

ABSTRACT

School Development Planning in the Newly Constructed Secondary Schools
(2000 – 2004) in Trinidad and Tobago

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The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, in pursuit of its stated policy of education for all, constructed 18 secondary schools from 2000 – 2004 through an IADB loan of \$150 million USD. In this study six of the new schools were chosen from six educational districts in Trinidad and Tobago through a system of selected random sampling. The investigation sought to find out what planning existed at the new schools and how the major stakeholders – the Ministry of Education, the principal, the teachers, the students, the parents, and the community had engaged in this process. A mixed methodology design using quantitative and qualitative methods was regarded as best suited for this study because of the multiple sources of data, the large number of stakeholders, and the need for a comprehensive picture of the situation. Thus, a variety of research techniques were utilized: analysis of documents, interviews, questionnaires, and observation. In general the study found that school development planning (SDP) varied immensely from school to school; that principals and teachers had varying concepts of what SDP was; that the creation of a SDP was mainly the task of the principal and some senior teachers; and that students, parents and community members were chiefly involved in projects such as fund raising rather than collaboration or participative decision making. Recommendations for increased participation in SDP together with a suitable model for school improvement were therefore made taking into consideration some of the successful international models of school improvement – the Comer Process, the IQEA, the MSIP, Accelerated schools, and Health for all; and the peculiar culture and circumstances in Trinidad and Tobago.

Keywords: School development planning; newly constructed secondary schools.