

ABSTRACT

This study examined certain factors affecting interest and performance in history. The chief factors were grouped into three categories, each of which contained different variables as follows:

A. Variables relating to the Individual

- I - Field Independent and Field Dependent style of perception.
- II - Empathy
- III - Past performance in history
- IV - Liking for stories
- V - Sex

B. Social and Environmental Factors

- I - Socio-economic status of the student
- II - Parental encouragement

C. Variables relating to the School

- I - Teaching methods
- II - Teacher-pupil relationship
- III - Topic studied
- IV - School location
- V - Teacher qualification

For each of these variables two null hypotheses were proposed: one proposing that there is no relationship between the specific variable and interest in history, while the other proposed that there is no relationship between the particular variable and performance in history. An additional hypothesis was also proposed which stated that there is no relationship between interest for and performance in history.

Testing was carried out on 121 female and 120 male third form students from six high (grammar) schools selected on the basis of three co-educational and three single sex, and three urban and three rural. Variables were measured by means of four 'researcher-designed tests and questionnaires', Miller's Occupational Coding Scheme (1971), and Witkins et al 'Group Embedded Figures Test'. Most of the data were subjected to correlation and multiple regression statistics, while those relating to sex and location were analysed by means of analysis of variance.

Some of the null hypotheses were rejected, while others were supported. The main results from the correlation were that there are significant relationships between Past performance, Socio-Economic Status of students and Teacher-pupil relationships and interest in history; and between Past performance, Empathy and Liking for stories and performance in history. These findings were supported by the stepwise multiple regression analysis.

The ANOVA results showed that rural students had higher interest in and performed better in history than urban students.