

Abstract

Teachers and Principals' Perceptions of the Teacher Performance Appraisal System in Selected schools

Aldith Mc Daniel Jones

The study investigated selected teachers' and principals' perceptions of the teacher performance appraisal system (TPA) in selected Jamaican primary schools. The nine variables addressed were: TPA criteria used by principals, methods used to develop the criteria, involvement in developing the criteria, teachers and principals' perceptions of the TPA process, information gained from the appraisal exercise, use of the appraisal information, understanding of the purposes of TPA, principals' role as appraisers in the TPA process, and factors affecting the effective appraisal of teacher performance.

One hundred and two teachers and 6 principals from 6 purposively selected urban primary schools comprised the sample. Two questionnaires with similar items were used to collect the data. The major findings indicated the following:

1. Teachers and principals agreed that classroom observation and lesson plan scrutiny were criteria used for appraisal.
2. Standardized criteria for appraisal were used in the sample schools.
3. Appraisal criteria were developed by the MOEYC.
4. TPA was not carried out regularly, and both groups of respondents are generally dissatisfied with the system in its present state.

5. TPA highlighted teacher competence, student achievement, and teacher attitudes to suggestions given by principals.
6. Information from appraisal was used to make decisions for improving teacher performance, for staff deployment and teacher promotion, but not for teacher dismissal.
7. The understanding was that TPA promotes teacher effectiveness and achievement of school goals.
8. Appraisal exercise was time consuming according to teachers.
9. Appraisal was integral to management and to the principal as instructional leader.
10. Teachers' needed to be educated about the TPA process and principals need more training in carrying out the exercise.

General recommendations arising from the findings are: adjust TPA instruments and have properly trained appraisers. The fact that TPA is integral to the principal as manager and instructional leader, she / he should make a concerted effort to carry out the process on a timely basis.