

ABSTRACT

Jamalcan Adolescents and the Social Problem-Solving Process

Joyce G. Davison

This study recounts the development, implementation and evaluation of a problem-solving skills training programme for Jamalcan adolescents. Seven classes of eighth graders (second form) in rural and urban secondary schools were taught a 12-unit problem-solving course during the Spring of 1984.

The main experimental question posed asked if students included in the problem-solving course would demonstrate better problem-solving skills. The question was tested via a pretest/posttest control group design. Results of a Chi-square analysis of the data supported this question. Another question which was supported by the data related to sexual decision making. Experimental questions that were not statistically supported included improved academic placement, improved English grades, improved attendance, reduction in number of children preferred, and increased time preferred (age) before first child is born.

Review of the literature includes adolescent development in general and specific information on the social and academic development of Jamaican adolescents. Based on the implementation of the problem-solving skills programme, classroom activities and observations relating to the social and academic growth of Jamaican adolescents are offered. Topics discussed concerning adolescents include:

- Identity
- Goals
- Self-Image
- Values
- Sexual Decision Making
- Homosexuality
- Problem-Solving Course Curriculum and Lesson Plans
- Simulations and Role Playing

Findings of this study are:

Teaching of critical thinking and problem-solving skills is appropriately included in the English curriculum for adolescents.

Jamaican adolescents are eager and able to learn a new process when the content is relevant and information is available.