

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the effect of certain environmental and socio-cultural factors on the values of Jamaican adolescents. The main objectives were to develop and validate an instrument or instruments specific to Jamaica; to measure the values of secondary schools students; to investigate interrelationship patterns among the independent variables and the values criteria, as well as to identify the best predictors of a composite measure of the criterion.

Ss' values were identified from their essays on things which they value in life. Orthogonal factor analysis was employed as the statistical means by which Ss' dominant value/s were extracted. Factor 1, a general factor, with strong significant loadings in the variables, Happiness, Health, Parental understanding, Peace and Security, identified what appeared to be a core value addressing "A Sense of Well-Being". A battery of five instruments tapping each of these variables mentioned (representing a Sense of Well-Being), was subsequently developed and employed as the criterion measures of the values dimension identified.

In the investigation proper, conducted on a randomly selected sample of 421 Grade 11 students, Home Influence and School Influence have appeared in significant relationships with most of the dependent variables, while a consistent negative relationship

of Parental Understanding and Health with Peer Influence was noteworthy. This finding was also supported by the canonical correlational analysis mounted.

The best predictors ascertained by means of the stepwise multiple regression (using a composite criterion derived from factor scores) were found to be Home Influence, Peer Influence and School Influence.

It was concluded that:

(i) The home and the school, being inextricably linked, must work more closely together in the interest of the student;

(ii) The teacher's role must assume wider proportions than simply being a transmitter of knowledge;

(iii) The development of curricula should aim at educating the "whole" student, and should place special emphasis on appropriate methodology for values education.