

ABSTRACT

Principals' and teachers' perceptions of organizational effectiveness of primary schools in the St. George East Education Division.

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The study investigated a) the nature of the variables that identified and described an organizationally effective primary school and b) the perceptions of principals and teachers on nine dimensions of effectiveness.

The study is a descriptive study which employed quantitative and qualitative methods. An integrated conceptual model informed the study. Inductive analysis of data as well as descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed: means, standard deviation, Spearman rho, t-test and analysis of variance.

Interview data revealed nine common criteria that were seen to characterize an effective primary school. These were: principal leadership, shared vision/goals, positive climate, parent-community involvement, monitoring and feedback, use of time, effective teaching practices, staff development and mastery of literacy and numeracy. Participants' ranking of effective school criteria (research question 2) showed that principal leadership, shared vision and positive climate were regarded as the most important criteria for

effectiveness. There was also a high level of consensus in the ranking of effective principal behaviours (research question 5).

Principals rated schools more highly than teachers on all dimensions except on staff development and effective teaching (research question 3).

The t-test (research question 7) showed a significant difference between Government and Government Assisted schools for principal leadership and parent-community involvement. The analysis of variance (research question 7) also showed significant differences for principal leadership, school climate and staff development as reported by principals and teachers in four school types.

Overall findings lent support to many of the effective school criteria identified in the research literature. The study also highlighted the significance of educational, cultural and symbolic aspects of leadership to school effectiveness. Given the variability of responses across all dimensions of effectiveness, it was not possible to identify any one model as dominant.