

Students' and Teachers' Perceptions of Learner Needs  
in Form Four at  
Diego Martin Secondary School

Virginia Astrid Saney

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate students' and teachers' perceptions of the extent to which schooling is meeting the needs of individual learners, at Diego Martin Government Secondary School, using needs assessment procedures and techniques.

Kaufman's (1977) system approach was combined with Tyler's (1949) rational curriculum model in the conceptualization of the research design.

Stratified sampling was used and there were two groups of students: 11+ and 14+. There were 130 students, 58 boys and 72 girls. The 11+ sample population was composed of 59 students, and the 14+ group of 71 students.

There were 36 teachers in the sample out of a staff of 42, selected on the basis of their teaching the sample population. Three teachers did not respond.



This descriptive study utilized the survey tool. A Student Survey and Faculty Survey, instruments developed by the Georgia State Department of Education, Atlanta (Crouthamel & Preston, 1979) were utilized. The Student Survey has a split half reliability of .93; the Faculty Survey has a split half reliability of .87 (field-tested by Hoenes & Chissom, 1975).

The discrepancy format response mode, utilizing two Likert scales to measure the DESIRED NORM, the degree of importance, ("Very Important - No Importance," 1 - 5); and the ACTUAL STATUS, the extent of agreement ("Strongly Agree - Strongly Disagree," 1 - 5), informed the construction of the questionnaires. There were four subscales in both instruments: Self, Curriculum, School Environment, and Teachers and Administrators.

Data analysis employed mean, standard deviation, frequencies and t-test statistics.

The overall findings indicate there is consensus by students and teachers that the school is not meeting the needs of individual learners. Also, there is disagreement between students and teachers about the desired norm, but agreement on the actual status. Boys

and girls also disagree about the desired norm, but agree on the actual status. The 11+ and 14+ students also disagree about the desired norm, but agree on the actual status. Girls have higher expectations than boys; the 11+ students also have higher expectations than the 14+ students. Lloyd, Gwyneth, Ema, Althes,

These results provide justification for curriculum development or revision/reform, based on the "perceived" needs approach, if learning outcomes are to improve.