

ABSTRACT

An investigation into the Attitudes and Perceptions of Administrators To Social Studies Education in Secondary Schools in Barbados

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This investigation was designed to examine the attitudes and perceptions of administrators in secondary schools in Barbados as they relate to Social Studies, and to discover what factors influenced the attitudes and perceptions of the administrators to Social Studies.

The sample consisted of nineteen (19) administrators (8 males and 11 females) as well as the Education Officer responsible for Social Studies in the Ministry of Education. Information for this investigation was obtained through the use of questionnaires and interviews, and an attitude and perception inventory.

The Administrators in the secondary schools were required to complete a three-part questionnaire that dealt with: (a) biographical information; (b) the status of Social Studies in their respective schools; and (c) an attitude and perception inventory. Forty-three (43) Social Studies teachers from the schools in the sample were also invited to participate in the study. Their responses were used for

comparative purposes. Of these 44% were trained to teach Social Studies while 55.8% were not.

Descriptive statistics and t-tests revealed that generally, the administrators held positive attitudes and perceptions of Social Studies, which differs from findings in the literature. Management practices were rather varied in relation to the inclusion of Social Studies in the curriculum; there were no clear patterns of support for or application of policies set by the Ministry of Education. Administrators, in older secondary schools who were more aware of and accepting of the value of Social Studies as a subject did not in practice embrace its inclusion in the same way that their counterparts in the newer secondary schools did. Sex, training and years of experience did not have any significant relationship on the attitudes and perceptions of the administrators.

Implications are that there are other factors that influence the practices of administrators other than school type, sex, experience or training. Further research needs to be conducted in order to ascertain the relationship between these variables and the attitude and perception of the administrators in the secondary schools in Barbados.

Key Words: Marcelle Antoinette Pennegan, Attitudes to Social Studies, Perceptions of Social Studies, Administrators, Older Secondary Schools, Newer Secondary Schools, Management Practices in Social Studies