

ABSTRACT

An Investigation into the Current Perceptions of Parental Involvement at the Primary School Level in Barbados

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The purpose of this research was to describe the current situation in relation to parent involvement at the primary school level in Barbados. Findings from the literature on parental involvement show the importance and need for such involvement in education but not much research is available that pertains to the Barbadian context.

To obtain a representative sample, the Infants B, Class 2 and Class 4 levels were selected and the design used was based on the parent involvement continuum, which incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Using stratified random sampling; data were collected from the parents of these children, the class teachers and principals of twenty schools. Questionnaires that contained both closed and open-ended items were used. The data were analysed by examining the views of the parents and school in relation to the continuum, home involvement, parent-school relationships, communication and community involvement as well as the facilitators and inhibitors to parental involvement. Findings from the analysis revealed that there is an awareness of the importance of parental involvement and that varying forms of involvement exist. However, especially within the schools there is some discrepancy between what is said and done.

Recommendations for making a stronger commitment to parental involvement are outlined as well as practical ways of involvement, especially in relation to literacy.

Keywords: Patricia Ann Springer; parental involvement in education.

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