

CONCEPTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW MATHEMATICS
PROGRAMS ACCEPTED OR REJECTED BY TEACHERS

by 45

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THE PROBLEM

Introduction

This study was conducted in a school district increasingly committed to the new program since 1960. Mr. George Evans, Supervisor of Mathematics in Broward County, Florida, estimates that in the school year 1966-67, at least 80 per cent of the secondary school teachers had had some training in the new programs. It is the goal of this school district to be virtually 100 per cent committed to the new programs.

In this environment of acceptance, what are the concepts and characteristics of the new programs being accepted by teachers? In covering this question, this report confines itself solely to whether or not teachers in the described school district accept all or part of the new programs. The merits of the overall new programs as compared to the more traditional secondary school mathematics programs and the possible benefits or detriments to the pupil from each program will not be discussed, except where any of these facts may relate to teacher acceptance of the new programs.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to determine what concepts or characteristics of the new programs were being accepted or rejected by teachers or certain groups of teachers, and whether or not age, experience, new programs' experience and preparation were determinants in teacher acceptance or rejection of the new programs.

Significance of the Problem

Much has been written about what the new programs are, and what they hope to accomplish, but there has been little research on just what groups

of teachers are accepting which parts of these programs. Since the teacher will probably be effective in purveying the changes associated with the new programs only to the extent he accepts them, these facts are important to know.

Definition of Terms

New Programs. This term as used in this report refers to the new instructional developments which have taken place since the mid-fifties, such as, the SMSG (School Mathematics Study Group) and the UICSM (University of Illinois Committee on School Mathematics). Other terms that appear in The Review of Literature that also refer to the same new instructional material are: New math, modern math, modern mathematics, modern programs, new curriculum, modern school program, new concepts and new mathematics.

Positive Statements. Statements contained in the survey instrument (marked with an asterisk) on which a positive response was considered as indicating acceptance by the respondent of that concept or characteristic of the new programs mentioned in the statement.

Negative Statements: Statements contained in the survey instrument on which a negative response was considered as indicating acceptance by the respondent of that concept or characteristic of the new program mentioned in the statement.

Favorable Response. A negative response to a negative statement (see above), or a positive response to a positive statement (see above). Such responses would indicate acceptance of that phase of the new programs by the respondent.

Unfavorable Response. A positive response to a negative statement, or a negative response to a positive statement. Such responses would indicate