

ABSTRACT

The research makes an exploratory investigation into attitudes toward schooling educationally blind pupils in the Jamaican dual school curriculum within the context of constraining political and social attitudes. It studies the social history which has shaped development of their schooling and the attitudes experienced by them through the special school curriculum and, later, the integration programme mounted by the special school.

A research model is derived from the problem analysis (chapter one) and literature review (chapter two.) The account of research design and process in chapters three and four contextualizes the analyses presented in the retrospective curriculum study, life history, taxonomy, and oral histories (chapters five, six, seven, and eight.) The case study and oral histories provide data for construction of a taxonomy of attitudes toward schooling educationally blind pupils, while the life history reveals personal constructs.

The historical analysis finds that society has marginally accommodated schooling of educationally blind children. Public policy excludes them from compulsory education. Consequently, their schooling is still secondary to Salvationist proselytization; and the personal leadership culture of the special school continues to militate against optimal curriculum delivery. Those findings reflect the persistent nature of attitudes, the molar paradigm of which is authoritarian virtuousness evident in the attitudinal dimensions of belief, social interaction, institutional culture, and socio-political norms. Themes and subthemes have been identified as attitudinal descriptors, some more strongly cognitive, affective, or behavioural than others. Given the dichotomies in the valences of this multiplex attitudinal complex, negative perceptions obstruct structural change in the nineteenth century concept of charity. No patterned Informant personalities emerge from coping responses to negative social attitudes and strong demands for compliance.

The principal implication is the need for a reconceptualization of distributive social justice. Chapter nine also discusses implications for school culture and future research.