

ABSTRACT

Management for the Quality Preparation of Primary
School Teachers in Trinidad and Tobago

Balchan Deodat Rampaul

This study proposed a management system for the quality preparation of primary school teachers in Trinidad and Tobago. It described those changes, international and local, which have been influencing the changing roles and functions of teachers, and to which teacher preparation responded. A brief history of this country's teacher training and education efforts, since Independence in 1962, was provided.

A critique of the strengths and weaknesses of four teacher preparation models was undertaken. Of these the developmental/growth model, which is essentially learner-focussed, was proposed as the most appropriate, in meeting the present and future needs of teacher preparation. The model was aligned to the principles of Total Quality

Management which has a professional bureaucratic orientation.

The findings of the study, based on a "mixed-methods" approach for data collection, and the use of quantitative and qualitative methods for data analysis, revealed the centralised level of the suprasystem's input into the colleges, and the limitations that making these inputs have on the college principal's levels of authority, or autonomy. The inflexible nature of the 'directed' curriculum, curriculum implementation, technical operations and teaching modes was highlighted. Student teachers' feelings about their inadequacy of subject content, pedagogical knowledge and skills, and the effects of the two-year programme on their personal and social skills and sense of commitment to teacher were also revealed. Teacher educators' espoused conception of quality preparation was provided.

A system of management, embracing both centralised and decentralised arrangements in teacher preparation, which emphasises shared visioning by all stakeholders, total involvement, process improvement and client satisfaction, was recommended as potentially the most viable option for the quality preparation of teachers.

Key Words:

'defect' / 'deficient' / 'defect' models,
'developmental' / 'organic' models,
suprasystem, total quality management,
total involvement, process improvement,
continuous improvement, client focus,
decentralization, frontline workers.