

ABSTRACT

An Investigation into the Relationship among Certain Psychosocial Variables and Classroom Disruptive Behaviours among Adolescents in Barbadian Secondary Schools

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This research was conducted to investigate the nature, level, impact and causes of classroom disruptive behaviours among adolescent students in Barbadian secondary schools. The research also sought to determine factors associated with this phenomena and the role of sex in relation to the nature and level of classroom disruptive behaviours.

Data were collected via three surveys and one semi-structured interview schedule. Survey data were collected from a cohort of 328 randomly selected fourth form students and a purposive sample of 95 teachers from a stratified sample of twelve secondary schools (8 newer and 4 older). Sixty 'deviant' students were also surveyed; five from each of the twelve secondary schools. Additionally, interviews were conducted with guidance counsellors from each of the twelve schools along with six principals.

Student and teacher responses indicate that "cursing of classmates" and 'students talking while teacher is talking' are the most frequently occurring behaviours respectively. Data results also show that classroom disruptive behaviours while common to all schools were most prevalent in three of the eight newer secondary schools. Additionally, issues related to home, school and students were considered as the primary causes of classroom disruptive behaviour.

Results of regression analysis found a statistically significant association between peer relations and classroom disruptive behaviour. Of significance also is the fact that sex does not play a significant role in the nature and level of classroom disruptive behaviours. The study therefore dispels the notion that male students are more involved in deviant behaviour than females.

Further, the study reinforces the need to focus on student-student and student-teacher relationships, teacher training, individual school analysis and whole school policies as effective measures in developing strategies to combat and retard deviant behaviour in our secondary schools.

Keywords: Classroom disruptive behaviours; deviance; adolescent deviance