

ABSTRACT

**The Attitudes of Primary School Principals
in St. George East Toward the Visionary
Leadership Ideal.**

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Quality education is dependent upon "good" leaders and effective leadership approaches. These exist under the aegis of what is termed "visionary leadership" in which principals as effective school leaders have vision as their key. This vision is the force that defines and drives the principal's mission and is implicit in their actions. This research attempted to determine whether or not primary school principals in the St. George East, Educational District exhibited the attributes of visionary leadership in their efforts to achieve quality education as outlined in the Education Plan 1985-1990.

Triangulation - a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of research was the methodology employed in the research. Quantitatively, the attitude survey questionnaire produced data that identified and assessed visionary leadership among principals.

Qualitatively, the interviews will provide insights as to the actual practice of visionary leadership by principals in their daily leadership behaviours.

Examination of the survey data revealed that almost all of the principals showed a positive attitude toward visionary leadership and its practice in schools in their efforts to achieve quality education. The interview data showed that principals were severely hindered by the nature of the education system as well as personal and ministerial constraints in their efforts to practice visionary leadership rather than strive for visionary leadership.

Principals in primary schools needed to have more autonomy in the operation of their schools. They also needed to have attended seminars and programmes to upgrade and increase their leadership skills and approaches if they had to achieve their goals of quality education. Promotions must be based on ability and performance rather than seniority. Upgrading of facilities and personnel in schools was also vital to support the changes that were needed to achieve successful education in the 1990's and beyond.