

ABSTRACT

Clinical Supervision: Conceptions, Perceptions And Attitudes of Teachers and Supervisors In Secondary Schools in Barbados

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This exploratory study sought to explore the conceptions, perceptions and attitudes of teachers and supervisors toward teacher supervision, and to evaluate the reactions of participants to the use of an adapted three-phase model of clinically oriented supervision (COS) as a viable alternative to traditionally oriented supervision (TOS). It employed a triangulation approach to data collection and analysis which involved (a) a sample survey of 150 teachers and supervisors in ten secondary schools, (b) pre- and post- assessment interviews of 24 subjects in four pilot schools and (c) individual case studies from pairing a teacher and a supervisor according to subject taught in the four schools. An experimental group of six paired teachers and supervisors piloted COS in two of the four schools, while a control group of equal numbers used TOS in the other two schools. The experimental group received treatment in the form of training prior to practising COS. Four research questions focused this study and the data were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The results of the survey and interviews confirmed that most respondents conceptualised supervision and evaluation as a continuous process for improving teacher performance; that they were dissatisfied with the present state of things, and that an alternative approach should be put in place. The individual case studies revealed that paired COS participants tend to be more collegial, communicative and collaborative in efforts at classroom observation and the provision of feedback than paired TOS participants; that COS pairs regarded each other as equal partners, while TOS pairs did not, and that all COS participants recommended the implementation of COS as an effective alternative to TOS. The study confirmed the need for training both teachers and supervisors, if COS is to succeed.

These findings will be useful to school administrators, teachers, teacher educators and policy makers in the Ministry of Education who desire to search for an alternative to the present approach.