

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this exploratory research was to construct and validate a scale to measure Achievement Orientation among a sample of 295 Year II student teachers pursuing courses in teacher training institutions in Jamaica. Additionally, the study sought to investigate relationships between selected biographical, environmental and personality variables and the Achievement Orientation measure and also to compare Sex, Course Level, Course Type and Institutional groups for differences on all the variables.

Seven separate achievement orientation dimensions were identified by factor analysis and defined the following constructs: External Pressure to Achieve, Competition Anxiety, Need for Challenge in Career, Internal Drive to Succeed, Desire to Surpass Others, Success Orientation and Fear of Failure.

Sex differences were identified using Student's 't' tests. Females were exposed to superior early education than males, but these males manifested higher Pre-College Achievement, stronger independence training, dominance, and greater need for challenge than females.

One-way Analysis of Variance followed by Scheffé's post-hoc procedure identified significant institutional differences for Socio-Economic Status, Independence Training, Capacity for Status, Tolerance, Institutional Status and Intellectual Efficiency variables.

Stepwise Multiple Regression analysis revealed that certain variables were consistently related to the separate Achievement Orientation dimensions. Dominance was the best predictor of the Need for Challenge in Career, Internal Drive to Succeed and Desire to Surpass Others criterion measures, while Emphasis on Academic Work, Independence Training and Institutional Status exhibited similar predictability for the criterion measures External Pressure to Achieve and Success Orientation.

Peer Group Influence was a significant predictor of both Competition Anxiety and Fear of Failure.

The implication of these findings for teacher education were identified, and recommendations were proposed at three levels (a) National; (b) Institutional and (c) Personal.

Future directions for Achievement Orientation research were also specified.