

ABSTRACT

Jamaican workers play a vital role in the industrial and economic future of their country. As members of the Caribbean workforce, they need to have a full appreciation of the rapidly changing work environment in which they will operate and have to survive. Their education and skills, and more importantly, their attitudinal disposition and beliefs will determine where Jamaica's destiny lies.

The central concern of this study is to explore the attitudinal preparedness of the Jamaican school-leaver/young worker for the conditions of work in the future. A battery of tests comprising ten attributes of the "New Age Worker", were administered to 117 students of school-leaving age and 110 workers from a cross-section of industrial and service sectors.

Statistical analyses utilized orthogonal factor analysis for establishing scale construct validity, one- and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the "t" test to ascertain where significant differences in the response of both samples pertained. Finally, correlation matrices were generated to identify where significant relationships between variables lay, within and across samples.

Data analysis revealed:

- (1) Less than satisfactory responses for students and workers on Risk-taking and Work Attitude.

- (ii) High Paranormal Beliefs and low Aptitude for Socio-cultural Diversity levels for the student sample.
- (iii) High Achievement Orientation among students not exhibited among the working sample.
- (iv) External Locus of Control and high Paranormal Beliefs as characteristic of females across both samples.
- (v) Assertiveness as a significant correlate of a supportive, nurturant home environment across both samples.
- (vi) The nature of the school or organization as the leading influence on attitudinal formation in both samples.

Recommendations focussed on the importance of a regional and national thrust to address the condition of education and employment in the Caribbean, and the role of the organization, family and individual in ensuring a future for the Caribbean.