

ABSTRACT

An Analysis of A Secondary School in Barbados Within A Framework of Selected Dimensions Of School Effectiveness As Revealed in The Research And Relevant Literature

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A secondary school in Barbados was analyzed within a framework of organizational and climatic dimensions of effectiveness selected from the research and relevant literature on effective schools. The purpose of this analysis was to discover the extent to which these dimensions existed in the school and the degree to which there was congruence between its objectives and achievements with a view to determining its effectiveness. Particular attention was paid to the role of the headteacher with regard to each selected dimension. In addition, this research sought to identify and analyze those factors which were perceived to be hindering effectiveness at the school or to have the potential to promote effectiveness therein.

Thirty-five teachers were selected through stratified random sampling and administered a questionnaire designed to discover teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the school. Structured and informal interviews were subsequently conducted in order to probe responses to the questionnaire and to discover those factors hindering or having the potential to promote effectiveness within the school. School records constituted another source of data.

The study revealed the school to be largely ineffective based on the criteria cited above. The major factors perceived to be hindering effectiveness were: (a) unsuitable curriculum materials and unsuitable instructional approaches, (b) an overloaded curriculum in the upper school, (c) lack of professionalism among staff and (d) ineffective leadership.

Among the existing factors identified as having the potential to promote effectiveness within the school were the headteacher's respect for the professionalism of staff and a number of qualified and committed teachers. However, these alone were not considered significant enough for effectiveness. Those factors identified as most crucial for effectiveness were: (1) an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, (2) a meaningful curriculum design delivered through appropriate methodological approaches and (3) strong effective leadership which places an emphasis on instruction, evaluation and staff development.