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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

A Sneak Preview of ADAPT's Third-Year Evaluation

David Moshman and Jacqueline Langley

The evaluation of the ADAPT program for the academic year 1977-78 will be based on pre- and post-test data for 19 ADAPT students and 24 control students on four measures--the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire, the Self Description Inventory, the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal, and a test of Formal Operational Reasoning--as well as an attitude questionnaire given to both groups at the end of the year. Detailed analyses of the results from both the ADAPT program and the other Piagetian programs described in this volume are currently being performed by Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, who is now at the University of California-Riverside. We can at this point, however, briefly describe the measures used and present some preliminary results.

The Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire consists of 34 dichotomous choices, each designed to assess whether students feel that they are responsible for their own accomplishments. A typical question reads:

If an instructor passes you on a test, would it probably be

- A. because she likes you, or
- B. because of the work you did on the test?

The Self Description Inventory asks the student to rate him- or herself in terms of ability to succeed and satisfaction with his or her performance in various situations. For example: "When you face new situations which require fast decisions, what percent of the time can you make them effectively?" Finally, the attitudes post-test used a combination of multiple choice and essay questions to assess students' opinions and impressions about a wide variety of issues related to college life, faculty, courses, other students, and themselves. Both the Watson-Glaser and the formal operations test have been previously described.

A preliminary analysis of available results from three of the above tests--formal operations, Watson-Glaser, and Intellectual Achievement Responsibility--was undertaken shortly before this edition went to press. The latter two tests did not show significant gains for either the ADAPT or control groups. On the formal operations test, however, the ADAPT students showed a mean gain of 11.47 (from 55.5 to 66.9), compared to a gain of 2.54 (from 60.3 to 62.8) for controls. Overall, 95% of the ADAPT students but only 58% of the controls showed gains in formal thinking. A simple nonparametric median test showed the difference between the two groups to be significant ($\chi^2(1) = 6.72$, $p < .01$). For more elaborate and detailed analyses of these and the other data, stay tuned.