

## ABSTRACT

### Selected Variables Related to the Interest and the Performance in Spanish of Third Form Students in Jamaica

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This study investigates selected variables that relate to the interest and the performance in Spanish of Jamaican students. The sample consisted of 83 students drawn from the population of Third Form high school students in Jamaica. Subjects were chosen from four urban traditional schools. Students responded to questionnaires that assessed parental involvement in schoolwork, affective variables such as motivation and feelings towards Spanish, the students' perception of the value of studying Spanish and their self-concept of Spanish ability. In addition, in order to determine students' performance in Spanish, students completed a Spanish Achievement Test. Their performance on the test was used to determine the level of performance of the students and the extent to which the independent variables related to their performance.

The findings indicate that there is a relationship between the criterion variables interest and performance and the selected variables. The students

performed well on the Achievement Test, demonstrating satisfactory to excellent knowledge of the lexical and grammatical areas appropriate to their level. The overall leading predictors of Spanish performance were gender, feelings towards native speakers and self-concept of Spanish ability.

There was statistically significant proportion in the students' interest in Spanish based on motivational strength, self-concept of Spanish ability, feelings towards native speakers, gender and school type. The proportion of students who performed well in Spanish was significantly lower than those who had a positive attitude towards Spanish and viewed it as a subject one should learn.