This exploratory research investigated the possible effects of certain personality and related
variables on academic achievement in a group of Sixth Form students attending Jamaican High
Schools. The main objectives were to examine the effect of specific personality characteristics
of the Sixth Formers on performance in the 1977 G.C.E. Examinations, and to establish relations-
ships of additional cognitive and environmental variables with achievement at Sixth Form level.

The data obtained were subjected to Orthogonal Factor Analysis to determine whether
the groupings of variables proposed were realistic, and to obtain information regarding the
most dominant of these. The best predictors of "A" Level achievement were also ascertained
by means of Stepwise Regression in which these dominant factors were employed.

The following common factors occurred for the Total, Male and Female sample. These
were (1) A Teacher Factor
(2) A Social Status Factor
(3) A Personality Influences on Study Habits Factor
(4) A Sociability Factor (Anti-Social in the case of Male Ss)

Personality variables featured prominently in the Total and Female samples especially,
correlating with Achievement Stimulus and Study Habits.

The best predictors of "A" Level achievement were:
(1) Previous Examination Successes, Perception of Teachers and Study Habits (Total Sample).
(2) Previous Examination Successes, Early Educational Considerations, Sociability (—)
(Male Sample)
(3) Previous Examination Successes, Academic Orientation (negatively) and Perception of
Teachers, (Female Sample)

In view of the prominence of personality variables in the above-mentioned multivariate
analyses, Factor Analysis and Stepwise Multiple Regression using personality variables along
with the criterion measure and the variable, Course Preference, were staged, with the sample
dichotomised on an Arts/Science basis.

Several contrasting factor patterns occurred, with the criterion loading on an Achievement
Drive Factor and Self Reliance Factor (Science-based), while for Arts-based Ss a Personality
Inputs For Achievement Factor, as well as an Achievement Related Personality Traits Factor
featured.

Ascendancy (Low), Course Preference and Authoritarianism (Low) emerged as the best
predictors for the Science-based sample; and Perception of Teachers, Authoritarianism (Low)
and Ascendancy for the Arts-based Ss.