

ABSTRACT

Self-concept, attitude to school, achievement motivation and performance on the Barbados secondary schools entrance examination

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This research was designed to inquire into the relationships between certain psycho-social variables (self-concept, attitude to school, and achievement motivation) and performance of students in the Barbados Secondary Schools Entrance Examination.

The sample comprised 308 students randomly drawn from the 10-11 age group of 10 government primary schools in Barbados. A battery of instruments tapping achievement motivation, self-concept and attitude to school was administered to the sample.

Results pointed to positive relationships between achievement motivation, self-concept, attitude to school, and academic achievement. Analysis of the data on the basis of sex, indicated that there were no significant differences in the academic performance of the boys and girls. However, the mean scores of females were significantly higher than those of the males on achievement motivation and on specific subscales of attitude to school; while significant differences were noted on specific

subscales of self-concept in favour of boys. There was a great similarity noted in the pattern of relationships that emerged from the correlational analyses for the sexes.

Analysis of data involving the three socio-economic status subsamples revealed the superior performance of the non-manual SES group on most of the independent variables as well as on the criterion measure. Differences were also noted in the pattern of relationships in the correlational analyses.

Results from Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis revealed that all ten variables together made a significant contribution to achievement in the BSSEE, explaining 17.6 percent of the variance, with the best predictor being achievement motivation.

Based on these outcomes, which are to some extent similar to international findings, it was concluded that efforts should be made by educators to enhance the achievement level of all students taking the Barbados Secondary Schools Entrance Examination.