

ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF VIOLENCE AND INDISCIPLINE IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

IN BARBADOS: A CASE STUDY

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A public secondary school in Barbados was studied during the school year of 1992 – 93 to investigate the severity of the problem of violence and indiscipline at the school and the factors contributing to the problem. Data were gathered from interviews with the Principal and Guidance Counsellor of the school, long-standing teachers, ten randomly selected students – five deviant and five non-deviant -, their parents/guardians, from official records of the school pertaining to the incidences of violence and indiscipline, and from the observation of the researcher. The data were analysed by percentage distribution, frequency counts and comparison for patterns.

The findings showed that the level of indiscipline and violence was very severe. The data revealed that there were pro-social correlates between student conduct at school and factors in the home and family background of the students. The composite profiles of the students highlighted a low level of parent-child interaction for the deviant students as compared with the nature and quality of the interaction between the non-deviant children and their parents.

Weaknesses in school organisation and administration contributed to the level of student indiscipline. A greater focus on proactive rather than reactive measures was an important implication of the findings.