

## ABSTRACT

This exploratory study arose from a need to probe the repeatedly unsatisfactory performance of Jamaican students sitting the Advanced Level Geography examination. The research was designed to explore the relationships existing between two criteria of academic achievement and a number of independent variables identified from a review of literature, and grouped into Student, Home and School/Teacher Dimensions. The sample consisted of 137 students and 28 teachers. Simple and multi-variate statistics were mounted to achieve the following objectives:

Objective 1: Identification of the performance level in 'A' Level Geography displayed by the sample.

Of the students sampled, 42.3 per cent passed 'A' Level Geography, with boys and girls obtaining an equal number of passes. Performance on Paper 1 was the weakest, especially for girls.

Objective 2: Identification of the best predictors of academic achievement in 'A' Level Geography.

For the total sample, regression runs showed the three

best predictors of A-Lev 1 (the overall grade), to be V-6 (Educational Tone of the Home), V-3 (Attitude to Geography) and V-7 (Geographical Tone of the School), while for A-Lev 2 (the aggregate score), the best predictors were V-7 (Geographical Tone of the School), V-6 (Educational Tone of the Home) and V-5 (Study Habits).

Objective 3: Identification of the relationship among the independent variables, and between the independent variables and the criterion.

Correlation matrices revealed many significant relationships among the independent variables, as well as between the independent variables and the criteria. Results from factor analyses, using independently the two criteria, pointed to a Motivational Factor for all groups. An Environmental Factor, comprised of home and school inputs, emerged as the second factor for all the groups.

Objective 4: Identification of the differences between the sexes.

Sex partitions revealed few significant differences. Boys displayed a greater degree of academic motivation, while

girls perceived more parental pressure and a greater influence of the geographical tone of their schools in achievement.

Based on these findings educational implications and recommendations were advanced, including one calling for further research into the area of performance in Geography at Advanced Level.