

Title

The influence of students' learning styles approaches and teachers' teaching approaches on students' perceptions of Teaching and Learning .

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Degree: Ph.D (2003)

purpose of this study is to investigate how students with different learning approaches perceive different approaches used by teachers teaching Chemistry in the G.C.E. (A/L) classes and their own learning.

Marton (1975) has introduced two main learning approaches used by students. The first is the deep approach where students focus on understandable learning while the other is the surface approach where students memorize facts without meaning and organization. The research literature on teaching revealed two different teaching approaches which are student centered with active teaching strategies and teacher centered with traditional expository teaching methods.

In this study data was collected from a sample of 385 A/L science students and 10 Chemistry teachers from five schools in the Kandy Educational Zone. The sample of students completed a written questionnaire containing two parts. The first part is the Learning Process Questionnaire (LPQ), (Biggs, 1987) which was used to identify their learning preferences. In the second part students were asked to respond to open ended statements about perception about their perceptions of teaching and learning in the designated class. In addition to that 40 students, 4 from each class and corresponding teachers were interviewed. These interviews focused on perceptions of teaching and learning in the class from both the student's and teacher's perspective. Approaches to Teaching Inventory (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996) along with class room observations were used to identify the teaching approaches.

Data was analyzed using qualitative and qualitative methods, in order to compare the perception of teaching and learning of students. Results of this study revealed that students with a preference for deep approaches to learning recognized and appreciated the learning

potential of constructivist teaching practices. Students with a surface approach did not appreciate the learning potential of these activities. Further, when traditional expository teaching methods were used, almost all students adopted rote learning strategies. These findings confirm those reported by Campbell et al. (1996, 2001) and suggest that students, especially those with surface approaches to learning need to be taught the skills and shown explicitly how to learn from varied active learning experiences.