

ABSTRACT

Educational Experiences of Students in a Low-Performing School Preparing to Take the Secondary Entrance Assessment: A Case Study

Janet Coward

This case study explored the educational opportunities provided to a socially and economically deprived group of students preparing to write the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) examination, as well as the administrative role of the principal in a supportive capacity to teachers. This was done by investigating the enactment practices of the teachers of Standards 4 and 5 classes at a primary school in Trinidad and Tobago. Data were obtained from interviews with the teachers and the principal, observations of teacher-student interactions, and document analysis. Findings indicated that teaching practices varied, and that classroom interactions were shaped by teachers' personal beliefs and expectations of students' abilities, which, in turn, impacted upon students' academic performance.

Keywords: Case studies; Primary school teachers; Primary school students; Secondary Entrance Assessment examination; Disadvantaged schools; Economically disadvantaged; Socially disadvantaged; Educational opportunities; Sociology of education; Trinidad and Tobago