

ABSTRACT

The study investigated school anxiety associated with three different methods of assessment in grade eleven of Jamaican Secondary Schools.

One method of assessment considers the performance of students on all tests and assignments throughout the year for the purpose of selection to sit an external examination (G.C.E.). Schools using this method are designated School type A in this study.

Another method of assessment places emphasis on only one internal major examination (Screen Test) for the selection of students to an external examination (G.C.E.). Schools using this method are designated School type B.

The third method of assessment is one in which performance in both internal and external examinations is responsible for certification. Participating schools of this method are designated School type C.

The total sample consisted of ten schools with 716 students.

The anxiety scale used was fashioned off the Taylor Manifest anxiety scale with some modification.

Independent variables selected were Mental ability, Self concept, Aspirations, Teacher pupil relationship,

Socio-economic status, Sex and Internal assessment.

The nature of the relationship between anxiety and achievement was tested by polynomial regression which revealed significant biases towards linearity for both boys ($P < .01$) and girls ($P < .05$).

An analysis of variance revealed significant differences in anxiety manifestations among the three school types and pointed to type B as the most anxious. In type B girls were found to be more anxious than boys ($P < .05$) while in other school types, although there were no significant differences in anxiety between the sexes, girls had higher anxiety scores than boys.

With regard to the validity of prediction (internal measures vs. external examinations), there was no significant difference between types. However, there were higher correlation coefficients in type A and also for girls than for boys in each school type. Also the mean achievement score in type A was significantly higher than that in types B and C.

A series of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis revealed that the most frequent and significant contributors to anxiety were mental ability, self concept and internal assessment.

In the light of the variables selected students of lower socio economic status in each of school types A and B show higher manifestations of anxiety than students at the

higher end of the socio economic scale. Contributions of variance to anxiety among the lower socio-economic group were highest in school type B. Also the variable Self concept was revealed to be the most significant contributor of variance to anxiety in school type B. Teacher pupil relationship was revealed to be a very significant contributor of variance among the female sample of type B.

Among the recommendations based on the findings are: That the single end-of-year examination for selection should be replaced by Continuous Assessment with end-of-year examinations to relieve the stress of preparing the entire year's work for a single selection examination.