities. At the time of these interviews (towards the end of the school year), only one student had been accepted into an overseas college. Furthermore, even at Bermuda College, students were not clear on the course requirements or if the college would offer courses in their fields of interest. Kyle, age 17, demonstrates this lack of clarity.

[So do you feel that you took the classes necessary to be able to go into marine biology at Bermuda College?] *I'm not sure what the requirements for that college is...* [So if you were to do the two years at Bermuda College, would you have a degree that would enable you to work at like the aquarium or something like that?] *Yeah, I should. I -- I'm not sure. I'm not sure how good the science is of the college, because I didn't go into too much detail on that.*

Like most students, Kyle has not done much research about the options at Bermuda College, or anywhere else. Although most students have dreams of going overseas, they did not know where and did not seem to know that it was already too late to apply for the upcoming academic year. Few students had submitted applications and they were unable to articulate the steps it would

take to apply for, and finance, an overseas college education.

Regino, who has no interest in attending Bermuda College, has not yet submitted overseas college applications because he knows that he has to secure a scholarship first. His sister is helping him with scholarship applications, which he describes as “*not that easy*” and as a process that will “*take awhile.*”

*I'm applying now. I should have been done a long time ago, but I've been so busy I couldn't really get a lot done. Now I'm trying to get it done so I can leave by September. Or not, stay for a year, work, and make some money. I have a job now, so... [If you don't get into college for dance what else do you think you might want to do?] I'm not even sure. I'm not even thought about a second plan.*

It is likely that Regino will continue to work at the shipping company where he is currently employed. Derek, age 18, also expresses some interest in applying to schools overseas but is not sure if his SAT scores are high enough or how he might identify funding. He explains,

*[Are you applying for a scholarship?] Um, well, if they um, if my SAT scores could get me into a college I guess. Oh um just the other day I got a letter in the mail to be a member of the National High School scholarships and I just have to down a payment of \$60 and they make me a member and they could get me a scholarship to a college. But, I haven't read too much about it.*

Some students hope to receive sports scholarships (basketball, football, cricket) and others mention various options on the island including scholarships and apprenticeships from the Bermuda Electrical Company (BELCO), the National Training Board, the Bermuda Police Cadets and the Tynes Bay waste treatment facility. For example, Calvin, age 18, explains how joining the Police Cadets could help him achieve his aspirations of becoming a physiotherapist.

*Next year I am planning to go to Bermuda College and join the police cadets. [Oh, okay. Why the police cadets?] Um, it helps me to pay for my school and (pause) give me more career opportunities. [And do you think that they'll give you the career opportunities that you're looking for in terms of cycling and being a physical therapist?] Hm-hm. Yea. Um, they say if I join the police cadets and finish the program and get my Associate's Degree they will send me out to college and they'll pay me 20 grand and I could do any program.*

Some students have become aware of these options because representatives from these programs/companies have come to the school. Arthur states,

*We had some form of fair at the beginning of the year I think, uh, was that a career fair? It was just some fair, I remember they had like a lot of random people at the school showing us different things, um, they had like some mechanics and things like that. And they had like a little police thing set up in the gym. They had like the new police bikes and a few officers at a table and an old lady she had all these booklets with the um police cadet application forms and all that stuff.*

However, Arthur is the only student in our sample that has already been accepted into a scholarship program and an overseas university. He reports that when this scholarship was presented to the senior class, only five students showed up.

*The guidance counselor announced it to all of us, but only about five of us showed up to the meeting. It was available for everybody but then uh a few - I think there was only two of us that actually went through with the um, application and - well both of us got it.*

Most students are still unclear about their options. These boys have educational aspirations for higher education that have motivated them to graduate high school. However, as the school year comes to a close, they have few concrete plans for attending college suggesting that obstacles

such as maturity and limited resources may make it difficult for students to realize their educational aspirations.

### **Employment Aspirations**

Most students have some ideas regarding their preferred career paths but are still considering multiple options<sup>49</sup>: 38.9% express interest in the trades professions<sup>50</sup> (electrical, carpentry, computer technician or emergency medical technician); 27.8% are interested in the arts (graphic design, photography, dance or film); 27.8% are interested in pursuing professional sports (football, cricket or basketball)<sup>51</sup>; 16.7% are interested in the sciences (marine biology or engineering). One student is interested in becoming a lawyer but none express interest in the very lucrative field of finance in Bermuda. A majority of students explain that their reasons for being interested in these aforementioned fields are because they enjoy working with their hands and because they desire the opportunity to become their own boss and have a flexible schedule.

### ***Working with our hands***

Several students explain that what they like about the trades or science professions is that they get to ‘work with their hands’. Boys anticipate greater job satisfaction in positions where they might take things apart, build and/or fix things. The boys appreciate that their school offers so many courses in the trades professions.

Jamel, age 18 wants to be an electrician because “*I just enjoy making stuff turn on and wiring stuff up and watching it light up.*” Irving enjoys taking apart remote control cars and helicopters and explains that he wants to be a computer technician or a carpenter in his Dad’s business because both of these fields would allow him to be “hands on”.

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<sup>49</sup> Students may have expressed interest in more than one profession (i.e. trades and sports).

<sup>50</sup> These are jobs that require an advanced certification, rather than a four year college degree.

<sup>51</sup> Some students interested in professional sports also indicated an interest in sports-related professions like becoming a physical education teacher or a physical therapist.

*I find carpentry interesting because I'm still hands on and I'm making stuff. So just like with the IT, you're hands on, putting stuff together, taking it apart and building different things.*

Leon enjoys everything about computers because he is “*more of a hands-on person*”.

*Like anything that's hands-on, I like doing. That's basically - I like hands-on type things.*

[What kind of hands-on things in school do you really like?] *Any computer class, that's me. Transport Tech, Photography, Media.*

Leon is interested in both the technical aspect of working with computers (computer technician) as well as the artistic side (computer design) and like several other students, he reports that his favorite classes in school are the most hands on, like carpentry or computers. He thinks that his high school is great because it offers so many trades courses. He states,

*It's better than most schools; more classes, more hands-on type things that it gives you an experience of what you may want to do in life. [And what kinds of things have you been exposed to?] Me? Well, I just started the motor mechanics class, and that's pretty interesting, because my grandpa owns a garage, but this class has actually given me more insight of what - how things work and stuff. Before it was just like me doing it, because my grandpa asked me to. But now I'm getting more of an understanding.*

Justin agrees and states,

*They [high school] have every class for anything that you would like to be, so you can get - at least get your feet wet and get to know if you would like it. You've got a little synopsis of what the job will actually be about... A lot of classes are hands-on like - like, you know, for mechanic, you're fixing stuff, and D and T, like you're actually cutting out wood, building little boxes and little chests and stuff like that.*

The opportunity to experiment with different hands on fields is deeply valued by these boys and boys enjoy these classes. Arthur, who has received a college scholarship to pursue engineering<sup>52</sup>, explains that at one point he was interested in pursuing a business career in the “risk management field like actuary work. Like I was thinking of doing that, cuz like I’m strong in math.” But, he was convinced by his mother that engineering would be more in line with what he likes because it would be more hands on. He explains,

*Well she always wants me to do something that I’m gonna like. When I used to tell her I wanted to go into the business field, she really didn’t think that was for me and I think she was right there. [Why didn’t she think that was right for you?] Well, like, she always tells me, well I’m always like working on bikes like every night I’m working on my bikes and stuff, engines and stuff. She always like encouraged me to go into like that field and stuff like in the mechanical area, but I always you know thinking of money first. Yeah it’s Bermuda, I wanted to get a job in one of the big insurance firms there so, but like she kinda help me out in making up that decision that uh, that something more hands-on was right for me. Something where I’m actually active and not just sitting and you know. Something where I’m actually moving around, like social talking the whole day through, just doing what I’d have to do. [She thought you’d enjoy that more than the insurance industry.] Yeah I think, I think she’s right, I think she’s right though.*

Like many of the boys in our study, Arthur is concerned about making a lot of money. But his mother convinced him that he would be happiest and experience greater job satisfaction if he was working with his hands, even if he might earn less money as an engineer than he would in the business industry. Preference for ‘hands on’ professions also stems from the perception that they offer more flexibility than office jobs, in terms of hours and job activities, and will provide the

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<sup>52</sup> Arthur is the only participant who has been accepted into an overseas college at the time of the interviews.

opportunity to have their own, or take over the family, business.

### ***Being my own boss and having a flexible schedule***

Students have an aversion to 9-5 office jobs or any job where they would be in the same place and have to do the same thing each day. For example, Arthur states, “*I was like really doing some thinking, saying like I don’t think I could really cope being in an office situation like nine to five and working long hours just in a little cubicle.*” The boys in this study are generally drawn towards jobs where they perceive an opportunity for moving around and doing something different each day. They hope to have flexible schedules and to ultimately be their own boss.

Charles hopes to play professional basketball and is thinking about exploring marine biology as a backup career because he believes this profession might offer him flexibility and variety on a day-to-day basis.

*I'm trying to get a degree so I can get a job where I don't have to do too much work. I don't want to work 9:00 to 5:00. (laughs). [You don't want to work 9:00 to 5:00?] No. That's like going back to school. [Okay. So what kind of hours are you hoping for?] They ain't got to be short hours, but it's not something that's like wake up every morning, work the whole day, do it again. Not go over 5:00 and have to get ready for the next day; if you're a marine biologist and stuff like that, you do actual stuff, like you will be working during the day, and then sometimes you have to go do stuff other places, maybe something different every day instead of the same thing basically.*

In addition to doing something different each day, many students have dreams of owning their own businesses. Irving contemplates becoming a computer technician so that he can come back to Bermuda and open his own business and create his own hours.



*I'm hoping, to come back here and open my own business. [Okay. Why do you want to do that?] Because I think it's better off because you will be your own boss, you make your own hours and you have people working for you, so nobody can tell you what to do and how to do it.*

Leon also plans to open his own computer or carpentry business and set his own hours.

*I think about it, because I'm working under someone, but then eventually I'm going to get tired working under someone. I would want to work on my own time, work from home maybe, and plus I'd be working for myself. I can make my own hours, work as late as I want, as early as I want.*

Boys like the idea of professions where they might work with their hands, be their own boss and enjoy a flexible schedule. In Chapter 1 of this report, we learn that Black Bermudian males are employed in lower paying industries than White Bermudian males and Black Bermudian females. Perceptions that girls are more likely to sit at a desk, accompanied by a lack of exposure to industries such as international business may explain this tendency among Black Bermudian males.

### **Limitations to Employment Aspirations**

Just as our study participants suspect that 'boys are less mature than girls', they also believe that office jobs are more appealing to females. Although the boys experience greater exposure to their mothers on a daily basis, their employment aspirations are more likely to mirror their fathers' employment. Boys are drawn to what they are exposed to and have little firsthand knowledge of industries other than the trades.

### ***Gender and exposure***

Boys in this study believe that girls are more ‘mature’ and are more willing to sit in an office every day. Will explains that guys may even avoid going to college so they can pursue jobs that will not leave them stuck in an office.

*Well, I just know like mainly females, they want to, they could be up in an office from like 9 to 5. That’s not for me. I just can’t do that, so it’s like I guess, most guys are like that. They don’t want to be sitting in an office. They want to be doing something, so I guess they don’t feel that they need to go to college for that.*

Boys are frequently drawn to the work that the males in their families tend to do. Dwayne is drawn to the business field but he knows he does not want to work in an office. As a result, he is not so sure about what he wants to do. When asked what type of industry he might pursue, he responds,

*Um, not too sure. Probably in the business, but I don’t like, I don’t like working in the offices, though. I couldn’t work in a office and have a desk and stuff. [No, how come?] I don’t know, that’s being inside all day. I wanna like travel around, go places I’ve never been before. That’s why security systems, everybody wants a little something in their house or something at their business where I have to travel to. [Right.] So, I don’t wanna be stationary in one spot... I want a job that I wanna go to work every day. Like installing security systems. That’s what my brother does, so trying to hop on that bandwagon.*

He thinks he might be happier going to work each day if he can travel around and considers pursuing his brother’s work installing security systems. His lack of exposure to professions where he might ‘go places he has never seen before’ leaves him to pursue what he knows is available to him. For many boys, an interest in taking over the family business motivates an

interest in trades' professions. Irving explains,

*I plan to go to Bermuda College and do an IT course and then go away. But while I'm in Bermuda College I'm gonna take a course in carpentry because my daddy owns his own carpentry business so one day I might be able to take that over.*

Resistance to working in an office, and exposure to job opportunities in the trades, might explain why there are fewer Black males in the business professions, compared to Black females and White males. They may not see themselves as 'the boss' in the business or finance industries where White males hold the majority of management positions. Boys hope to have more control over their work, their hours and their day to day activities and they believe they might find this control in the trades, science and sports professions. Families are supportive of these employment aspirations and encourage boys to continue with their education so that these goals might be realized.

### **Family Advice**

Approximately 50% of Black males leave the Bermuda public high schools before graduation<sup>53</sup>. The participants in this qualitative study all graduated from high school in June 2009. The interview data suggests that each participant made it through high school because they had someone in their family who pushed them to finish high school and continue on to college. The following section reviews the advice boys get from their mothers, fathers and extended family.

#### ***Mom: High expectations***

Almost all participants live with their biological mothers. At least half of the participants believe that their mothers went to college with five of them reporting that their mothers have college degrees. A large majority of the students report that their mothers have the most

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<sup>53</sup> Based on statistics provided by the Bermuda Ministry of Education.

influence over their educational and career decisions. Students also report that their mothers offer them a great deal of support (both financial and emotional). For example, Will states, “*She plays a big role, like she supports me in everything that I do. Yeah. She always wants the best for me.*” When asked about the specific educational and professional advice they get from their mothers, the advice was individualized to the interests of their sons, thereby communicating their unconditional love and support. Irving states that his Mom wants him to “*be as successful and as happy as I can be.*” Several boys talk about a time in high school when they considered dropping out but their mothers were there to encourage them. Moms tell their sons to be the best they can be and almost all believe that higher education will pave the way for success. They have high expectations for their sons to go as far as they can with their education after high school so that they can get good paying jobs that make them happy. Boys talk about how their mothers want them to do more than they, or other family members have done, and they encourage them to stay away from male family members that may offer a bad influence. However, few mothers offer concrete guidance on how the boys might meet their high educational expectations.

Students consistently say that school will lead to a better life and when asked who has instilled this belief in them, they repeatedly name their mothers. For example, Anthony knows that his mother wants him to be “*you know, successful.*” He explains,

*She's hoping the best for me. Go as far as I can go. Don't stop. Basically... She wants to get me the best education. [She wants you to go to college?] Yea. College, get that top notch education, make something out of myself.*

Similarly, David explains that his mother has always told him that he needs his education to get a good paying job. David agrees with his Mom and believes that he needs education to

successfully become who he wants to be, unlike his friend that dropped out of high school and is experiencing limited employment options.

*I need my education to become what I want to be. To do what I want to do. Without education you can't get nowhere in life really. [What made you believe that? Where do you think that came from?] From my mom. She has always pushed me for like academics and it's like, it's true cause if, if you want a good paying job and you dropped out of high school you can't get it. So, if you want that, if you want to become successful, you need the education. [Have you seen that happen to people? Drop out of school?] Yes. A friend, he dropped out and then he's like working for a landscaping company or something like that. He is not getting as much money as he could have if he would have stayed in school and got his papers, ya know?*

Many students have experienced the pull to drop out of school and they talk about how their mothers' concern and encouragement kept them, and continues to keep them, on track to graduate. Will states, "Like she knows that I'm cool to graduate, but she just wants to make sure that it happens, so she's going to stay on my back until I do." Armel shares the challenges that he faced in his third year of high school and how his Mom inspired him to stay in school by explaining how he would not even get the simplest job without a high school diploma.

*I just didn't find school interesting that much or nothing. I felt like dropping out. I wasn't gonna do it but I just felt like it so much. I just knew that as long as I get through high school it will be way better off than not going through it, so I just kept that in my head. [What made you think that? How'd you know that?] Because my mama and everybody else keeps talking about how you should have a high school diploma before, well a lot of jobs, even the simplest jobs nowadays they said, so it's even inspiring me more to do it.*

*And I don't wanna be living like no bum or anything. And I wanna make something out of myself, so, I stayed in and my grade point average last year was low, like 2.1, but I think it's up higher this year.*

Fear of becoming 'a bum' kept Armel in school and motivated him to improve his grades. Now his Mom is after him to submit his application to Bermuda College and she repeatedly reminds him that he needs to "do something" with himself.

*She wants me, um, she want me go to college. Cuz before I sent in my college application for Bermuda College, she used to tell me if you're not gonna go college you need to go get a job and get some money like at least and have a job so I could do something with myself cause I was just sitting around. But mostly, she wants me go to college and she's always trying to force me to. Well, before she was always trying to force me to go and hand in my application. It's just that I always did it, I had it finished, but I procrastinated a lot and then she used to get mad at me. I understand.*

Because Armel's Mom was so concerned with his education, Armel is graduating high school and going to Bermuda College. Jamel also shares how his mom encouraged him to stay in school and how he is graduating for her.

[Was there ever a time that you considered giving up on high school?] *Yeah, plenty of times.* [Okay, can you tell me about that?] *I just got tired of waking up in the morning and going to school and doing the same thing every day. That's boring.* [Yeah, so what kept you going?] *My mama.* [Yeah? What did she say?] *She said 'you better go to school.'* *Because in the future - in the long run it's better to get a certificate from your high school than dropping out and getting a GED.* [Why does she think that's better?] *You have more opportunities going away and stuff, because a GED only works in Bermuda... My mama,*

*she really wants me to graduate so - high school - for her.*

Now Jamel plans to go to Bermuda College and become a certified electrician. Leon also thought of dropping out of high school when he was in his third year and he ended up getting held back. He explains how he managed to stay in school with the support of both of his parents,

*At one time like I really was just - I felt school wasn't for me. It was just overwhelming, so much homework and then assignments. And it was a lot. And I honestly felt like this wasn't for me. I felt like dropping out, but I worked through that. My parents told me stay in school; you're going to find that high school is the best years of your life... They said don't do it, because it's the best years of your life, and I'm not giving up on you, so don't do it. So that was like that gave me encouragement to stay, because even if I don't get the best grades ever, they know that I've tried my best.*

This year, his mother continued to encourage him to go towards his “dreams”.

*The beginning of this year she was telling me - she told me that this is my last year, it's my final year, it's going to go by fast, so do all that you can to get it done and over with so you don't have to come back again. [When you had to do your 3<sup>rd</sup> year again, what was your mom's reaction?] She wasn't mad at me. She said you caused it, so just get it done, because you put yourself in that position, so you better face the consequences.*

He believes that his friends who have dropped out had “*no real family support- someone to just keep pushing them.*” He is proud that he is about to graduate and is excited about the opportunity to go to Bermuda College and has even started looking at schools in the U.S. and Canada. He believes that it will take a lot of “*hard work, focus and dedication*” to find a scholarship but knows that he “*can always lean on my parents for advice and things*”.

Mothers' advice also includes staying away from cousins or siblings that have dropped

out of school. For example, one student explains that his Mom is “*a little too hard*” on him because she wants to see him go to college and make something of himself, unlike his brothers and sisters. He states,

*Every time I complain to my mama, she say I only want you to make something, because I don't want you to end up like your brothers and sisters, and not going to college and stuff like that. That's why I think they're real hard on me, just because they tell me that. But I guess it's all for a good reason.*

Having someone that is ‘hard on them’ seems to have kept many of these students on track to graduate and go to college. Will explains that all of his sisters and female cousins went to college but that they worry about his educational future because he is a guy.

*Everybody pretty much like, because I guess - because like my momma's side, it's all girls, so I guess they are just worried about me, because I'm a guy. [Why are they worried about you because you're a guy?] I don't know. I guess they just think that I'm not interested in school like.*

Mothers of the boys in this sample are worried that their sons will abandon their education and repeatedly send the message to stay in school so that they might realize their occupational and income goals.

Professionally, mothers hope their sons will be happy and successful with ‘good jobs’ and that their sons will achieve more than they did. For example, David’s mom is a bus driver and hopes that he will go as far as he can in school so that he can become more than that because she believes he is “*smarter than just to drive a bus.*” Anthony’s Mom wants him to get, “*You know, a good job. Probably like my uncle's cause one's a doctor and the other one's an accountant. So she would probably want me to have, you know, a good paying job like that. You*



*know, be successful.* Irving's Mom encourages him to work for a computer or carpentry company and then own his own business:

*She said that I should go and work for a company and then eventually open your own business because you have experience in the field so you know what you're dealing with and you know the problems that occur within a company.*

Mothers are generally supportive of whatever industries their sons are interested in. For example, Leon states, *"She realizes what I'm interested in, which is IT, so she says if you want to, that's what you can do. She doesn't try to push me to do anything different."* As previously mentioned, Arthur's mother encouraged him to pursue engineering so that he might work with his hands and experience job satisfaction.

Although boys perceive their mothers as supportive and as having high expectations of them, few boys state that their Moms offer concrete guidance on what it will take to reach their goals, other than college and hard work. They do not, for example, offer much assistance with the college application process. For example, Jamel's mom wants him *"to reach for the stars"* but he has not submitted any applications for next year and with very low grades in school (GPA= 1.8), he is likely to fall through the cracks. Similarly, Anthony, whose Mom wants him to get that *"top notch education"* and a *"good paying job"*, does not know how he would pay for college overseas.

*I would like to get a scholarship. That would be a good thing for me to get, a nice scholarship, but other than that, I really don't know. [So if that doesn't happen, what would you do?] I'd probably work for a year, I will work for a year and save up some money so that I can help my mother pay for college.*

Anthony has not yet applied to college, or for scholarships, and is likely to start working after high school.

In sum, boys experience their mothers as supportive of educational goals and as having high expectations. Mothers have helped many boys in our sample stay committed to graduating high school and have encouraged their sons to fill out the Bermuda College application and take the SAT. But although mothers want their sons to pursue higher education so that they might find satisfying and well paying employment, the complicated process of college and fellowship applications is rarely discussed.

***Dad: Go to college (preferably overseas) and stay out of trouble***

Only five out of the 18 participants live with their biological fathers, two of the fathers' died when the boys were younger and five of the fathers live overseas (3 in the U.S. and 2 in Jamaica). The amount of contact that boys have with their fathers varies from every day to never. According to the boys, none of the fathers have a college degree and two of the boys admit to having fathers that are deeply involved in drugs. But in spite of the inconsistent presence of fathers in the lives of these young men, fathers do offer some consistent advice: Go to college (preferably overseas) and don't mess up.

The majority of boys perceive their fathers as caring about their education and state that their fathers encourage them to pursue college, either in Bermuda or overseas. For example, Kyle, who lives with his Dad, has been advised to go to college overseas because he would get a better degree than he would at Bermuda College.

*He [Dad] wants to kick me off the island. He says that all the time. He's joking, yeah.*

*I'm going to kick you off the island, go to school; just get some experience already... Just get school experience off the island, like just don't stay here and go to Bermuda College.*

*You'll get a mediocre degree, when you can go farther - Master's, PhD, whatever. It's good to get more experience from being off the island.*

Kyle's Dad wants him to aim higher than the associates' degree that is offered at Bermuda College and attend college off the island. Fathers also worry about their sons getting into trouble with violence, girls, drugs if they stay in Bermuda. For example, Wesley's Dad works at the jail and tells Wesley about all of the brewing trouble in Bermuda. He advises Wesley to go overseas to college so he can succeed and not get caught up in the violence.

*My daddy wants me to go away to college and he just wants me to get outta Bermuda like cause Bermuda's all, getting all crazy right now. [What do you mean by that?] Like all the trouble that's going on, beef type of thing. Yea and he's at the prison also. So he tells me what's gonna go down and he said during the summertime there might be like, beef-, like gun war. He thinks it might increase. So he just wants me to get outta Bermuda, just, you know, succeed in life. You know. Just do what I gotta do, don't do wrong.*

Fathers hope that if their sons stay in school, they are less likely to 'mess up'. When David sees his Dad on the weekends,

*We talk about career choices and stuff like that, like college, schooling, like he's big on my education too because they know my potential, like so they don't, they just don't want to see me mess up type of thing. [So what kind of advice does he give you?] Just stay in school and pay attention and do the best you can really.*

Many fathers want their sons to stay in school to stay out of trouble and so that they might achieve more than they have. Charles explains,

*[Do you think your dad wants you to go to college also?] Yeah, he does (sigh). [How do you know?] Because nobody in his family went, or any of his two younger sisters, or his*

*older sister, and his younger sister went to college. And the rest are in jail and stuff like that, Yeah, that's how it's like.*

Because of the lack of contact with fathers, boys detect a push towards education in subtle ways. For example, one student whose mother helped to keep him in high school, is deeply conflicted about his relationship with his father. He states, “*We’re close, like best friends type thing*” but also admits that his father tends to “*spend his money on drugs and not me.*” He is frustrated that his Dad doesn’t always “*come around*” or even pay child support but recalls a time when “*he used to give me good advice and try to make me do my schoolwork*”. He holds on to this advice in conjunction with the promise that his Dad made to help him raise money for school and interprets it as support for higher education. He explains,

*The other day he just asked me, um, if I’m still going Bermuda College or do I wanna go away to college and I say yea and then he said ‘okay well we’ll work on that’, I was like ‘yea and just over the summer I’m gonna try to work and save up money for it’ and he said ‘okay’. He was like ‘oh you gotta job?’ I tell him ‘no, I can always go back to the camp and my friend said he will talk to his boss about it’ and then he said that he would speak to whoever he can to see if I don’t have a job, if I could get a job with him. And so he wants me to do that. [What kind of job do you think he’d be able to help you get?]*

*Um, probably on the construction site, too, something like that. Cause since I’m 18, I guess I can do whatever now.*

His father’s efforts to find him a job communicates to this student that he wants to see him go to college.

Most boys experience limited contact with their fathers but believe that their fathers want them to finish high school and pursue higher education. Fathers advise their sons to stay out of

trouble (drugs, girls, violence) so that they might achieve more than they did and ‘succeed in life’.

***Extended Family: Stay focused on school***

Similar to the advice that these boys get from their mothers and fathers, the majority of students mention at least one other family member who has encouraged them to remain committed to their education. For example, Justin, whose brothers did not go to college, explains that they give him “good advice.” *“They just say don’t get caught up. Just finish school and go to college, you know, just don’t get caught up in no bad stuff, you know.”* Grandmothers, cousins, siblings, aunts and uncles all offer educational guidance in various ways, including help with homework, resumes or college applications; sharing of personal experience from college or what happened after they dropped out of high school; and encouragement to stay in school and stay out of trouble. All advice confirms one consistent message, stay focused on school.

Family members frequently share personal experiences with the boys. Anthony’s uncles went to college and offer some insight into what college will be like. *“They, you know, explain to me that college is not going to be easy. You’ll have your fun times, and your ups and downs, like high school.”* Another student has uncles who never finished high school and they explain how this presented a problem for them in their lives,

*They have told me that they didn’t get to finish school and they’re not in a position that they would like to be in, so if they would’ve finished school they could’ve been a job manager or a CEO of a company, but since they don’t have their high school diploma they cannot really go too far in life. [What do they do?] Well, I know one of my uncles pumps gas and one of them, he drives trucks for a company.*

Similarly, Markus’ cousin hopes that Markus does not make the same mistakes he has made.

*Yeah, um, he's [my cousin] a really good person. He's a person who has made some mistakes in his life but he acknowledges that he's made those mistakes and he says that he's learned from them and his advice to me is more or less about women, because he does not want me to get tripped up by any girls. He wants me to stay focused and stay in school and make something of myself. Cause he always wanted to make something of himself but he just made mis - you know decisions that just kind of messed him up. He's messed up because like well he's been locked up. He's done drugs. He's been locked up for it, and he's paid his debt to society, and he says you know I look back and it's not worth it. And he told me how his drug habit, like his drugs like got him in trouble and all and he was talking to me and he grabbed me and he said 'let me tell you something, if I ever hear of you smoking weed you' and that's all he said to me, and I was like you know I'm not going to do that and he goes 'I'm just playing with you man, but seriously don't do it.' He jokes around like that but he says there's some decisions that you have to make just think about what you're making though. Think about what happens later on.*

These boys soak up the advice they get from their loved ones and feel good that they can count on people to express themselves to. Even when they can't always articulate their plans for the future, they appreciate it when their family members ask them about it and exhibit interest.

Regino's sister is like having "another mama" and she is helping him work on college and scholarship applications. "She [sister] makes sure that everything's straight, makes sure I got all my stuff together."

In summary, the boys in this sample are on track to graduate high school and all seem to have at least one family member who encouraged them to finish high school and is pushing them to go on for higher education. Having family support is essential for this group of students

because considering the low high school retention rate for Black males, it is easy to fall through the cracks in high school. However, families do not always offer concrete support with college and fellowship applications. Few parents went to college overseas and have firsthand knowledge of the complexities involved in the application process. The next section explores the advice and guidance that students receive in school.

### **School Advice and Guidance**

Messages from teachers and school staff consistently point to the following theme: stick with your education. Students feel that their teachers like them, especially when they work and try hard in school. Almost all students can identify at least one adult in the school that they can go to for help with their schoolwork, to help choose classes, and for advice about life after high school. Favorite teachers and school activities are often identified as those that offer real life tips about college or exposure to the workplace. However, many admit that they did not receive college or career support until their senior year in high school. Their lack of clarity over what they will be doing next year suggests that this guidance may have occurred too late in their high school careers.

#### ***‘Stick with it’ and don’t give up***

Teachers, school advisors and school counselors consistently send the message to stick with your education and do not give up. According to Anthony, *“Basically the advice that they give me is just keep on top of your game, don't give up. Cause if you give up you're not gonna succeed in life.”* School staff frequently advise students to finish high school and maybe even pursue higher education so that they may experience ‘success in life’.

Justin explains that teachers are particularly hopeful that the boys will finish high school and go on to higher education so that they will not end up ‘on the wall’.

*They [teachers] want to stop seeing the guys just either drop out of high school, or finish high school and just be done with their education, and they want to see the guys go and get those good jobs, like instead of just being thugs and all of that; stuff like that... just worry about your education so it can take you somewhere... They expect me to do the best that I can do, and expect me to strive for excellence and to make something of myself like after I finish school. [How do you know that they want you to do that?] Because they even tell you, 'I don't want to see you sitting on a wall and doing - sellin' drugs and doing stuff like that.' They want to see you make stuff, like make something of myself.*

For the teachers and school staff, the key to avoiding the wall is education. This advice echoes the father's message of go to college so you can stay out of trouble. Several boys shared stories of times when they were considering dropping out of high school. Some stayed with the help and guidance of their mothers and others had teachers who convinced them to 'stick with it'. For example, when Wesley felt like he could not cope with school anymore, he left. His teachers brought him back from the wall.

*I was like yea man I dropping out, I can't take this school no more and I walked out of school one day, then somebody came out and got me and brought me back, had a big meeting there. I was like down there sitting on the wall.*

Wesley knows that his teachers like him because "they put up with me for these 4 years. They would have given up on me." They have not given up on him. Instead, they encourage him to do his work so that he can "pass and try to graduate" and they brought in his parents to ensure that he completes all of the graduation requirements. They also advise him to go to college.

*They said don't be like some guys in Bermuda. You get, you like keeping on getting money, money, money and you don't want to leave high school or Bermuda, you be like*



*I'll go next year, I'll go next year type of thing. [You mean to go to college?] Yea, they say go college. And get that thing that you want.*

Wesley feels cared for by the teachers because they brought him back from the wall, convinced him to stay in school, supported his efforts to graduate, and even believe that he could obtain higher education. Now, he is committed to graduating to show them that he can do it. Similarly, Dwayne was planning to drop out of school and was “*lackadaisical*” about his schoolwork. But when he met his basketball coach in his first year of S3 (he repeated this grade), he started “*sticking by his side and just learning everything he knows and he changed my life.*” Instead of dropping out of school to support his sick mother, his coach advised him to stay in school so that he might find an even better job.

*Uh, with my mama's situation. How she's been in the hospital and stuff. Like that was a reason why I wanted to drop out so I could make some money to help her. But he was trying to tell me if I stayed in school, the money that I was going to make, I could make double that if I stay in school and get a high school diploma. So he gives me a lot of life stories, too, like. So he's keeping me on the straight and narrow track... [What kind of advice does he give you about your future?] He just tells me stick with it. If you want it, go get it.*

When boys in this study perceive their teachers as encouraging them both in and out of the classroom, they think their teachers must like them, care about their futures, and believe in their potential to succeed, as long as they stay in school. Charles also considered dropping out of school but his basketball coach convinced him to stay and has even guided him on how to get into college.

*The coach told me what I needed to get so I could make it out of the school and get into a college. So I decided to stay and prove, and it's been my best year, this year, so far. Now I see it more as just something I have to do to get out of it, like to get where I want to get, instead of just a place that's forcing me to do this and that.*

These boys have teachers that believe in them, even when they doubt themselves, leaving them motivated to 'prove' that they can indeed graduate and go to college. Will explains that the teachers hope that his education is not ending at graduation. They care about his plans for next year and hope "*That I'll be fine and go to college or university to get a degree, because the thing is you can't go nowhere now without a degree... In order to graduate, stay focused in school. Like, high school is a stepping stone towards your future.*" They advise him to go to college, and he plans to attend Bermuda College in the fall.

When teachers tell students to stay focused in school, work hard, graduate and go to college, they are communicating to boys a confidence in their ability to accomplish these educational goals. This very important message is much appreciated by the boys and they do indeed work hard in school so that their teachers will like them and continue to give them the support that they need to graduate.

***Work and try hard and my teachers will like me***

Teachers and school staff frequently relay that students must work and try hard in school. Boys think that a demonstration of this behavior contributes to the quality of teacher-student relationships. When they do their work on time, when they minimize class disruptions and make an effort to do their best work, their teachers in turn will support both their academic and personal endeavors.

Irving explains that teachers like the students that work hard in class and show that they want to be there. An attempt to try hard is more important than the grades they get.

*Teachers look for somebody that, well they don't look for the best students, but if you're trying and trying they will take care of you. They want to see that you put in an effort and you're just not doing the work just to do it and just to get by. They want to see that you put in an effort and that you want to do the work and that you, well, that you're committed to being in the class.*

Teachers will 'take care' of the students that make this type of effort in school. Leon explains that teachers like "someone that's hardworking, on time to class, and does all of their assignments while in class." He feels cared for by his teachers because they, "put in the extra time to stay behind after school, have tutorials, and they come in early enough - they come early mornings. They have tutorials in the mornings, and they can stay as late as possible for you if you need help." He is currently getting help from his computer teacher after school and is "finding that really useful." Teacher support and student effort go hand in hand. By simply going to his teachers for academic help, Arnel's teachers are convinced that he is committed to his school work. As a result, he finds that the teachers are "more patient" with him and they rarely give him trouble, even when he is late for class. When asked how he knows that his teachers like him, he responds,

*I could tell like from when you see how teachers act to certain students and then they act to some other students, you can tell which ones they like and which ones they have a problem with. Like for me, my math teacher, my SI math teacher, he gets mad as soon as one boy speaks, cause he does it a lot of times this student talks a lot and he talks a lot of stupidness sometimes, and when he talks, as soon as he says something stupid, he gets*

*real mad. But, if I was to do that, like just once, he would probably be like, 'um, what's wrong' or something like that. Or just be like 'oh calm down' or something like that. [So what do you think it is about you that it makes him more patient with you than with another student?] Um, because I don't talk a lot in class. I try to like come back to him after school sometimes to get my work done. He doesn't have problems with me.*

The boys observe that the teachers are more patient and helpful to those who get their work done because they see how other boys, who may be more disruptive or late with their schoolwork, are treated. This variation in the ways teachers relate to the students offers the boys in this sample confidence in the belief that their teachers positively regard them and have high expectations of them. Regino has seen a change in the way his teachers regard him. He did not feel encouraged by his teachers when he started high school and thinks this was because he did not try very hard. But now that he is going to graduate, he thinks they pay him more attention.

*[You had this feeling like the teachers didn't think that you were going to graduate?] Cause they never paid me any mind in class. [Can you give me an example of a time that that happened?] Oh, man, there's been so much, can't even remember. Like they knew I had the work done so I mean you have to encourage the children, your students, but I just didn't care. I was like, can't tell me what to do, so why should I do it? I'm not 11 years old. [So you think they pay more attention to kids that are trying in class?] Yeah. [But now that they see you trying how do you see that it has changed?] They pay more attention and help me more. Even when I ask a question, my teacher comes to me and assists me as much as possible.*

Because his teachers ignored him in class, he perceived his teachers as not believing in his ability to graduate. Now that he cares about school and tries harder in class, his teachers will offer him

academic support. The Principal and Assistant Principal are even providing Regino with recommendations for college.

In summary, students have learned that taking education seriously and making an effort in school results in a commitment by the teachers to provide academic support. Justin states, *“Once the teacher sees that you’re willing to help yourself, then they will love to help you.”* Teachers encourage students to do their best, show initiative and get their work done. In exchange, teachers will help with schoolwork and minimize disciplinary punishments. Through academic and social support, the teachers communicate care and the belief that the boys can be successful in school. Teacher support has helped the boys in this study achieve graduation, high school engagement and positive expectations for the future. Students clearly appreciate the academic support they receive from their teachers as well as the college and career exposure efforts that are made in the school.

### **Real life college and career tips make a difference but this advice is too late**

When asked what they like about school, or about their favorite teacher, students speak about the real life tips regarding jobs and colleges that they get from teachers or school administration. Even school rules are valued when they are placed in the context of life after high school. They believe that these tips, accompanied by guest speakers and opportunities for workplace internships, help to prepare them for life after high school, but for many, this advice is too late.

Although Charles oftentimes feels that his schoolwork is *“unnecessary”*, he appreciates the career advice and the practical advice regarding *“putting money in the bank”* that he has received from his carpentry teacher.

*My carpentry teacher, sometimes he discuss like gaps in the market or something, and*

*some of the ways you could get paid. He fills us in on stuff that we wouldn't know about, like putting money in the bank and getting interest. Like he said if you give him \$1,000, he'll put it in the bank for you and then it will double up in one year and stuff like that... He told me about all the positions for ETs, for electrical technicians in the world, and the money that you'll get out of it, and the good things about being in it, and the benefits you get out of it and stuff like that.*

This guidance is perceived by Charles as important and helpful to his future. Arthur is also satisfied with the advice he gets at school. He mentions the 'good' assemblies including one on gang violence and another by the Center of Philanthropy, where he learned helpful information about social ills and global politics. He also appreciates his business and math classes where they talk about earnings in Bermuda compared to other countries, and about finding a career that you enjoy. Anthony talks about how one motivational speaker inspired him to work harder in school.

*Before my grades were not looking too good at all. [So what changed for you? How did you turn it around?] Basically my attitude. Cuz over the years they have been bringing in people to like talk to us, you know about life, stuff like that. And you know you have your guest speakers and everything. And then, like it really clicked to me like in my third year that I really need to pay attention. I wish I would a done that in S1, but you know, I really paid attention last year... A motivational speaker came in and he was talking about life and everything like, and it really clicked to me. It made sense what he said. He was like, 'pay attention in school cause good grades equals good life', or something like that, it really clicked to me. And it made sense. So I just followed it and now my whole attitude is changed.*

Like several of the boys, Anthony did not take school too seriously in his first and second year but came to the realization in his third year that he had to work harder in school if he wanted to achieve his aspirations for the future. Advice about the 'real world' maintains students' interest and perhaps their motivation in school.

In addition to this type of practical advice, several students talk about how certain school rules will prepare them for life after college. For example, Derek explains that rules such as good attendance will be important in the 'real world'.

*I think that they um do everything they can to prepare you for college and they set standards for you to meet. For like attendance records so you could see how important it is to have a good attendance for when you go out in the real world.*

Justin also feels that the rules in school, such as no talking in class, no baggy clothes, or no late assignments, are helping to prepare him for college and the professional world.

*They try to prepare me for college. Like they'll say 'you know, you can't do that in college, you can't talk to your friends in college. In college, they're not going to know you like that. They give you numbers like to call you by and all that so college teachers are not really worrying about you. If you don't have that assignment in on time, okay, zero.' So they try to teach you that. Yeah, I think that's good, so like they try to get you oriented for the college life... Or like in reference to like sending you home for stuff, you know you're getting ready to go into the workforce, like you can't go with baggy clothes and all. You have to, you know, you have a suit or whatever like that. But that's what I understand that they're trying to do that.*

When practical advice is accompanied by rules that are perceived as making sense in other contexts such as college or the workplace, students experience school satisfaction. Boys report

that several members of the school staff inquire about their plans for the future and will offer college guidance.

When asked about the assistance they receive in school regarding their plans for life after college, several students explain that they have participated in college fairs, have taken SAT courses or have received basic encouragement from teachers to submit their applications. For example, Derek reports that his school counselors and teachers have encouraged him to take the SAT and also helped him with his plans to attend Bermuda College in the fall.

*Like the counselors still assist you with getting um, signing up for the SAT to um try to get in to college I guess... They [teachers] helped me with writing my essay to get into Bermuda college. Yeah, and they also wrote a letter of reference for me. And right now they're helping me with the CPT [college placement test]. They're helping me.*

Derek's teachers helped him with his essay, references and placement exams. Some report that they were assigned to the same guidance counselor for four years and that this counselor helped them choose classes that were appropriate for the type of career they are interested in. Charles explains,

*Well, first they sit you down as a group, like I think it's the first week of school you do group work with your SI year and then they give you a paper at the end of the week and it asks you what do you want to be once you leave high school and then it goes from there. And then you get to know your counselor and she will start putting your courses to where you want to work.*

Charles finds the guidance counselors helpful because "You can go to them any time and ask for certain stuff, like I needed to ask for my own Bermuda College application, and stuff like that,



*and they'll help you out with that. They're like known as people basically to get help.” Justin describes the assistance he has received from the deputy principal.*

*My deputy principal, she goes, ‘oh, what would you like to be, what do you enjoy doing, or what do you want to be’, and then she’ll set you right up with the classes. Like in S3 or S2, she said if you want to be a veterinarian, you take a lot of biology classes and chemistry classes. Or if you like, if you want to do mechanics, take D and T class, design tech. And it’s like she just sets you up and she’ll tell you, you can go to like certain programs, like internships and all of that. Like she will send you there, like she’ll email your name into the people like and set up interviews. Like I had an interview. She put my name - emailed my name for an interview for Cellular One, we had to do an interview about that, like about the jobs there. And we have a lot of college, like job fairs... She has connections with a lot of them big people, like say people that like to do hair like and cosmetology type stuff, she calls the people and sets up meetings with the students. She calls them and sets up for you to meet them. She goes ‘if that’s what you want, all it takes is one call’, like she really makes stuff happen, like she really does. She can set you up for scholarship, like tell you what you need to do for a scholarship, or she’ll tell you to go to that person and stuff like that.*

Justin has received support in anything from choosing classes to getting interviews for jobs and knows he could also get guidance regarding a college scholarship. The ‘college planning program’ is described as a career/college program for students who are on track to graduate.

Will appreciates the guidance that has resulted from the college planning meetings.

*They sent me to different physiotherapists around Bermuda, just so I can make sure that that’s what I really want to do... [How did they know what you were thinking about*

doing?] *Because like during free period, she used to call the students down into the meeting room, and that was pretty much like a college planning session like what you want to be, what your grades are looking like, what classes are you taking. She is all for the students, so she's tryin' to get us on track. [And when did she do that?] September, like when we first started.*

Will appreciates the opportunity to explore his career interests but he only started this year.

Along the way, Will has relied on his parents to push him towards college. Considering only one out of our eighteen participants has been accepted into a college overseas and boys have limited clarity about their employment and educational options, it is likely that the career and college advice that students receive in school is occurring too late in their academic careers. Armel describes the possibility of getting college guidance in this program but admits he has never spoken to anyone about colleges or scholarships before his senior year in high school.

*They [career and guidance] try to help us fill out scholarships and look for colleges and they put these things in place for us like we had a college planning program here and they put people in there to help us look for the good schools and show us what's bad or good skills and help us find where they're giving a scholarship away too.*

Although he is learning about the skills he needs to get into college, Armel has not taken advantage of the guidance services because he knows his family cannot afford to send him overseas to college at this time.

*I don't know, I don't think I got that proactive about it. I should have more but I was just mostly focused on football and school at the time, like my school grades and trying to think of ways I could get out of here to go to England, but I just didn't think I thought hard enough about it... We could go back to them any time we want and get advice from*

*them [guidance department], but for me it's just that it just don't make sense. In some ways it don't make sense to keep doing that and some ways it does cause I don't know if my mama's going to be able to afford to send me away to college straight away, so I have to go to Bermuda college first for two years. And then, with the scholarships and all of that I just don't know that much about it, think about it that much. But I can get advice, but there's just a lot of school work that we had done and worry about first before that.*

Armel is so focused on his schoolwork and finishing high school that it is difficult for him to see beyond that. Derek hopes to go to college overseas but he has not yet applied. He is also not clear on how he might obtain a scholarship. He states, *"Oh um just the other day I got a letter in the mail to be a member of the National High School scholarships and I just have to down a payment of \$60 and they make me a member and they could get me a scholarship to a college. But, I haven't read too much about it."* For Wesley, the message 'graduate high school' has kept him from thinking about what to do next. He talks about an interest in information technology, going away to college, and even owning his own business and when he recently shared this plan with his teachers, they encouraged him to go to college overseas. However, he has not yet applied yet, and has not received guidance on how to do so.

[Has anybody ever talked to you about what you would need to do here to be able to go to college for computer science?] *Well yea, I work in a TV department upstairs and they was telling me that I practically know all the basic stuff right now. So they'll say if I do college then I'll know some things, but you'll be still learning like new stuff cause, you know. Technology is changing and stuff. But they said I'm ready to go, they just point me to some schools, they said like some schools in England and a school in the United States*

*and a couple schools in Canada they said, they point me to, so I'm just gonna try to pick the right one.*

It is unclear how he might choose the 'right one' and it is too late for him to apply for the upcoming academic year. Furthermore, the certificate that Wesley is graduating with requires him to still pursue a GED before he can enroll in college but it is unclear if he knows that. Charles insightfully describes how the school could do more.

*They should try to find out what the student wants to do when they grow up, so they could push you towards it. I know it sounds like a backup, but push you towards it so they could get there instead of just coming to the last year asking them what they want to do, and then telling them what they need to do to get there.*

This is a good suggestion. Perhaps engaging students in an ongoing discussion about what they want to be would motivate them to not only stay in school but to plan for life after high school. Markus has been deeply disappointed by the college planning program.

*The college planning program here is a complete let-down because it goes in depth in what you should do but they just don't really help you fully. Like I don't feel like I got any decent support here. All the information I found, I found on my own, on my own research. So, it's really not helpful. [And that college support program happens in your senior year or earlier?] Senior year. Yeah a little bit late to try to get you ahead. [So before senior year does anyone do any sort of career planning?] No, I mean, I've had people ask me like the counselors will ask you, you know what do you want to do and they'll call you in like once every eight-months or so you'll see them maybe once or twice every couple years about it, but like I mean, but they don't really sit down and they don't*

*go over like, oh okay well, what's your skills? What's your ambition? How much money would you like to make?*

Again, this is a good suggestion. Asking kids to contemplate their futures, and what they want at the start of high school may result in action.

In sum, boys experience positive relationships with their teachers when they are encouraged to 'stick with it' and when they receive help with their schoolwork. They value the guidance about life after high school that is made available to them and believe that the teachers care about their futures. These relationships have helped these boys achieve their graduation goals. But with higher expectations and earlier connections to college and career aspirations, these relationships may promote even greater results. An emphasis on graduating high school has kept these boys from establishing long term goals and a plan for meeting those goals. An emphasis on life after high school when boys enter high school, coupled with adult support, might help students think about their interests, generate goals, and develop the confidence to believe that they can meet them.

## **Conclusions**

The results of semi structured interviews with 18 Black male public high school seniors indicate that graduation from high school is likely to result in some participation in college, especially Bermuda College which is free and offers trade certificates and associate's degrees. Students generally prefer to ultimately attend college overseas but almost all participants first plan to take preparatory classes at Bermuda College, to complete overseas college and scholarship applications, and to simply figure out what they want to do. Several students plan to enter the trades' (electrical, carpentry, IT tech) or science professions because they enjoy 'working with their hands' and because they believe they will eventually be able to own their

own businesses and be their own boss. Boys observe little professional or managerial work from their fathers or relatives which may contribute to their view that such work is unsuitable for them. Both parents and teachers support the boys' educational and professional aspirations and advise the boys to 'stick with it' and graduate high school and pursue higher education. Boys experience a 'maturity' challenge, especially when they start high school, and find it difficult to take school seriously. Consequently, maturity and disciplinary problems may inhibit teacher-student relationships and contribute to the high dropout rate among Black males in high school. Conversely, parent and teacher support communicates a confidence that the boys can indeed meet their educational and professional aspirations and inspires a commitment to school. With this support, the boys in this study are on track to graduate high school. However, they are only beginning to think about their college and career plans and are not clear about how to achieve their goals, especially college overseas or professional careers. Parents in this study are supportive but have limited experience with the complex process of college and fellowship applications and teachers are offering this guidance too late, oftentimes in the final year of high school. Results suggest that student teacher and family relationships are critical to how boys think about their own capabilities but that obstacles like gender specific expectations and limited exposure to employment options and college requirements may leave them in the position to say 'we're graduating, but what next?'

## Appendix to Chapter Four

### Appendix A

#### Script for Student Interviews

Before we begin, I want to thank you for your time and make sure a few things are clear.

1. This interview will last about one hour. I'll be asking you questions about your experiences at home and in school, as well as your goals for the future. If any of the questions are unclear, just let me know and I'll try to explain better.
2. You definitely do NOT have to answer ANY question that makes you feel uncomfortable. Just let me know and we can move on.
3. It is very important to remember that there are absolutely NO right or wrong answers to these questions. This is not a test and this interview is in no way connected to your standing at school. I just want to know what you *really* think and feel.
4. Everything you say will be strictly confidential (secret). Only myself and my fellow researchers in New York will be able to hear this interview. **NO ONE FROM YOUR SCHOOL WILL BE ALLOWED TO HEAR THIS.** The reason I'm recording the interview is so I do not have to take notes while you are talking and so I do not miss anything you have said. Your name will not be on the tape.
5. The only exception to this confidentiality rule is if you tell me that you are planning to hurt yourself or another person, or is someone else is hurting you. Then I will need to report that to your school principal.

Thank you for your participation in this project! Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### I. Introduction

Tell me a little bit about yourself. (How old are you? Who do you live with? What do you like to do? What do you plan to do after high school?)

#### II. School Experiences

- a. How would you describe this school? Probe for specifics (Can you tell me more about that? Can you give me an example of that? What happened that made you think that?)
- b. Tell me something that you like about school. Describe a recent good experience that you had in school. What happened? Who was involved? How was it positive for you?
- c. Tell me something that you do not like about school. Describe a recent negative experience that you had in school. What happened? Who was involved? How was it negative for you?
- d. Tell me about a time that you got into trouble in school. What happened?
- e. Tell me about your relationships with your teachers.
- f. What qualities do teachers like in students? Are you like that? Why or why not? Do teachers like you? Why? What teachers *don't* like you and why? Who is your favorite teacher? Why?
- g. What do your teachers expect from you in school? Do you think there are different expectations for different people? (girls, Whites) If yes, how do you know?

## Appendix to Chapter Four

- h. Do you ever talk to your teachers or other adults in the school about your plans for the future? If no, why not? What do you think they would tell you? If yes, what kind of advice do they give you?
- i. Tell me about your friends in school. What kinds of things do you talk about? What do you do together?
- j. Do you ever talk to your friends in school about your plans for the future? If no, why not? What do you think they would tell you? If yes, what kind of advice do they give you?
- k. Can you tell me about some of your friends that have dropped out of high school?
- l. How are you doing in school? How do you feel about that?
- m. What are you learning in school? Do you feel that it is helpful information to you?
- n. Are you interested in school? Why or why not?
- o. Do you ever skip school? Why? If you didn't have to come to school, would you come anyway? Why or why not?
- p. Do you feel like you 'belong' in this school? Why or why not? Can you give me an example of a time that you felt like you belonged here?
- q. What would you change about your school if you could?
- r. Do you think you are treated differently from the girls in your school? Why or why not? If yes, in what way?
- s. Do you think you are treated differently from the White boys in your school? Why or why not? If yes, in what way?
- t. Do you think that students in private schools have different opportunities than you? Why or why not? If yes, in what way?

### III. Family Experiences

- a. Tell me about your mother. What role does your mother play in your life?
- b. What do you like about this relationship? Why? Can you give me examples?
- c. What don't you like about this relationship? Why? Can you give me examples?
- d. Tell me about the disagreements you have with your mom. What are they typically about?
- e. How does your mother want you to be? What kind of education does she want you to get? What kind of job does she want you to get?
- f. How far did your Mom go in school? Does she have a job now? If yes, tell me about her job.
- g. Tell me about your father. What role does your father play in your life?
- h. What do you like about this relationship? Why? Can you give me examples?
- i. What don't you like about this relationship? Why? Can you give me examples?
- j. Tell me about the disagreements you have with your dad. What are they typically about?
- k. How does your father want you to be? What kind of education does he want you to get? What kind of job does he want you to get?
- l. How far did your Dad go in school? Does he have a job now? If yes, tell me about his job.
- m. Who lives in your home? How do each of these family members influence your thoughts about your future? (Go through each member of the family living in the home. Probe for specifics, i.e. Can you tell me about a time that you talked about that? How did that conversation or experience make you feel?).
- n. Is there anyone else in your family that you talk to about your plans for the future?



## Appendix to Chapter Four

### IV. Future Aspirations:

- a. Do you think school is important? Why or why not?
- b. Do you plan to graduate high school? Why or why not?
- c. Do you plan to pursue advanced certifications (GCEO and GCEA)? Why or why not?
- d. Do you plan to attend college? Why or why not? If yes, where? Can you tell me more about that choice? If you do not plan to go to college, what are your plans for next year and the future?
- e. What kind of job are you hoping to get after you finish school?
- f. What do your friends plan to do after high school?
- g. Do you think the opportunities available to girls in Bermuda are different from those available to Black boys? If yes, please explain. Probe for examples.
- h. Do you think the opportunities available to White or other non-Black Bermudians are different from those available to Black boys? If yes, please explain. Probe for examples.
- i. What do you think is challenging for Black males in Bermuda? Do you think that has been or will be hard for you?
- j. What do you think it means to be 'on the wall' in Bermuda?
- k. Where do you see yourself in 5 years? In 10 years?

### Closing:

- a. Is there anything that you didn't have a chance to talk about that you think would be helpful for me to know?
- b. Do you have any questions?
- c. How was this experience for you?

Thanks again for your time, patience and honesty!

## **CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion**

**By Ronald B. Mincy and Monique Jethwani-Keyser**

The first three chapters of the report identify large unemployment, earnings, and educational attainment gaps between young Black Bermudian males, and their same age peers as well as the role of parents and teachers in forming the educational and career aspirations of Black Bermudian high school students. Besides industry and a few personal characteristics, unemployment and earnings gaps are highly associated with educational attainment gaps. To understand what should account for these educational attainment gaps, Chapter 2 reviews the literature used in Chapter 3 and 4 to examine the degree to which these gaps in educational attainment are associated with family background, parental and other characteristics. There are other factors, also reviewed in Chapter 3 that we cannot observe in the Census, but which are also important determinants of educational attainment. These include boys' perceptions of their experiences in school and at home, which may be helpful in explaining educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and females. Chapter 4 uses qualitative interviews with Black Bermudian high school students to provide additional insights about the ways in which families and teachers influence the career and educational aspirations of Black Bermudian males. This chapter summarizes and interprets our findings and suggests their implications for future research and for programs and policies designed to reduce unemployment earnings and educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and their same age peers.

### **Discussion of Empirical Findings**

#### **Employment and Earnings Gaps**

Almost all young Bermudian males work, or look for work, but Black Bermudians perform worse than their White counterparts in four ways. First, Black Bermudians have unemployment rates (6%) that are almost twice the size of the White Bermudians (11%). Second, among those who work, school enrollment among the former (15%) is less than the latter (23%). Third, among those who are not enrolled, low annual earnings (\$16,000) are more common among the former (13%) than the latter (10%).

If the crime, violence and the growing concentration of Black Bermudian males in prisons have an economic basis, it must be the difficulty in finding a job, not how little they earn when they work. Young White Bermudian males also have low earnings, but many are foregoing higher earnings so they can continue schooling and those who are not enrolled are much less involved in criminal behavior. This means that the earnings of Black and White Bermudian males will continue to diverge as they grow older. White Bermudian males will recoup the investments they have made in schooling and Black Bermudian males will experience reductions in earnings associated with the labor market experiences they lost while they were unemployed and the scarring effects of criminal involvement on their future earnings (Western, 2002).

According to human capital theory, unemployment would be lower and earnings higher among young Black Bermudian males if they had more education (Becker, 1993). Unfortunately, Black Bermudian males gain less from higher education than their same-age peers. This makes it more difficult for them to secure employment in the international and business services sectors where wages are higher. If they had as much education and worked in the same industries as White Bermudian males, they would still earn between \$1600 and \$3000 less. If they had as much education as Black Bermudian females they would earn no more, but if they worked in the same industries, they would earn \$3200 less. These persistent gaps may discourage many young

Black Bermudian males from obtaining more education or seeking employment in higher-paying industries, which require more education.

### **Enrollment and Educational Attainment Gaps**

In theory family income, family structure, and parental education should help to explain educational and enrollment gaps between Black Bermudian males and their same age peers. With higher incomes, parents can afford to buy their children the books, supplies, space for doing homework, and high quality educational environments promote educational attainment (Phillips, Brooks-Gunn, Klebanov & Crane, 1998)). Married and highly educated parents are more likely to support their children's education in part by choosing to spend their income on their children's education over other consumption or investment (Ermisch & Francesconi, 2001). Income, education, and the proportion of children in married and other two-parent families are higher among White Bermudians than Black Bermudians. Mothers head most Black single-parent families and like boys around the world, boys in female-headed families get less education than girls (Buchman, Diprete, et al., 2008). For all these reasons, we expect socioeconomic status variables that we can observe in the Census to help explain enrollment and educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian males and their same age peers.

In practice it is difficult to disentangle the effects of parental income and education from the effects of household structure, which is highly associated with race and educational attainment. It is clear that in all types of families, Black Bermudian females have educational advantages, and in some types of families these advantages are quite large.

In general, the gaps between White Bermudian and Black Bermudian male teenagers in two-parent households are lower (or even reversed) than the corresponding gaps in between White Bermudian and Black Bermudian male in single parent households. This is true for the

enrollment and non-enrollment gaps between White Bermudian and Black Bermudian male teenagers and the education certification gaps between White Bermudian and Black Bermudian male young adults. It is difficult to account for the lower racial educational attainment gaps in two parent families, because our estimates account for a variety of ways in which these household types differ, including parents' earnings, marital status, and education.

Educational attainment gaps between Black Bermudian females and Black Bermudian males also differ by household type, but not in an orderly or predictable way. Black Bermudian female teenagers in single parent families are much more likely to be enrolled and to have completed secondary school with a certification and not enrolled in any additional educational program than Black Bermudian male teenagers in single parent families. For Black Bermudian teenagers in two parent families, the gender gaps in enrollment and non-enrollment are even larger, however, the larger gap could be due to daughters in two parent families headed by unmarried mothers.

Young adult Black Bermudian females who live independently are more likely than Black Bermudian males who live independently to have an advanced secondary certificate, a technical degree or more, and a Bachelor's degree or more. The educational attainment gaps between young adult Black Bermudian females and Black Bermudian males living with a single parent increase with educational attainment. The former are much more likely than the latter to have an advanced secondary certificate, far more likely to have a technical degree or more, and far --more than four times-- more likely to have a Bachelor's degree or more. Among young adults who live with two parents, gender gaps are the same for all levels educational attainment.

The family background and parental characteristics available in the Census tell us much about family resources and provide proxies for family support. However, the Census tells us

nothing about the characteristics of the schools students attend, nor about the ways in which Black Bermudian males experience their families and schools. For example, even though they have the same families and attend the same schools as Black Bermudian females, Black Bermudian males and females may experience these environments differently for variety of reasons, thereby influencing their behavior. For these reasons we wanted to examine how the family and school experiences of Black Bermudian males are related to their educational and career aspirations.

## **Discussion of Qualitative Findings**

### **Career and Educational Aspirations**

Our qualitative research explored how Black Bermudian high school seniors articulate their plans for the future, including the messages that they receive from their families and teachers. This research was guided by theories that suggest parental support and the experience of positive teacher-student relationships are critical contexts for adolescent development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and contribute to the educational and professional attainment of Black males (Booker, 2006; Croninger & Lee, 2001; Dubow et al., 2001; Jackson & Meara, 1977; Roderick, 2003). A grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) leads us to ask the following question: How do the identified themes and patterns in this study of Bermudian adolescent Black males compare to our existing understanding of educational and employment aspirations among males in the research literature? Keeping this question in mind, this section discusses the messages that Black Bermudian males receive from their families and teachers regarding their educational futures, and the obstacles inhibiting their professional and educational goals.

### **Educational Attainment: Sticking With It**

Qualitative findings in this study reveal that the experience of finishing high school is no small accomplishment for Black Bermudian boys. As in the United States, Black Bermudian males have the poorest rates of high school completion and are disproportionately affected by no tolerance policies and the emphasis on discipline that occurs in large schools (Roderick, 2003). The boys in this study are all on the road to graduate so what makes them unique? The boys all indicate having someone in their family or school that supports their goals and encourages them to stick with their education. They also generally felt that their families and teachers believed in their ability to finish high school and go to college.

Educational and psychological research in the United States suggests that family and teacher support promotes academic achievement and positive expectations for the future and prevents students from dropping out of high school (Booker, 2006; Jackson & Meara, 1977; Roderick, 2003; Roeser, et. al, 2000; Rumberger et. al, 1990). Positive family and teacher relationships can have the greatest results for the most socio-economically disadvantaged adolescents (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Dubow et al., 2001).

Family advice and engagement in education has been identified as an important contributor to educational attainment, especially for Black males (Dubow et. al, 2001). Noddings (1992) argues that ‘authentic caring’ by teachers, or care for students’ emotional and academic well being, is the basis for all learning. “Caring relations can prepare children for an initial receptivity to all sorts of experiences and subject matters (Noddings, 1992, p. 36).” The boys in this study experience warm and friendly teachers who are available for assistance and support as long as they demonstrate a commitment to working hard in school. They have family members who encourage them to pursue their studies so that they might achieve higher

certifications and jobs with high earnings. Teacher support has helped these students achieve graduation, higher school engagement and positive expectations for the future.

In this study, caring teachers and engaged families that offer educational support have guided students towards graduation and have helped them internalize a belief that working hard in school will help them to achieve their educational and professional goals. Consequently, almost all of the boys expect to pursue higher education overseas. This study contributes to our cross cultural understanding of the important role that teachers and families play in the lives of adolescents. However, students are not clear on what to do next, bringing us to the obstacles to educational attainment facing Black Bermudian males.

## **Obstacles to Educational and Professional Attainment**

### ***Resources, Knowledge and a Glass Ceiling***

In the U.S., researchers have identified several obstacles to educational attainment for Black males including income (Coleman, Campbell, et al., 1966) low teacher expectations (Rosenthal, 2002), stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1998) and school or social isolation (Downey, 2008). A close examination of the qualitative data reveals that limitations to boys' ambitions were unique to the experience of Black Bermudian males. Because there is no four year college in Bermuda, boys need to go overseas to achieve a Bachelor's degree or higher. However, a lack of resources accompanied by a lack of knowledge about college requirements, scholarships, and the processes involved in applying for and attending a four year college overseas, presents obstacles to boys' clarity about what to do after they graduate from high school. A lack of knowledge about employment options and suspicions of a glass ceiling in the higher paying industries such as finance, may be limiting their professional aspirations.



In this study, high school seniors report the following educational ambition: go to Bermuda College to achieve an associate's degree and then go overseas to achieve higher education. Professionally, boys hope to find a job where they can work with their hands, have a flexible schedule and be their own boss. Because parents, teachers and even the boys themselves have been so focused on graduation, boys are not prepared for college overseas. This makes Bermuda College a common stepping stone. Like many low income students in the United States, community college is seen as a place to figure it all out. The parents of the boys in this sample are predominantly in working class occupations and are likely to have little exposure to the process of getting into a four-year college, or knowledge of management professions, so they advise their sons to go to community college where they might find the guidance they need. Boys in our qualitative sample frequently shadow their fathers at work (i.e. on the construction site), even when they do not live with their fathers. It is likely that boys have little vision of management professions or what office work is really like.

Ogbu (1990) argues that involuntary minorities in the United States, defined as those who were brought into society through slavery, conquest or colonization, often view education as a pathway to success but the experience/observation of a glass ceiling in the labor market "discourages them from investing their time and effort into the pursuit of education and the maximization of educational accomplishments" (p.50). The same might be said for Black Bermudian males. Although many of the boys are interested in higher education, most are headed for community college. And boys are expressing interest in industries where they might 'work with their hands' rather than the high paying financial industry, which is perceived as offering unappealing office jobs. As we know from chapter 1, more White Bermudians hold jobs in management and Black Bermudians who do enter professional careers frequently speak of a

‘glass ceiling’ at middle management, defining the glass ceiling in Bermuda as “racism; prejudice; real; limitations; intentional; historical” (Scott, 2003). Perhaps an awareness of this glass ceiling contributes to the notion that Black males would prefer positions in the trades where they might even run their own businesses. Educational attainment has not rewarded Black Bermudian males with higher earnings explaining why they may view the trades’ professions as offering greater job opportunity.

Although mothers are more likely to work within industries such as business or finance, boys are not interested in these office jobs, even if they pay more than a ‘hands on’ job might. A qualitative study of low-skilled, poorly educated unemployed males in England, found that men rejected non-manual office jobs (Nixon, 2006). The author explains that non manual or customer service based jobs would “require the young men to deny themselves, to be passive and socially acceptable, to cover up their class and their backgrounds, their feelings and emotions, their accents, their behavior, and so on. And as the young men’s previous experiences and difficulties with customers and management demonstrated, this was something they clearly struggled to do.” British men in Nixon’s study felt comfortable and experienced job satisfaction through working with their hands, fixing machines and making things and simply saw no potential for satisfaction or fulfillment in service or office work. Similarly, the boys in this study believe they will be happier in jobs where they can work with their hands and experience flexible hours. Although they may earn more in professional jobs, perhaps they fear that they would have to give up a bit of their identity as Black Bermudian males. Furthermore, concerns about the maturity of Black males may lead to the perception that they do not have the ‘soft skills’ (i.e. punctuality, compliance with rules) necessary to work in an office setting and that these jobs are better suited for females. Together, these findings further our cross cultural understanding of the

disadvantages facing Black males and suggest a lack of resources, exposure and knowledge about educational and professional options after high school present a great obstacle to the aspirations of Black Bermudian males.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Data limitations are the most important reason for caution in interpreting the findings of our study and drawing policy implications. Many of these limitations arise because the data sources on which we rely (the Census and our qualitative interviews) do not include information on important determinants of educational attainment. Other limitations arise because these data sources are cross-sectional, so we are able to examine associations among variables, but causal inferences are not possible. In addition, because of resource constraints, our qualitative study is limited to Black males at one public Bermudian high school. Although the boys spoke much about how their aspirations and interactions with families and teachers differed from those of girls, or their friends who dropped out of school, we did not speak with the girls or the out of school youth themselves.

### **Quantitative Studies**

The Census does not provide information about the characteristics of the schools students attend. Studies show that educational attainment is affected by teacher quality and experience; expenditures on facilities and classroom instruction; the racial mix of the student body, other characteristics of the student body such as their performance and socioeconomic status (Ferguson, 1991, 1998, 199b, August & Shanahan, 2008, (Conchas, 2001; Crosnoe, 2005; Moody, 2001; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995, 2001). These school characteristics may have a direct effect on educational attainment through the resources they provide or an indirect effect through their influence on school climate (e.g., maintaining standards of excellence).

Presumably parents with higher incomes or higher levels of educational attainments choose schools for their children with more resources per pupil, and lower concentrations of poor performing students. So, our controls for parental characteristics are proxies for some of these school characteristics. Nevertheless, most Black Bermudian students attend public schools, while most White Bermudian students attend private schools. These school characteristics are likely to depend upon whether the school is a public or private school. Therefore, even after controlling for parental characteristics, it is difficult to determine whether educational attainment gaps between Black and White Bermudian males are due to factors associated with race or factors associated with differences between public and private schools. Not even our qualitative interviews give us any information about the characteristics of private schools or the experiences of Black Bermudian males who attend those schools.

Many factors associated with race and gender, which the Census does not measure, could explain the earnings, unemployment, and educational attainment gaps between young Black Bermudian males and their same age peers. Three of these factors are discrimination, occupational segregation and soft skills. Bermuda's Big Conversation has made the role of employment discrimination clear to all, though some may doubt its' on-going salience. Occupational segregation is more subtle, because it reflects both employer and worker preferences. Employers may prefer young Black Bermudian females for entry-level administrative jobs. Young Black Bermudian males may reject these jobs in favor other jobs where they can "be their own boss" or "work with their hands." These preferences could affect their choices about education and careers, and therefore, affect their earnings. Employers easily explain employment and earnings gaps in favor of White Bermudian males and Black Bermudian females by superior (soft) skills, such as punctuality, teamwork, cooperation,

compliance with rules, and good workplace attitudes. With equal facility, teachers easily explain educational attainment gaps in favor of females by appeal to related skills such as attentiveness, organization, and compliant (vs. disruptive) behavior. But others in Bermuda may be less familiar with these explanations.

These explanations are inter-related because of the well-documented history of racism in Bermuda and the less-well documented history of sexism (Hodgson, 2008). For decades, Black Bermudians were relegated to the lowest positions on the occupational ladder, including those in domestic work and hotels. In the eyes of young Bermudian men today, soft skills may too closely resemble the subservient behavior their fathers had to display to make a decent living. This is an important element of the cool-pose subculture that reduces the employability of young Black men in the U.S (Majors & Bilson, 1993). This cultural adaptation might also partly explain the preference for self-employment and working with their hands among young Black males (Nixon, 2006). Young Black (and Caribbean) women in the U.S. also reject the subservient roles their mothers had, but their cultural adaptation involves getting more education and work even at the bottom of managerial hierarchies.

With direct measures of discrimination, soft skills, and occupational segregation, we could determine which is most responsible for the large earnings advantages that White Bermudian males and Black Bermudian females enjoy over Black Bermudian males, even after controlling for everything else the Census measures. However, these factors are hard to measure, because they involve socially undesirable behavior, which people are reluctant to admit. With longitudinal data, which results from surveys of the same young people as they age, we could control for spurious correlations among race, gender, earnings, unemployment, educational attainment and other factors that are hard to measure. Therefore, the most important implication

of our quantitative research is the need for longitudinal data. Without such data, it is impossible to say which of the latter is primarily responsible for the substantial race and gender differentials that remain, after controlling for other characteristics the Census does measure.

While the gains from a technical education are higher for Black Bermudian males than females, the former gain less than the latter from college. This means that young Black Bermudian women do not have to look to the future to justify investments in higher education. Put differently, to earn a decent living in Bermuda, young Black Bermudian females have no other choice. Young Black Bermudian men, by contrast, do have choices. They can earn more than their female counterparts without rigorous academic training in secondary school and avoid higher education altogether. Doing so may reduce their future earnings, but this is difficult to perceive while they are still young. This presents a critical challenge for Bermudian educators, policymakers, and youth-service workers. How does one get young Black Bermudian males to be more forward-looking when making these critical decisions? We take up this question in the final section.

### **Qualitative Studies**

Although the qualitative study offers information about Black Bermudian males, the generalizability of the results are limited. This study took place in a particular geographic location, a public school where the leadership of the school was female, as were most of the teachers. Whether similar results would be found among Black male adolescents in a private school setting, where there are more White students and foreign born teachers, is unclear. The boys in this study were in their final year of high school and on the pathway towards graduation so it is also unclear if similar results would be found among Black male students in their first or second year of high school. Although we make comparisons to their same age peers in this

study, future research seeking to understand the experiences and aspirations of Black Bermudian males might include other samples of the Bermudian population such as girls, White males, private school students, Black male students in their first or second year (before they are of the age where they might drop out of school), or young out of school Black males.

Considering the disadvantages that Black Bermudian males face, especially those from low income and single parent families, it is essential that future studies also examine the motivation behind messages such as ‘Black boys like to work with their hands’, or ‘Black males don’t like to sit behind a desk’. An examination of the phenomenological experiences of the young adult population in a variety of educational and professional environments is crucial to understanding the complexities of the Black Bermudian male experience.

### **Implications and Policy Recommendations**

This section of the report develops the implications of our findings for programs and policies designed to close employment, earnings, and education achievement gaps between young Black Bermudian males and their same age peers. Three considerations dominate our thinking in this effort: adolescent development, especially gender differences, 2) evidence on the links between dropping out, unemployment and criminal behavior, and 3) human capital theory, which provides a strong basis for the relationship between education and earnings, most of which has been tested using cross-sectional data.

Adolescence is a time of great physical, developmental and social change. Physically, adolescents are coping with changes in their bodies due to puberty. Developmentally, adolescents are beginning to think more and more abstractly. They are starting to imagine the hypothetical as well as the real, they consider multiple dimensions of a problem at once and they are able to understand the perspectives, thoughts and feelings of others. Socially, adolescents

begin to experience greater complexities in their relationships as they question their identities and the world around them. As adolescents reflect more and more on themselves, their relationships and other complicated problems, they begin to appreciate the relativity and uncertainty of knowledge. They begin to consider what possibilities are available to them, have an increased capacity to think about the future as it connects to the present, and try to come to a deeper understanding of themselves and others. In other words, adolescents have an increasing breadth of vision but also a decreasing sense of certainty about themselves, their relationships and their communities and they need support and guidance as they make difficult and complicated decisions (Keating, 1990). This study reveals that Black Bermudian males are the most likely to drop out of high school, compared to their same age peers. Considering the reality that Black Bermudian females and males attend the same schools, it is likely that the academic and social environment is contributing to the challenges that Black males experience in high school.

According to our interviews with students who were scheduled to graduate from secondary school (chapter 4), many young Black Bermudian males experienced difficulty in the first years of secondary school because they believed they were 'immature.' Besides being lackadaisical about their studies, they also engaged in disruptive and rule-breaking behavior, which resulted in disciplinary problems. The boys we spoke with observed that girls were much less likely to engage in rule-breaking and disruptive behavior and appeared to be more committed to their studies. As a result, they were much less likely to be affected by disciplinary practices and boys suspect that the girls experience closer relationships with their teachers. When the boys were disruptive, however, they lost valuable instructional time and fell behind in their work. Some of their friends fell so far behind that they eventually dropped out. None of this is



surprising. Research in the U.S. suggests that African American males experience a decline in perceptions of the quality of teacher-student relationships as they move into high school, are disproportionately affected by the increased emphasis on discipline in high school and experience more suspensions and probations than their same age peers (Roderick, 2003). What is surprising is the failure of Bermudians and other citizens around the world to address the adverse consequences of these unremarkable events for males and for their larger societies.

In Bermuda and the United States, these adverse consequences are striking. In the United States only 47% of Black males graduate from high school and college enrollment and completion rates are the lowest among any demographic group, despite rising rates of return to college going for all such groups in recent years (Sen, 2006). Further, Black males without high school diplomas are over-represented among those who commit crimes and are therefore over-represented among the prison population in the United States (Western, 2002). Media reports also document the overrepresentation of Black Bermudian males who fail to complete secondary school among the incarcerated population in Bermuda as well. Therefore, efforts to prevent so many young Black Bermudian males from dropping out and efforts to reduce unemployment among those who have already dropped out are warranted on fiscal grounds alone.

Finally, despite the cautions we noted about causal inferences and cross-sectional data, there is ample empirical literature testing the core hypotheses of Human Capital theory that more education *causes* higher earnings, and most of this literature uses cross sectional data (Becker, 1993). As a result, reductions in educational attainment gaps would help to reduce unemployment and earnings gaps as well. However, it would be foolish to ignore the cautions about cross-sectional data and causal inferences. Chapter 1 also notes that earnings gaps remain even after controlling for educational attainment. The associations among race, gender, earnings,

unemployment, and educational attainment could be caused by spurious correlations with discrimination, occupational segregation, and soft skills gaps and, which we cannot measure with Census data. Studies show that soft skills and discrimination partially explain the unemployment and earnings gaps between young Black males and their same age peers in U.S. (Moss & Tilly, 1996; Pager & Shepherd, 2008). Employers in Bermuda also report that these factors are partly responsible for the unemployment and earnings gaps between young Black Bermudian males and their same age peers (Richardson, 2009). For these reasons, our program and policy recommendations address efforts to close the observed educational attainment, unemployment and earnings gaps by changing the work-related characteristics, including soft skills, of Black Bermudian males (supply-side strategies) and changing the ways in which employers interact and hire youth and young adults, especially Black Bermudian Males (demand-side strategies).

### **Career Counseling and Guidance in Secondary School**

Eventually the boys we spoke with, who were about to graduate, turned themselves around, often under the influence of an adult in their lives, and recognized the value and importance of school. These adults, including family members and teachers, encouraged them to stay in school and helped them utilize their new cognitive skill of connecting their current situations to their aspirations for the future. Cognitive support was accompanied by social support because by simply encouraging students to stay in school, adults were communicating the belief that boys could indeed succeed in school. It is essential that those Bermudian organizations working with mothers, fathers and teachers emphasize the importance of authentic and consistent relationships with Black males that encourage educational engagement. These relationships can have a far reaching impact for Black males, including improved academic performance, higher educational attainment and higher expectations for the future.

Increasing parental supports for the educational attainment of Black males sounds like a daunting task. Many Black Bermudian males live with mothers, who are already highly involved in their son's education, despite shouldering many other responsibilities. It may be unrealistic to expect more of these mothers, although the messages they give their sons about career and education could be reframed to encourage their sons to pursue higher education and careers requiring such education. For example, a mother who observes that her son enjoys building things need not conclude that her son would be well suited for work in the building trades. Surgeons work with their hands!

However, our interviews showed that many Black Bermudian males looked to their non-resident fathers when thinking about their own career choices and believed that their fathers cared about their education. While no one should disparage "working with your hands," the fathers of Black Bermudian males grew up in very different times. Their opportunities were more severely constrained by racism and the opportunities for high-paying employment in Bermuda's international, business services, and financial sectors were more limited. Black Bermudian fathers today can be proud of what they achieved, despite the obstacles, and still advise their sons to embrace get the education they need to prepare for jobs in the highest paying sectors of the modern Bermudian economy. Further, Nord, Brimhall, and West (1997) showed that middle and secondary school students with nonresident fathers who were involved in child's school activities were more likely than similar students with uninvolved nonresident fathers to get mostly A's, enjoy school, and less likely to repeat a grade. This suggests that even nonresident fathers could increase their role in the school activities of Black Bermudian males with good result.

For Black Bermudian males without educational support at home, in school support is especially critical. Warm and encouraging relationships, ones where they feel known and understood, are crucial for the well being of Black males in school and can effectively serve boys who are at risk of dropping out *and* those who are trying to determine the next steps in their educational careers.

Our first recommendation is that the career and college guidance departments in the Bermudian public secondary schools devote many more resources for Black males through ongoing and consistent relationships. Guidance counselors should work with students to identify students' interests and allow students to begin to articulate educational and professional goals right at the start of high school. This relational connection applies perhaps equally well to students who are at risk of dropping out and students who are likely to graduate and go on to higher education. Individual student needs can be identified and responded to within the context of these relationships between guidance counselors and students. Students who are thinking about dropping out can receive guidance in the consequences of alternative pathways and students who are thinking about higher education can identify the steps they need to take to achieve their goals. Guidance counselors might help students understand college requirements, the college application process and help students identify scholarships, internships and more. Counselors who guide students through decisions and problems not only send the message that the school sees their education as a priority but also helps students conceptualize the long term consequences of various actions before it is too late. Personalized guidance and ongoing monitoring of student progress are likely to promote school engagement, confidence and

motivation among Black males because their efforts in school are placed in the context of their own goals<sup>54</sup>.

### **Dropout Prevention and Recovery**

It is possible to still find students who, despite the receipt of much support, are at risk of dropping out. There is, of course, a large population of young-adult Black Bermudian males who have already dropped out. For these young people additional supports are needed along the lines of the dropout prevention and out of school youth programs, which have been extensively developed and evaluated in the U.S. over the last 4 decades. Few successful programs have been identified for young males, especially Black males, in part because the attention given to this population has been sporadic (Littles, Bowers, & Gilmer, 2008; Mincy & Pouncy, 2007)

When considering programs to prevent dropping out and recovery of out of school youth to productive activity, at least 4 policy considerations arise: cost effectiveness, discrimination, workforce development and workforce equity. We address the first by recommending only programs that have been rigorously evaluated in the U.S. or those that are promising, based upon, less rigorous evaluations, but which are especially appropriate for working with young Black Bermudian males. While adaptation would be necessary, and the results in the U.S. could not be generalized to Bermuda, there are reasons to believe that these programs, if adapted well, would be cost effective in Bermuda. We address the other policy issues after reviewing the program recommendations.

Even the moderately successful programs that have been identified in the U.S. are likely to be cost effective in Bermuda for three reasons. First, the number of the youth and young adults who could benefit from these programs represents a much larger share of school age population

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<sup>54</sup> Conversations with adult stakeholders in Bermuda suggest that the ratio of guidance counselors to students in the private schools is around 1:35 versus 1:200 in the public schools.

in Bermuda than in the U.S. The net costs of such programs would be lower in Bermuda than in the U.S. because Bermuda saves more (as a fraction of total) educational expenditures, when such a large proportion of its school-age population drops out. Second, the net benefits of experimental programs are also likely to be larger in Bermuda, because of the way such benefits are calculated. The net benefits of employment initiatives, for example, equal the difference between the earnings of participants and non-participants. In the U.S. these benefits are often smaller than expected, especially in the long run, because non-participants locate services on their own, which enable them to find jobs almost as good as those found by participants in the experimental program. However, Bermuda does not have a well-developed workforce development system, with easily accessible options for educating and training dropouts and out-of-school youth (Arnold, 2005). Therefore, those who participate in effective experimental programs brought to Bermuda (and adapted) from the U.S. are likely to have much higher employment rates and earnings than non-participants. This means that the net benefits (the difference in earnings of participants and non-participants) of such programs would be higher in Bermuda.

However, fiscal considerations are not the only considerations that call for action to prevent so many Black Bermudian males from dropping out and to reduce unemployment among so many who have already done so. Studies show that dropout and unemployed youth are also disproportionately involved in violent crimes. The Island has been jolted by the recent escalation of crime and violence among Black Bermudian males. As we shall see below efforts to reduce their dropout and unemployment rates are likely to reduce their criminal involvement as well.

### *Common Elements of Youth and Young Adult Services*

Before turning to the individual programs it is useful to discuss a few shared elements. First, over the years a youth development perspective has come to dominate dropout prevention, out-of school youth programs, and other programs targeting youth. Instead of the particular deficit or problem behavior of interest to policymakers, this perspective emphasizes the needs that troubled youth share in common with all youth. These common needs include safety and structure, belonging and membership, self-worth and an ability to contribute, self-awareness, and the ability to reflect and assess, independence and control over one's life, closeness with at least one lasting relationship with adults, competency and mastery (Mincy, 1994). Given the foregoing emphasis on adolescent development, it is not surprising that this youth development perspective influences our recommendations for policies and programs as well.

A youth development perspective can change the way we think about reducing dropout rates and unemployment among young Black males. For example, given the correlation between the average performance in the student body and individual educational attainment one might wish to avoid clustering the poor performing youth in a dropout prevention program. On the other hand, doing so might facilitate the sense of belonging and membership, which, along with other elements, could make a successful, alternative learning environment for such students. Also, some programs using a youth development approach appear at first glance to adopt elements that are inconsistent with their goals or actual outcomes. One promising program called YouthBuild gives out-of-school youth the opportunity to construct low-income housing in poor urban communities in the U.S. The program attracts many young male, dropouts because they believe they can learn a trade that pays them well for working with their hands and does not require them to learn new skills in a classroom setting, where they have already been unsuccessful. However, about half of its participants are young women. Few successful male or

female participants actually go into the construction trades upon completing the program, many complete their high school equivalency (GED's) certifications, and some go on to higher education. These outcomes are not surprising when viewed from the perspective of youth development, because YouthBuild gives all participants an opportunity to contribute an attain competency and master “at something,” and having done so, they begin to seek other areas where they can continue to contribute and learn.

The examples referred to below have other elements in common. They identify youth at-risk of dropping out early and use multiple strategies to ensure that these youth remaining engaged and complete high school. The programs take different approaches to achieve these goals. Two prominent examples are Multiple Pathways and the Quantum Opportunities project, which augment in-school programming with out-of school activities during the evenings and summers in the hope of accelerating progress toward graduation. Another approach, also employed by Multiple Pathways and Career Academies, described below, is to organize students into small schools within larger schools to create a stronger sense of belonging and membership, better student-teacher relationships and more personalized instruction and guidance.

Finally, these programs also undertake deliberate efforts to expose at-risk students to career, college and postsecondary training opportunities, and to reveal the correspondence between their in-school activities, on the one hand, and their potential future employment opportunities on the other. This is especially important for youth who may not be strong abstract learners and those for whom fathers (and other family members) without college training are the primary source of information about the world of work. These students need special motivation to remain engaged in their studies. They also need job-shadowing activities, so that they can try work-related activities that they would not otherwise encounter and discover which activities



they find more enjoyable. The hope is that this exposure will help them to recognize the careers for which they may be better suited. This kind of exposure could be crucial to Black Bermudian males in Bermuda, because they may not yet have at an opportunity to test their preference for "working with their hands" and may be making the false assumption that such a preference is incompatible with post-secondary education. Indeed many careers, such as lab technician, computer maintenance and repair, environmental-technology, and physical therapy involve professionals with college degrees, who work with their hands.

### **Dropout Prevention**

Although there are many models of dropout prevention, we recommend 3 that are particularly relevant seem particularly well-suited to the needs of Black Bermudian males: Multiple Pathways, the Quantum Opportunities Project, and Career Academies.

#### *Multiple Pathways*

Multiple Pathways is a program employed by the New York City Department of Education since 2005. It is designed to identify the risk factors for becoming an over-age or under-credited students, and to move these students from a traditional school to two alternative models: the Transfer School and the Youth Adult Borough Center (YABC's). Transfer schools are small, academically rigorous, full-time, high schools for students at risk of dropping out. They provide individual learning environments, maintain rigorous academic standards, pupil-oriented teaching methods, support for learning and development goals, and connections to college. YABC's are small, full-time, evening academic programs for at-risk students, which employ individual course offerings and allow students to take only the courses they need to graduate. In addition, YABC-students are referred to programs in their communities for youth development, career, and college preparation services. An outcomes assessment of Multiple

Pathways showed that more than half of Transfer School students with fewer credits than the average students their age graduate while less than one fifth of such students enrolled in traditional schools do so. Similarly, nearly half of students enrolled in YABC schools graduate within one year (New York City Department of Education, 2006).

The typical New York City high school enrolls many more students than either of Bermuda's private secondary school. With more resources devoted to guidance, as described above, students at risk of dropping out in the first or second year of secondary school could be identified and referred to a transfer school- located within the same physical buildings which house Bermuda's two public secondary schools. Put differently, to adapt this model to Bermuda, physical separation from the students still enrolled in the traditional school may not be as important as creating a small close community for at-risk students who develop a sense of belonging with other at-risk students and their teachers, under an alternative educational program, designed to meet their special needs. On the other, hand older students, who are at risk of dropping out from both of Bermuda's public schools, might be assigned to a YABC located in a common facility. This is what already occurs with students who dropout from Bermuda's public schools to technical schools. For the YABC, however, the entire orientation of the alternative school would change, based on an existing and rigorously evaluated program model.

### **Career Academies**

Career academies are small schools, usually involving 100-200 students, which organize the educational experience around specific career-based themes (health and hospitals, for example). In pursuing this theme, students who take academic, career, and technical courses, while participating in job-shadowing experiences of school-local employer collaborations. A long-term rigorous evaluation has shown very positive results on school completion, earnings

especially for at-risk Black males in United States. This places Career Academies in a class of its own. Despite the specific themes employed in career academy programs and their emphasis on career-themes, participants and non-participants (who were followed during the evaluation) were equally likely to enroll in post-secondary education (Kemple and Willner, 2008). Finally, like the Multiple Pathway-Transfer School option, Career Academies could be created in existing school facilities, with dedicated teachers and school administrators, trained to deliver the unique Career Academy program, which has now been replicated in over 100 communities in the U.S.

### *The Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP)*

The Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) is an after-school program that refers poor-performing 9th graders to community-based organizations for mentoring, case management, and tutoring, and other youth development activities. The eligibility criteria have evolved over time. The pilot program was originally targeted at the children of welfare recipients, mostly single mothers, one reason that the QOP may provide key lessons to assist Black Bermudian males, who are also disproportionately raised in single-mother households (Hahn, 1994). Another reason is QOP's a radical departure from the traditional educational program.

QOP identifies at-risk students in middle school, and continues to serve them for five years after enrollment. Most students are served in secondary school, but the program continues to provide services even if they drop out or are incarcerated. This genuine youth development approach prioritizes the need of a young person above the institutional setting in which he finds himself. This model, particularly the Philadelphia site, which had a strong follow-up component was particularly effective for boys, may have extraordinary relevance for at-risk Black Bermudian males, who upon leaving school prematurely are disconnected from other sources of support. The average cost per participant ranged from \$18,000 to \$49,000 over the 5 years of the

program. A non-experimental outcomes assessment showed positive impact for sites which closely adhered to the program model for disadvantaged students who were 14 years old or younger when they enrolled in the program in the ninth grade (Schizm, Stuart, and McKie, 2006).

### *Upward Bound*

Upward bound is a program serving students identified as at-risk of dropping out in the first or second year of secondary school. It provides mainly academic services (instruction, tutoring, and counseling) until the summer after high school graduation. Services during the summer are important feature of all years in which services are offered. A rigorous evaluation of showed that Upward Bound did not have significant effects for most students. However, the program did have significant and positive impacts on the number of courses taken in English math, science social studies and foreign languages, high school graduation, college attendance, and course completed in four-year colleges for students who initially had low expectations of attending a four-year college. Further, the program had particularly strong impact on boys, low-income students, and students with parents with no college education (Myers and Schirm 1999).

### *Programs for Out Of School Youth*

Besides adapting effective programs that target students at-risk of dropping out early, there are many out of school youth currently on the Island who are unemployed or employed, but earn very little. As we saw Black Bermudian males are over-represented among both groups and they need attention. Some dropped out of secondary school before receiving any certification. Others graduated from secondary school, but have little hope of career advancement. The development of a specific youth development policy to meet their needs may be seen as an effort to make some small progress on the development of a workforce development policy for all low-

skilled Bermudians, beginning with the training needs of the most vulnerable group at early age (Arnold, 2005). Further, this small focused step would not require the replication of one-stop centers, which have proven enormously ineffective especially for the needs of young workers, nor the identification of employer approved skills standards, which could come later (Holzer, 2008).

Instead the effort would be centered on adapting two programs to Bermuda. The first, The Job Corp, which has been replicated many times since its inception in 1964 and was also recommended by Arnold 2005, has been rigorously evaluated and shown positive impacts for out-of-school young males in the U.S. The second program YouthBuild has not been evaluated using the most rigorous methods. However, when implemented according to the original design, it has shown particularly strong outcomes for disadvantaged, out of school young adults, especially males. We recommend this program as well.

These two programs serve “disconnected” young people between the ages of 19 and 24 years old in United States, who are neither working, enrolled in school, in the military, or participating in vocational-training programs. Several features of these programs make them especially appropriate for consideration when designing efforts targeting Black Bermudian males who are “on the wall.” First, because they are focused on young adults, rather than teenagers, the programs are focused on a labor market, rather than educational outcomes, although they have positive impacts on the latter. Second, while the program shares comprehensive features similar to those targeting teenagers; they focus on the barriers to work and self-sufficiency typically faced by disconnected young adults, including housing, substance abuse, parental involvement and incarceration. Third, both programs emphasizes training in the skilled trades (“working with their hands”) so they would be very attractive to young men, yet transitions to post-secondary

education have occurred in both programs. Fourth, both have been replicated extensively and can support replications, even internationally. Finally, both programs have received major, on-going support from the federal government in the U.S., so support and on-going improvement is very likely.

### *The Job Corps*

The Job Corps is the largest, federally funded, vocationally focused education program in the U.S. for disadvantaged youth, mostly non-White, high school dropouts, between 16 and 24 years old, including many with former arrests, especially among males. Established in 1964, it is a residential program serving more than 60,000 new participants each year. The primary services provided include vocational training in more than 75 trades, with input from local businesses and labor unions, which provide information about specific competencies required by the training. Individualized and self-paced academic instruction in math, reading and writing skills leading to the GED certificate counseling, social-skills training, and health education. A comprehensive program, Job Corps also provides support services for those with substance abuse problems and recreational services. Following participation, Job Corps also provides job-placement services or assistance with additional training.

A recent rigorous evaluation with a four-year follow-up showed that Job Corps had large and statistically significant impacts on the GED of the other skills trades certificates, and by year 3 positive impacts (both small) average weekly earnings. There were no overall significant effects on earnings after 1998, when the downturn leading to U.S. 2001 recession began. (Schocet et al. 2008). However, earnings impacts were significantly positive for older (20-24 year-old) participants even during the 1998-2003. When assessing the relevance of these findings to Bermuda, we should note that employment programs typically have small impacts on

earnings, especially in the long run, because those who did not participate in the program are able to find similar employment training services in their communities. Since few such programs are available in Bermuda, this is unlikely and therefore program impacts of Job Corps in Bermuda are likely to be higher.

### *YouthBuild*

YouthBuild targets economically disadvantaged youth and young adults who build housing for low-income families in the U.S., while acquiring training in workplace skills, construction and education. The objectives of the program as described in authorizing legislation are: "expanding the supply of affordable housing by utilizing economically disadvantaged young adults, providing economically disadvantaged adults with opportunities for meaningful work in service to their communities, enabling economic disadvantaged youth young adults to obtain education employment skills necessary to achieve economic self-sufficiency, and the development of leadership skills and commitment to community development among young adults and low-income communities."

The program has never been evaluated using rigorous standards, but a number of studies show that in selected sites YouthBuilds have successfully enabled young adults to enter education programs and obtain employment skills. For example, a cost benefit analysis of the YouthBuilds programs in Minnesota found that graduates earned more than double the minimum wage while youth with similar characteristics earned only the minimum wage. Moreover, YouthBuilds participants with prior criminal justice backgrounds have had considerably lower rates of the arrests and convictions and fewer returns to prison than other youth involved in criminal justice system. The study was estimated to a have total net benefit to the state of \$7.3 million by 2006.

## **Discrimination and Worker Equity Policy**

Over the past two years we have read hundreds of pages of reports about education and labor markets in Bermuda, histories of the struggle for racial equality, newspaper articles about current events touching on these issues, including those reporting tragic incidents of violence among Bermuda Bermudian males. We have spoken with a dozen or so stakeholders in government, philanthropy, the independent sector, and the private sector. We visited the island approximately six times to speak with students, teachers, and school administrators. We have enjoyed the islands' luxurious and low-priced hotels, chatted with staff members taxi drivers, and out of school youth. Finally, we have scoured the Census data to better understand what is producing employment earnings and educational attainment gaps between young Black Bermudian males in the same age peers and studied about 150 scholarly articles and books touching on similar problems in United States and throughout the developed world.

While we cannot claim to know more than Bermudians about the challenges facing youth and the larger society, we believe we have paid our dues and become expert, in our own way, about what needs to occur to meet these challenges. Therefore, we feel qualified to risk an opinion about the policy decisions that need to be made in order to make progress on an issue that has been long neglected.

Bermuda is in the midst of two debates that bear upon the recommendations we have proposed. One relates to efforts to undo the legacy of racism in Bermuda so that one day racial equality can become a reality. Despite the structures Bermuda has created such as the Commission for Unity and Racial Equality (CURE) and the Bermuda Race Relations Initiative's Big Conversation, this debate is still contentious. No one denies the legacy of racism, but there is much disagreement about its relative importance, when measured against other forces



responsible for the persistent inequities between Black Bermudians and others on the Island (The Bermuda Job Market Brief, 2009). While efforts to address discrimination must continue, Bermudians may be sensing that this debate is at an impasse, because acknowledging the legacy of racism does not necessarily suggest a way forward, given the persistent educational and occupational gaps and the high demands for college trained workers, which should resume after the worldwide recession ends.

The other debate is more recent, but no less contentious. It concerns the Workforce Equity Bill through which firms would be given a choice between employing Black Bermudians at all levels in proportion to their representation in the workforce or paying a fee (or fine) of \$50,000. When introduced in 2007, this bill was met with much resistance from the business community, which argued that there are too few Black Bermudians with the educational credentials to fill the positions this bill would require. Proponents, on the other hand, argue that the number of college trained Black Bermudians exceeds the number of college trained White Bermudians (The Bermuda Job Market Brief, 2009). Moreover, they argue that unless some strategy that gives these qualified Black Bermudians entry into high paying jobs, the income inequalities that have persisted for decades will continue.

These debates will take a long time to resolve, because the issues are thorny and both sides of each debate have credible arguments. What is needed is a third alternative, a pragmatic, thinking out of the box alternative that does not require entrenched stakeholders to abandon their positions, but does provide them with a way to move forward. We believe our programmatic recommendations would do just that if accompanied by policy changes.

## **Building and Funding the Infrastructure to Support Services for Out-of-School Youth In Bermuda**

First, none of the programs we have recommended can be implemented without the collaboration of schools, other units of government, youth serving organizations, and members of the business community. This last observation is critical. None of the strategies can be implemented effectively without the cooperation of business leaders who would be required, perhaps with the assistance of program consultants and youth serving organizations, to look within their organizations to identify jobs that can be done by youthful interns shadowing the activities of staff members and thereby learning the vocational, soft and work-related skills they need.

Business leaders in Bermuda have undertaken previous efforts to address this need by providing intensive internships for graduating students who still needed to prepare for the world of work. For example, with the support from the Bank of Bermuda, secondary school graduates in Bermuda were offered a financial services preparation course developed by the Financial Services Academy of Bermuda. Besides job shadowing, these students learned office etiquette, basic computer skills and soft skills training, including the importance of punctuality. Those who successfully completed the course were guaranteed employment. For reasons that are unclear, this effort was discontinued.

In another effort, following the recommendations of Arnold (2005), Bermuda moved to replicate a highly effective Job Corps model established at the William M. Davis Career-Technical High School in Rhode Island so that students in Bermuda seeking training in technical skills could have a more effective program than was available in the public schools. This effort was never fully implemented<sup>55</sup>.

Unlike Arnold (2005) our recommendations do not require creating and entirely new

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<sup>55</sup> We are grateful to Richard Richardson (2009) for these examples of previous efforts in Bermuda to address the training needs of out of school youth in Bermuda.

workforce development system. Instead these efforts would begin by reaching out to program experts in the U.S. to replicate their services, much like the effort that preceded the planned replication of the William M. Davis Career-Technical High School Job Corps model. They would also require the involvement of youth serving organizations in Bermuda to recruit out of school youth and ensure that their youth development needs are addressed, along with their educational and training needs. Doing so would require answers to many questions, and this would create opportunities for dialogue and small scale action on a whole variety of discrete problems that must be resolved to identify, adapt, implement, and evaluate the programs we have recommended. But who would organize and coordinate this activity, so that it was sustained? And who would pay for it?

Currently no government agency, including the National Training Board or the Training and Employment Service, makes a priority of serving the youth or workforce development needs of out of school youth between 16 and 18 years, who lack a GED certification. These are probably the youth most likely to be “on the wall,” (e.g., not enrolled, unemployed, or employed at very low earnings) and the youth most likely to be involved in criminal behavior. When they leave the public schools, perhaps after having been disciplined several times for rule-breaking behavior and falling behind in their work, a few may enroll in the "tech" program. But this program, serves a small only a small number of students with funds from the Department of Education. However, even these students are not served with the kind of innovative services that might exist if some the programs we recommend above were available.

Think of what this means. Half of the Black Bermudian males who enter the public high schools in the last several years leave without obtaining a certificate. The average cost per student in Bermuda is somewhere between \$16,000 and \$24,000. Suppose half of this amount

represented fixed costs, associated with maintaining school facilities, administering educational services and other expenditures that do not vary per student. This means that somewhere between \$8,000 and \$12,000 is currently left behind in the Department of Education's budget, but not being used by the National Training Board, the Training and Employment Service, or any other government agency, to serve these former students. None of the programs we recommend above has a per participant cost (including fixed costs) that exceeds \$24,000. In other words, the funds left behind in Bermuda's public schools by out of school youth could be used to fund one third to one half the full costs of servicing these youth more effectively.

These funds should be made available to some new agency, whose primary mission is to serve out-of-school youth who lack a GED with the most innovative services available through youth serving organizations in Bermuda. In turn, these agencies should deploy these funds to address the "on the wall," problem in Bermuda. We recommend a new agency or department to organize their efforts and to support the research and development of partnerships with the business sector, because existing agencies that might perform this critical role are committed to somewhat different tasks for very different populations, namely the education and training of well-functioning children or adults.

Though the out of school youth population, which is the focus of our study is small, it is comprised of young people who have been unsuccessful in the traditional school setting and who are experiencing difficulty in youth to adult transition. This is a critical period of human development and advances in the field of youth development, which focus on the needs of all youth, have led to changes in programming, which need to be fully embraced and developed. This task may not be well-suited for the Department of Education, the National Training Board, or the Training and Employment service. These departments focus on much larger populations

and it may be difficult for them to give adequate attention to the needs of out-of-school youth population, which despite its small size, generates enormous financial and human costs and receives so much attention in Bermuda.

After committing fixed costs to the new agency or department, the \$8000 to \$12,000 per student, which is not being used effectively to serve out of school youth in the public schools, could be made available to support the most innovative youth and workforce development services for out-of-school youth who lack a GED by youth serving organizations in Bermuda. These organizations currently provide some youth services with funding from private and corporate philanthropy and government. However, our conversations with youth service providers in Bermuda indicate that youth serving organizations in Bermuda tend to focus on specific risks or services – Big Brothers/Big Sisters provides mentors for young people who need adult role models, PRIDE focuses on substance abuse prevention and healthy lifestyles, YOUTHNET focuses on computer literacy, and the Adult Learning Center focuses on GED programs). Moreover, these organizations do not have a stable funding base and therefore, their capacity is underdeveloped and the services they provide are untested, though well-meaning. What Bermuda lacks are comprehensive programs, with secure funding, that use a youth development approach, to prepare out of school youth to make a successful transition to adulthood, including school re-entry, higher education, and preparation for work.

By contrast, there are well-established models for serving out-of-school youth in United States. The service models we recommend above have been evaluated, some with the highest standards, and shown to be promising or effective for Black males in the United States who have not completed secondary school, are unemployed, not -enrolled, or employed at very low wages. Like their counterparts in Bermuda, these young men are over-represented among those involved

in crime and substance abuse, and they are filling prisons and jails in the United States at alarming rates. Even in the midst of the longest period of economic recovery in the U.S, the employment to population rates of young Black males in the U.S. who had secondary school degrees, but no college, continued to fall (Mincy, 2006). The labor shortages that Bermuda has experienced in the past two decades indicate that this would not be the case in the thriving post-recession Bermudian economy if Bermudians act now to recover their out-of-school youth.

We hope Bermudians will seize the opportunity we have tried to sketch in our study, and begin to construct a way out for its youth and the larger society.

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