

ABSTRACT

The lifeworld of the student describes the world as experienced by students in their daily existence at school. It is synonymous with lived experiences and aims at explicating the meaning of what it is like to be a student at school.

This study documents and analyses the lived experiences of three students: Akeil, Ramesh and Sarah at a Junior Secondary school in East Trinidad. It attempts to present to the reader the way these students perceive, conceptualise and negotiate meanings in this particular school setting.

Utilizing the method of hermeneutic phenomenology, data were gathered using a combination of participant observation, unstructured individual interviews with each of the three participants and focus group interviews with two groups of students.

The experiences of each of the three students: Akeil, Ramesh and Sarah constitute their lifeworlds as students. From these experiences, the themes of violence and violation of the person with emphasis on bullying and sexual harassment were found to constitute a significant aspect of their lifeworld. Other themes identified were discussed under the subheadings: student's beliefs and relationships with teachers and their concept of self, self-esteem and self-efficacy. Further analysis of these themes yielded the themes of victimisation and victim creation, which were found to be common for all three students.

Keywords: Linda Francis; experience; lifeworld; phenomenology; sexual harassment; victim creation; victimisation.