

ABSTRACT

Assessing Cognitive Functioning of Jamaican Students of Low Social and Economic Status Backgrounds

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A multidimensional approach, for assessing the cognitive/intellectual functioning of Jamaican students of low SES backgrounds was supported in this investigation. The constructs: intelligence/cognitive ability, academic performance, adaptive behaviour were studied for subjects ($N= 603$ students: 330 boys, 273 girls) aged 6 years 6 months to 9 years 11 months. The designs, causal comparative and correlational, and statistical techniques, the Pearson product-moment correlation and Spearman rank correlation coefficient, cluster and factor analyses, chi-square tests, analysis of variance, t tests (independent and paired samples), Levene and Scheffé tests produced results that support the multidimensional approach. The results also support the need for measures that will more validly assess intellectual functioning and the need for intervention to improve academic performance. Limitations and implications for further research are discussed.

Keywords: cognitive/intellectual functioning, local norms, multidimensional approach, Social and Economic Status backgrounds