

POST PRIMARY CENTRES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
"A STUDENTS' NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY"

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ABSTRACT

Post-primary centres were established for the first time in Trinidad and Tobago in 1988. A programme of study with the aim of meeting the needs and interests of the students was developed and implemented in the centres, but without the conduct of a needs assessment of the students for which it was designed.

Researchers in the field of needs assessment including Kaufman and Harsh (1969), Blanchard and Hersay (1973), and Gibson (1986) to name a few, have purported that for goals to be relevant, appropriate and cater to the success of any programme, a needs assessment should be conducted early in the planning stage. A needs assessment they argue, ensures the development of a programme more responsive to the needs and aspirations of the recipients for whom it is designed.

This study is an attempt to conduct a students' needs assessment survey, to identify the perceived needs of the students and to examine the extent to

which these needs are catered for, through the programme offered at the centres.

Analysis of the data collected through the medium of the questionnaire, revealed that while the centres were adequately meeting the perceived needs of the students in some areas, there were discrepancies in other areas, which indicated that some needs were only partially met, while others were not met at all.

It is hoped that deficiencies of the post primary programme identified in this study, will provide a useful point of reference for planners and decision-makers in the Ministry of Education in Trinidad and Tobago in their quest for the improvement of the centres and the need to make them not only more responsive to the needs of the students but also to the attainment of the overall goal of quality education.

Finally, I am greatly indebted to my wife - Yvonne who has unstintingly supported and encouraged me to complete this project, especially at times when the temptation to abandon it was overpowering.