

ABSTRACT

This exploratory study was prompted by the widespread occurrence of anti-social behaviour among Jamaican youth.

A researcher-developed uni-dimensional Alienation scale, pilot-tested to establish internal consistency reliability, was administered to a sample of 190 Jamaican youth, 15 to 19 years of age, consisting of two extreme groups from prison and school milieux. Responses to scales designed to measure selected Home and School factors assessed possible correlates of Alienation. The aims of the study were satisfied using:

- (i) Stepwise discriminant function analysis which revealed that School Leaving Stage, Age, and Family Size were most influential in discriminating between the school and prison groups.*
- (ii) Analysis of variance (ANOVA), followed by Scheffe's post hoc analysis which further probed and identified differences between institutions.*
- (iii) Correlation matrices which identified relationships between the selected variables for the two groups.*

Prediction of Alienation among the school sample was one of the major aims of the study and this was satisfied using stepwise multiple regression analysis.

The major predictors proved to be Low School Opinion, Low Socio-economic Status and Poor School Attendance.

Sex differences on the selected variables were examined using "t" tests; and significant differences emerged for Parent Contact, Family Size, Socio-economic Status, Discipline, School Leaving Stage and Peer Group Influence.

Implications of these results for education are discussed, and the recommendations offered relate to the role of the school in aggravating alienation among youth, the necessity for early detection of potential delinquency, as well as the pressing need for an acceleration of prisoner rehabilitation programmes.