

ABSTRACT

Self-Concept and Achievement Motivation among adolescent students in Jamaica

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The main objective of this study was to investigate the level of self-concept amongst selected Jamaican high school adolescents in relation to their achievement motivation. The social and economic conditions, that affect the development of these adolescents' self-concepts were measured. The variables chosen that seem to have a close relationship with self-concept, achievement motivation and socio-economic-status were: grade, sex, school type and the dimensions of masculinity and femininity as described in the work of Bem (1976).

A sample of 499 adolescents from grades seven and eleven of seven high schools in the metropolitan city of Kingston, Jamaica, was selected using a stratified random sampling procedure.

An instrument was specifically designed to assess the self-concept of these adolescents. Two other scales - "Desire to Excel" and "Life style scale" were used to obtain feed back on achievement motivation and socio-economic-status.

The results were subjected to the following statistical procedures:

Pearson Correlation

Student's "t" test

One-way and Two-way Analyses of Variance.

The investigations revealed the following:

- (1) The male group of the sample stemmed from a higher socio-economic-status than that of the female group.
- (2) On the whole, the younger adolescents of the population showed higher self-concepts and displayed more androgynous characteristics than the older adolescents.
- (3) The older male student group, from single sex schools came from high socio-economic-status and were more often classified as Masculine on the Bem scale.
- (4) Although there was no correlation between self-concept and achievement motivation for the sample as a whole, when students were grouped by sex, there was a correlation between self-concept and achievement motivation for girls, but not for boys.

On the basis of the research findings it is recommended that a greater emphasis be placed on the improvement of social and economic conditions of the lower classes, a family structure that includes a permanent male parent or role model and provision of equal educational opportunities for both genders. These three factors are of paramount importance in the Jamaican setting.

However, need for further research in this field was emphasized.