

ABSTRACT

The Inter-Relationships of Risk and Resiliency Factors, Depression and Risk Behaviours in Jamaican Adolescents: 15-19 Years What Protects Our Youth?

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Adult health risk behaviour and disease have their origins in adolescence. Positive youth development in the face of risk factors can occur when resiliency factors exist to mitigate the effects of these risk factors.

This study offered insights into the role of risk factors and their association with depression in Jamaican youth 15-19 years and the subsequent association of depression with risk behaviours. The report investigated the role of resiliency factors that may offer protection from depression, by ameliorating the risk factors that are associated with depression and moderating the effect of depression on risk behaviours.

The study used data from a complex multi-stage survey design. Factor analysis and principal component analysis created resiliency constructs. Binary logistic regression models examined the inter-relationships of risk and resiliency factors, depression and risk behaviours.

The prevalence of depression in Jamaican youth 15-19 years was 16% with the burden borne disproportionately by the females. The factor that most greatly increased the risk for depression in youth was exposure to violence.

This study found that, Jamaican Adolescents 15-19 years lack the resiliency factors that protect them from becoming depressed. The resiliency factors identified which would offer protection from depression and engagement in risky behaviours was self-confidence and effective communication in the home. Youth who had self-confidence were thirty percent less likely to be depressed ($P < 0.05$). Adolescent who had a supportive home structure were forty percent less likely to be depressed. ($p < 0.01$)

The results obtained strengthen the concept of promoting and providing Interventions that reinforce the positive attributes of youth to prevent both depression and high-risk behaviours.

Keywords: Shelly McFarlane, Depression, Adolescents, Resiliency Factors, Risk Factors