

ABSTRACT

Perceptions of the Selection and Promotional Procedures for the Post of Secondary School Principal in two Educational Districts in Trinidad and Tobago: Implications for School Effectiveness.

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The purpose of this research was to investigate the perceptions of purposefully sampled stakeholders about the selection and promotional procedures of principals in state-run or government secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago, and to glean implications of those perceived procedures for the attainment of school effectiveness. The investigator questioned the adequacy of the interview method as the sole evaluative instrument for principals' selection.

This thesis was guided by a mixed-method design which gave priority to qualitative interview data. Data collection methods comprised qualitative interviews, questionnaires and analysis of documents.

Major research findings were as follows: (1) Selection for the post of secondary school principal was largely determined by factors such as: being the most senior applicant, involvement in school activities, long period as middle manager and being an acting principal; (2) The interview method is inadequate as the sole instrument for principalship selection; (3) Alternative evaluative instruments should include assessment centres, internships, and preparatory leadership programmes; (4) Key attributes of school

effectiveness included high time on tasks among students and teachers, quality teaching and learning outcomes, quality staff development activities, and effective school-based management and student assessments.

Research findings suggest an urgent need for policy changes on recruitment and selection of secondary school principals in Trinidad and Tobago.

Keywords: Ancel Wycliffe Balfour, purpose of study; mixed-method design; major qualitative interview findings; selection factors; inadequacy of interview method; alternative evaluative instruments; school effectiveness attributes.