

ABSTRACT

Secondary School Students' Dominance in Leadership Roles in a Co-educational Establishment: Its Impact on School Ethos

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This study sought to explore the phenomenon of student leadership among adolescents at a co-educational secondary school in Trinidad and Tobago. It specifically sought to identify the reasons for female students' dominance in leadership roles versus the lack of leadership roles assumed by male students of the school, which may directly/indirectly impact on school culture. Data were collected through interviews with four students: 1) the Head Prefect, 2) one other prefect, 3) one male student (non-prefect), and 4) one male prefect and vice captain of one of the school's houses. Findings indicated that: 1) the behaviour of male students suggested a lack of ability to assume leadership roles; 2) there appeared to be an element of gender bias, in favour of female students, by teachers; and 3) the superior communication skills of female students seemed to make them more suited to leadership positions than their male counterparts.

Keywords: Leadership; Secondary school students; Gender analysis; Male students; Female students; Trinidad and Tobago