

Abstract

School-based management in Trinidad and Tobago: Changing stakeholder relationships in Tobago primary schools

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Governments worldwide that subscribe to democratic principles, use the process of decentralization to strengthen their legitimacy by allowing citizens to participate in state decision-making. School-based management is an example of educational decentralization and was introduced into primary schools in Tobago in 1999. This study is a qualitative inquiry into School Improvement Planning (SIP) in two Tobago primary schools. The maximum variance selection technique was used to select the most effective and least effective SIP project. The inquiry revealed that stakeholder relationships that ranged from survival to adaptive, played the key role in determining the effectiveness of the educational change. Four emerging themes – change, development, empowerment and satisfaction and organizational factors such as principal leadership, managerial approaches, authority systems, decision-making and openness to the environment impacted on stakeholder relationships at both school sites.

Key words: decentralization; school-based management; educational change; relationships.