

Title Page:

Title:

Educational Reform Strategy in Trinidad and Tobago, from the early to late twentieth century.

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Date:

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Social Studies Research Project

Historical Question:

What are the changes in the Roles and Duties of Principals in Government Primary School of Trinidad and Tobago, from the early to late twentieth century?

Hypothesis:

Preliminary research, has led us to believe that the Roles and Duties of Principals in Government Primary School has become an essential Educational Reform Strategy to increase students' academic achievement.

Discussion of Sources:

Our research based on the Changes in the Roles and Duties of Principals in Government Primary School of Trinidad and Tobago during the early to late twentieth century has led us to investigate various primary and secondary sources. We visited the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago, the Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre Educational Library and the World Wide Web. We also used interviews and questionnaires of past and present principals as our main primary sources.

At the National Archives we viewed a list of:

1. Secondary sources:

- a. Board of Education, (1902, August 26th) “New Code of Rules under The Elementary Education Ordinance 1890 – 1902”. This gave us information about the books and registers that principals were required to keep.

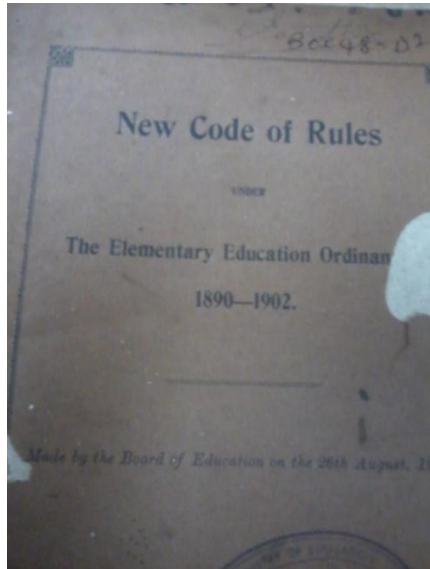


Fig. 1 Cover of the New Code of Rules under The Elementary Education Ordinance 1890 – 1902.

- b. Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education, (1983) “Trinidad and Tobago Historic Education Documents” Volume 10 1921 – 1946. It provided information about the eligibility of head teachers.

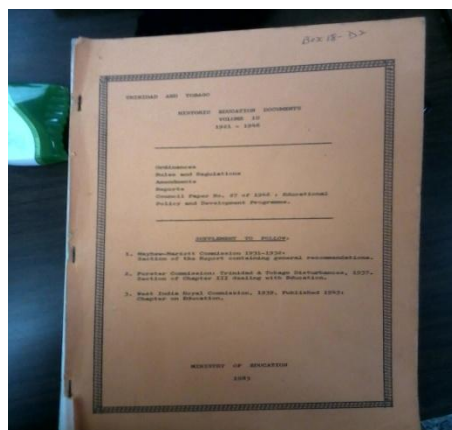


Fig. 2 Cover of the Trinidad and Tobago Historic Education Documents.

- c. Trinidad and Tobago Teacher Education Committee, (1980) “Report on Teacher Education and Training for the Primary Level 1980”

At the Rudranath Capildeo Learning Resource Centre Educational Library we viewed a list of:

1. Primary Source:

- a. Minister under Section 86 of the Education Act, (1965) “*The Education Act of Trinidad and Tobago*,” Chapter. 39:01. It provided information about the Responsibilities of Principals.

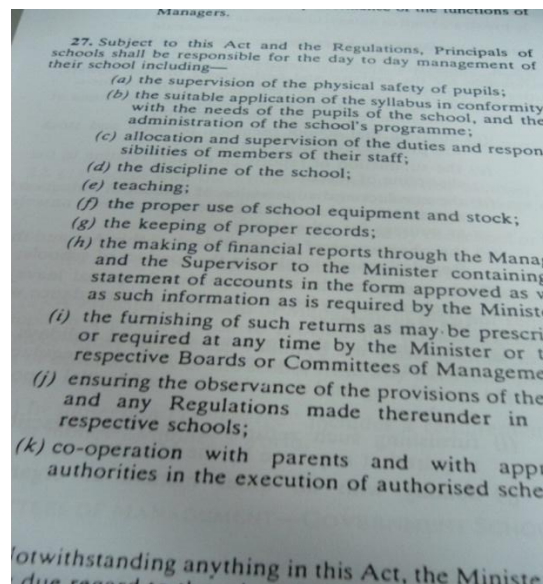


Fig.3 Excerpt from The Education Act of Trinidad and Tobago.

2. Secondary sources:

- a. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development, “*Instructional Leadership*” Hand-out 52. It identifies the roles of principals in “*Creating a Collaborative Culture.*”

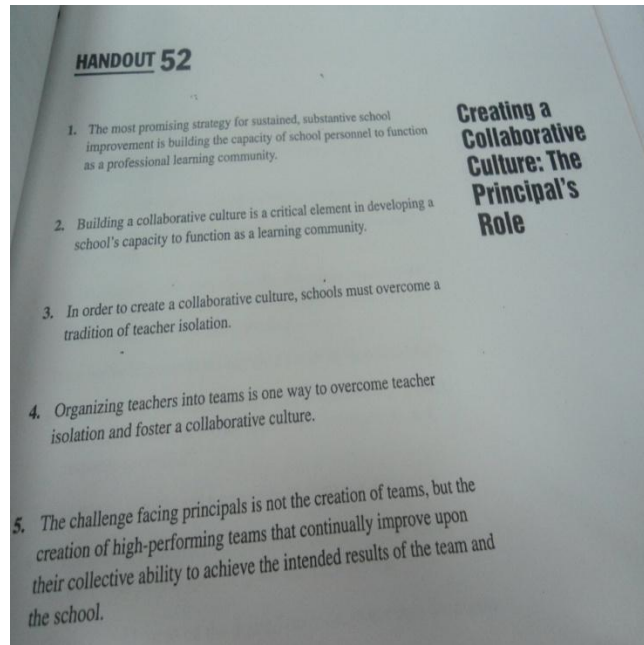


Fig. 4 Excerpt from Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

a) Mohammed, J. (2001) "*Current Issues in Educational Administration*." UWI.

This book was of great significance to our study. It provided a wide range of information like historical facts and educational reform concepts.

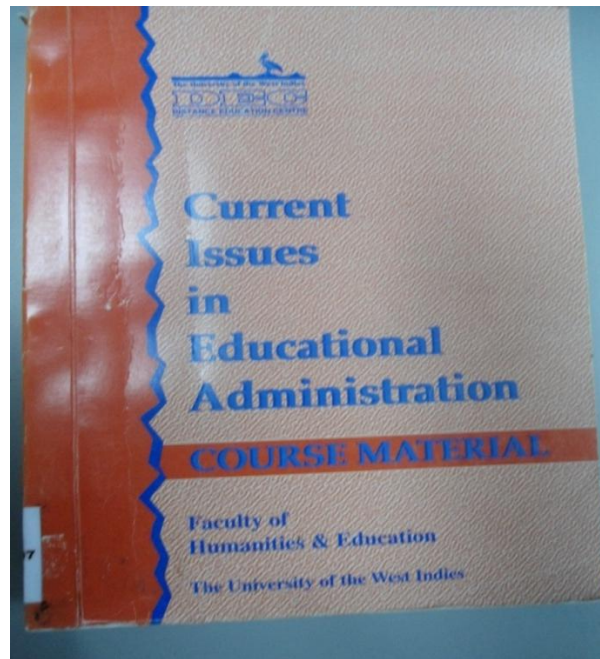


Fig.5 Cover of Current Issues in Educational Administration.

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Fig. 5c

Fig. 5a, 5b & 5c Table of Contents from the Current Issues in Educational Administration.

- b) Educational Leadership. (2000, April) "*Beyond Transformational Leadership.*"
- c) Tips for Principals. (1995, Nov.) "*How to Create an Inclusive School.*"
- d) Smith A. H. & Crouch E. (2004) "*Take Me to your Leader!*" It indicates the Challenges of School Leadership in Trinidad and Tobago.

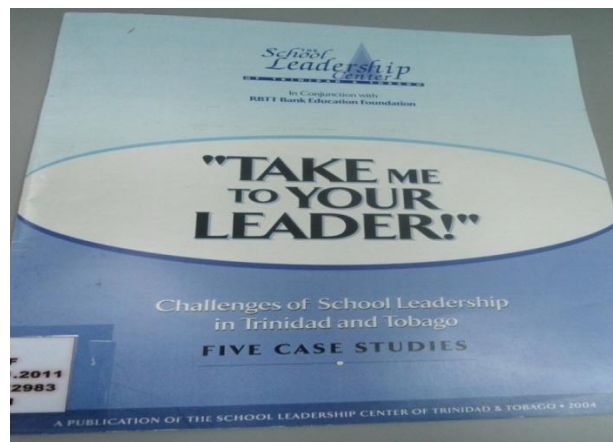


Fig.6 The cover of “Take Me to your Leader!”

From our interviews of past and present principals:

1. Primary sources:

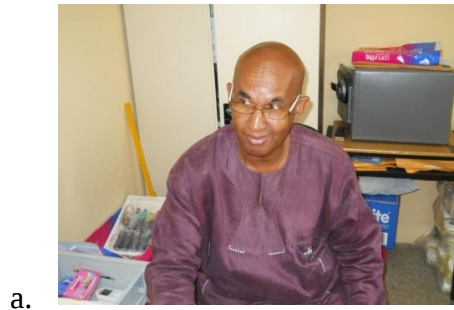


Fig. 7. Mr Matthew Alexander (Personal Communication, February 1st, 2012)

He is principal from 2006 to present.

- b. Mrs Lorna Blackman (Personal communication 12th February, 2012)
She is principal from 2000 to present.

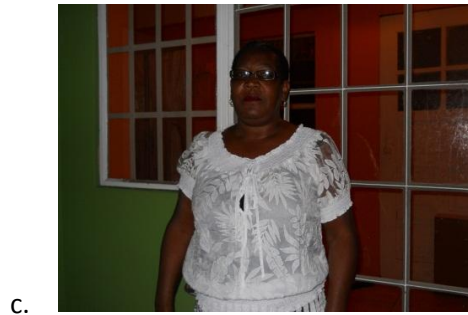


Fig. 8 Mrs Jennifer Edwards (Personal communication, February 5th, 2012.)
She was a principal from 1998 to 2009.

- d. Mr Samuel Joseph (Personal communication, February 8th, 2012.)
He was principal from 1992 to 2002.

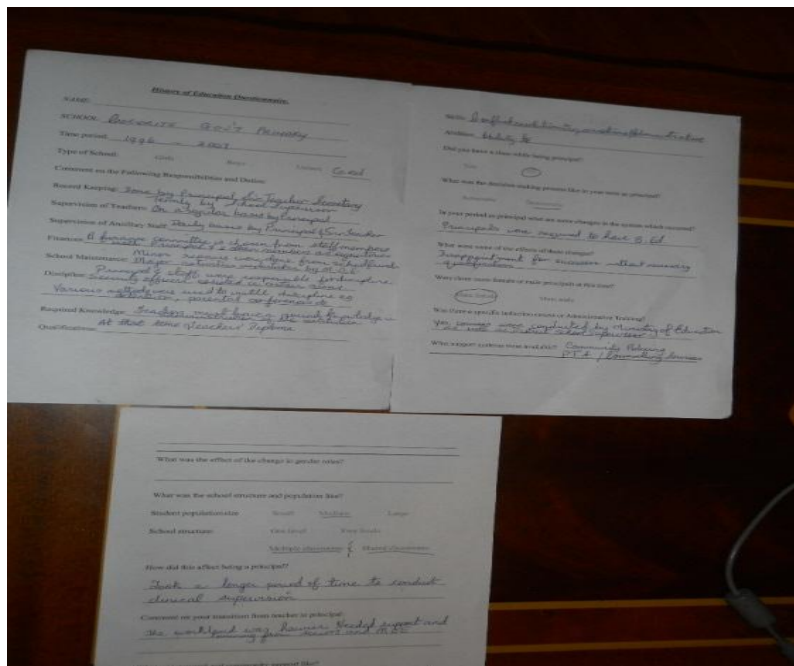


Fig.9. Historical research questionnaire completed by past and present principals, 2012.

At the World Wide Web we viewed a list of:

1. Secondary sources:

- a. Eamon, M. (historian and archivist, Library and Archives Canada). Defining Primary and Secondary Sources. Internet 7th March 2012, Available.

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/008-3010-e.html>

- b. "Principalship Program" Internet 1st February 2012, Available

<http://www.utprincipalship.org/>



Fig. 10 Austin and Dallas Principals Cohorts (2010).

- c. “The Practitioner: How Successful Principals Lead and Influence”

Internet 3rd February 2012, Available

<http://cnx.org/content/m14255/latest/>

- d. “The Role of Elementary and Secondary School Principals, Principal Duties and Responsibilities, Principal Qualifications - Schools, Public, Private, and Students - StateUniversity.com” Internet 1st February 2012, Available

<http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2333/Principal-School.html>

The changes in the roles and duties of principalship as it relates to the history of education in Trinidad and Tobago:

Our secondary sources researches have led us to determine that primary education has existed in our education system of Trinidad and Tobago since 13th January, 1823. It was a Cabildo, a

formal Spanish, colonial administrative council that governed a municipality, operated school. It was led by a school-master, who was brought on contract from England. He worked along with 6-8 male English speaking monitors. This gave birth to the monitorial system in teacher training in Trinidad and Tobago. Its primary purpose was to teach boys whom were mainly white. However it also included coloured boys from free parents.

Commencement of public schooling and the development of mass education system began in the nineteenth century in North America, Europe and the Caribbean. Educators are gradually redefining the role of the Principal from instructional leader with a focus on learning...By concentration on learning, today's school leaders shift both their own focus and that of the school community from inputs to outcomes and from intentions to results (Richard Du Four, 2000).

There is a school of thought that suggests that management and governance of a school contributes in a significant way to the quality of education it can provide. This would definitely have a positive correlation to defining what would be the roles and duties of principals. Changes from then to now would have occurred in:

- School leadership perspectives and management approaches:-Changing from a management perspective towards a leadership perspective.
- School Culture: - Schools became unisex, multi-cultural, multi-intellectual, multiracial and multi-religious.
- School Structure: - Schools which were one-room schoolhouses became multi-grades and multi-classrooms schools.
- Staff Structure: - Teachers who would teach multiple grades became teachers of only one

class. The staff progressed from being only teachers then to teachers & head teacher to finally teachers, principal, vice-principal & auxiliary staff.

- School Population: - This changed from fortunate students' only, then to all students and eventually all students plus special needs students.
- Students: - self-discipline, attitudes, values & moral system, interest and perspectives.
- Family Structure: - The family structure changed from predominately extended to the nuclear to the single parent. There are increased numbers of employed mothers and less actively involved fathers.
- Teacher: - dedication, academics, values & moral system, interest and perspectives.
- Classroom Arrangements: - The furniture size & shape changed from wooden benches that seated two –three students (which was difficult for group work) to individual desks and chairs (which allowed for group, pair and individual working). Resources which were hand made by the teachers became less visible as ready- made resources became more prevalent.
- Administrator:- dedication, academics, interest, perspectives and management skills.
- Capacity of the building:- The one room school house which housed a small school population size changed to schools which now housed large school population size.
- Culture Frames:- Schools were primarily catholic schools, this evolved to catholic & government schools to catholic, government & other denominational schools.
- Students' Needs like their health, nutrition, physical, social and mental needs are being identified and addressed via the necessary support systems.

The broader historical context of schooling in relation to the changes in the roles and duties of principals:

(Mohammed, 2001, p.90) Researches from our secondary source literature have led us to the conclusion that schooling in Trinidad and Tobago had evolved from a need to discontinue a colonial imposed relationship that existed since 1498 towards a self-governing visualization. Education had to be intentionally used to achieve national development goals. This was evident in the African population because without money, land or influence, education was the only means of improving their position in life. Much later on Canadian Missions efforts brought the East Indian population into education. (Mohammed, 2001, p.94)

Education was not cost free and readily available to all national citizens, hence national social issues arose based on this need for increased provision and equal access to education. This led to great national social discontent. Eventually in the 1950's political parties like the PNM, was capable of gaining national independence. (Mohammed, 2001, p.95)

Established was a mass education system in Trinidad and Tobago. Education was currently a means of providing an efficient, equitable and quality system. (Mohammed, 2001, p.95) It would in the future be the means of encouraging independence of one's mind to freely, creatively and critically think. Its curriculum had now reflected a more indigenous content. Repeated changes would have occurred in educational philosophies, reform, restructuring and the execution of education.

Today's educational reforms additionally exist in the form of training for school administrators, the

implementation of innovative teaching methods, forming partnership with parents and stakeholders of the community. This would directly affect and influence changes in the roles and duties that principals would have to execute daily. Therefore changes had to be made at the level of the school:

Schools:-

- have not always had principals.
- have changes in leadership and their most important leadership role.
- have changes in management.
- influence the academic outcomes of students.
- influence the productivity outcomes of teachers.
- incorporate parent and community involvement.
- provide equitable educational opportunities.
- provide quality educational experiences.
- provide a holistic development.
- have been increasingly held more accountability for students' achievement or lack of achievement.
- have progressed towards educational reform.
- have to facilitate cultural changes.

The social, cultural and intellectual culture of Trinidad and Tobago as it relates to the changes in the roles and duties of principals:

We strongly believe that the roles and duties of principals have changed towards training and

experiences related to administration of schools. (Mohammed, 2001, p.209) The leadership perspectives involve a comprehensive imagery of all the stakeholders in a school and keenly consider their concerns. These administrative duties increased tremendously in our society of Trinidad and Tobago due to social, cultural and intellectual culture factors such as:

- Free and compulsory primary education for all children, hence management of larger school population sizes.
- Increased breakdown of family life and social structure, hence students have more negative social issues and require increase social assistance.
- Increased number of employed mothers, hence less nurturing time and social development of many students.
- Increased accessibility and influences of negative information to students via unsupervised time, television and internet exposure. Hence changes in the social culture of the schools with increased delinquent behaviour to be regularly addressed.
- More intense and frequent supervision of teachers due to increase curriculum, standardization of work and yearly national testing, recording, assessing and rating of schools.
- More intense and frequent supervision of teachers to increase productivity via educational successes.
- More intense and frequent supervision of teachers to implement new and effective educational philosophies. This allows us the opportunity to understand our charges and tailor our teaching strategies to meet their needs as far as possible. Therefore focusing on teaching our students rather than subject matter.
- Increased security issues due to theft of school property, kidnapping, physical and sexual abuse of children. Hence each issue has to be legally addressed.
- Reorganization of classrooms, classroom furniture and schools buildings.
- Implementations of new philosophies in education through providing learning experiences that facilitate child-centeredness, hands-on, minds-on, interactive learning, historical thinking, metacognitive processes, maximum participation of students and cooperative learning.
- Implementations of technology in education like computers, internet and projectors.
- Development of a holistic education system that caters to the cognitive, emotional, social, psychological, moral, intellectual, personal and physical development of the student.
- Develop a school culture that is inclusive of all pupils regardless of their academic needs, medical requirements, ethnic, racial, religious and social background between the ages of five and fifteen years. Hence, mirroring our multi-intellectual, multicultural, multiracial and multi-religious society

- Foster an equitable school system that provides education to all children of Trinidad and Tobago regardless of their lifestyle or belief system.

The Broader Global Issue and Trends as it relates to the changes in the roles and duties of principals:

Global researches like “*Unexpected learning by Neophyte Principals: Factors related to Success of First Year Principals in Schools.*” have led to the realization that there are meaningful factors that affected the successful outcomes of principalship within schools. National attention on effective schools has focused on the issue of the quality of leadership preparation programs. Universities like “The University of Texas” have developed preparation programs to assist participants in making the transition from classroom teacher, traditionally an isolated, solitary position, into that of collaborative leader. Significant attention has been directed at the need for more and better prepared educational leaders (Hale & Moorman, 2003). Leithwood et al. (2008), after reviewing results from both qualitative and quantitative studies, came to the conclusion that “school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning” (2008, p. 27).

These researches are significantly important because they aid to:

1. improve the successful outcomes of principals in schools.
2. improve the successful outcomes of teachers and students in schools.
3. suggest what preparation or framework would be required for principals’ successes, especially within their first year of tenure.
4. facilitate easier transition from the role of teacher to that of principal.

5. provide principals with the necessary knowledge and confidence to perform their duties.
6. inspire more persons or teachers to be interested in the role of principalship or other administrative roles within the school environment.
7. develop the criteria for the duties and roles of principalship.
8. ensures accurate keeping of records.

Historical Thinking Concepts:

a. Continuity and Changes:

What has remained the same about the Roles and Duties of Principals from the early to late twentieth century?

- Their management role.
- They are the head of the school.
- Supervision of all teaching, instruction, discipline, organization of classes and accurate keeping of the school registers.
- Ensure a safe and secure learning environment.
- Submitting information into inventory books.
- A multi-purpose role.
- Accurately keeping of Register, Daily Report Books and Records.
- Provide free access to schools for Ministers of Religion for the purpose of providing Religious Instructions.

What has been reformed about the Roles and Duties of Principals from the early to late twentieth century?

- Their role focus was changed from School Manager then towards School Instructional Leader and presently to School Reform Leader.
- Their primary responsibility has shifted from management perspective to leadership perspective.
- Actively engaged in a shared-vision and shared decision-making processes with the entire staff.
- Ensure the implementation of new philosophies in education.
- Ensure the implementation of quality and technology in education.
- Ensure an inclusive, equitable and holistic school environment.
- Collaborative Leadership.
- Increase levels of commitment in order to gain success.
- Working with parents when disciplinary issues arise, when students are not succeeding academically and when parents have concerns.
- Provision of clerical officer to take away burdensome paperwork.
- Qualifications (B. Ed, M.Ed. became necessary to hold this post.)

b. Cause and Consequences:

Cause	Consequences
• In the beginning of the twentieth century schools were converted from one-room schoolhouses into multiple grades and classrooms schools.	• Teachers known as principal teachers were the first to attempt to effectively manage these intricate organizations as they simultaneously taught their classes of 20 pupils.
• Eventually as the school's management requirements, responsibilities and time increased in correlation to the school's population size and structure.	• Principal teachers became full-time administrators as head teachers and in due course stopped teaching.
• The primary role of principals was school management. It included some curriculum and instruction supervision.	• They were responsible for the financial operations, building maintenance, student scheduling, personnel, public relations, school policy regarding discipline, coordination of the instructional program, and other overall school matters.

• In the latter part of the twentieth century schools were being held accountable for students' academic successes on national assessments.	• Therefore, the role of the principal changed from school manager to school instructional leader and then to the school reform leader. There was a modification in role focus but principals still retained their management roles.
• The duties and responsibilities of principals also changed.	• They were additionally responsible for teaching and learning in their schools. Their duty to monitor instruction increased along with their responsibility to help teachers improve their teaching. They now had to further effectively evaluate instruction and assist teachers as they focused on improving their instructional techniques.
• One major management responsibility is school safety.	• This responsibility includes ensuring that facilities and equipment are safe and in good working condition. It also involves facilitating the development of the

	general school discipline policies and the enforcement of these policies. It further entails the assignment of supervisory responsibilities among school personnel.
• One major responsibility of a school reform leader is to increase student achievement.	• This is directly correlated to the principal's ability to create a shared vision within the school community. Its success involves the implementation of these new organizational structures by engaging teachers in shared decision-making.

c. Significance:

Our National Government had to use education as a means to nurture national development goals. The changes in the roles and duties of principals are therefore of great significance to us as an ever changing society as it seeks to foster the development of tolerance, quality, equality and production within the school environment. It dismisses the myth that only students from literate, financially stable, specific ethnic, specific

gender, specific religion and specific racial backgrounds can be educated. Hence, implementing the policy “Education for all or No child must be left behind Act.” It facilitates the increase commitment of teachers with the principal to implement new educational philosophies to aid and promote academic successes of students.

Our primary sources of interviews and questionnaires with past and present principals have indicated that Principals had to be:

- more equipped to deal with the ever changing social, cultural, physical and educational school environment.
- collaborating with the whole-school community in the creation, communication and sharing of vision.
- providing opportunities for the professional development of all staff to assist them in dealing with the range of abilities, challenges and needs in the classroom.
- aware that the economic, social and cultural background of students attending schools is changing rapidly. Principals need to reflect on how they can support and empower staff, students and parents in this changing environment. Schools are expected to deal with family breakdown, abuse of drugs, poverty and other social issues. In this context, schools now deal with many external agencies, e.g. social support services, health officials, community police and psychologists.
- aware that their schools are increasingly enrolling pupils with a wide variety of educational needs. Schools now cater for a level of cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic and intellectual diversity which is unprecedented. The inclusion of children with special educational needs in the classroom adds to the diversity within the classroom. A culture

of inclusion in schools requires that all pupils are respected and supported and their needs met.

d. Perspectives:

Through interviews and questionnaires of primary sources we were able to acquire the perspectives of both past and present principals within the time period 1950 to present day. Each era of principals compared themselves to their past principals. The past principals viewed themselves as a “one man band”. Leadership was top down or autocratic. In their experiences they were responsible for all decision making, accountability of funds and school property etc. Parents, businesses, community and others were treated as visitors. They viewed the role of the teacher as time spent with students. Teachers were the workers and students were the products. Staff development programs were external. They revealed that they were not as blessed as the principals today to have clerical officers to assist with substantial paper work. One of their prime responsibilities was to prepare the staff to fill the post of principal in years to come (based on seniority).

The present day principals see themselves as democratic leaders. They believe that their role includes more teacher collaboration with site based decision making inclusive of faculty and staff. They view parents, businesses and community as partners in education. Teachers’ role includes planning, decision making, conflict resolution and other professional duties. Professional development is shared internally. Recent introduction of the new senior/head teacher positions will facilitate a smoother and less complicated

transaction to principalships. These members are the ones who are primarily prepared to fill the post in the future.

Below are some samples of the books principals are required to keep:

Fig. a. Log Book used by the principal to record the daily activities of the school.

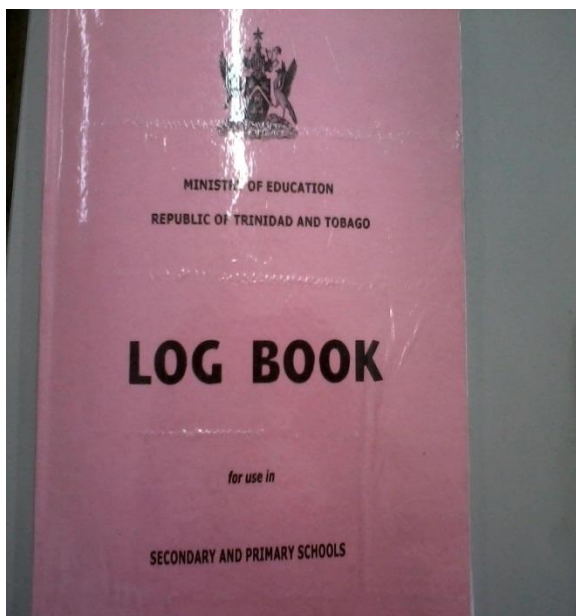


Fig. b. Cover of the Stock and Store Book. It is used to record the supplies that the school receives.

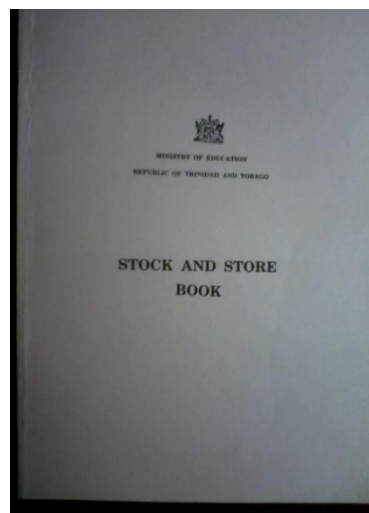


Fig. c. Cover of the Teachers' Attendance Register. The Principal monitors and notes Regularity & Unpunctuality.

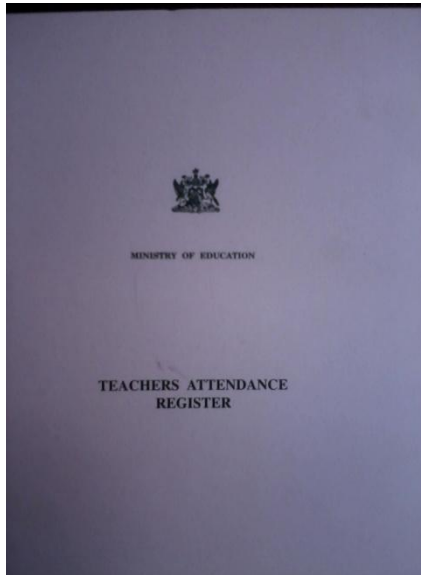


Fig. d. Cover of the book that records the delivery of furniture and equipment to the school.



Results of the Research:

Educational reform is geared towards school effectiveness, quality education and school based management with an emphasis on leadership perspectives. Nevertheless there has not been evidence of extensive research being conducted into understanding the roles and duties of the government primary school principals in Trinidad and Tobago. However our secondary sources entitled “Current Issues in Educational Administration”, “School Principals as Effective Leaders” and “The Practitioner: How Successful Principals Lead and Influence” suggest evidence that proficient principals are known to be effective and efficient communicators. They are great visionaries, who are capable of translating their vision, provide a supportive environment, monitors, intervenes and are always ethical. They accumulate, interpret and analyse data for school improvement projects. They are capable of fostering relationships, positively impacting their school culture and understanding what proficient teaching encompasses. They are role models for:

- the establishment and implementation of a shared school vision.
- the development and sustaining of a culture and instructional program that is conducive to effective learning and staff professional development.
- ensuring the management of school operations to produce a safe and effective learning environment.
- encouraging partnership with families and the diverse societies within which schools function.
- the promotion of integrity, quality, equality and ethical behaviour.
- the interaction with larger political, social, legal and cultural contexts of schooling.

- supervising of the staff members and their professional development.
- managing the facilities and equipment.
- executing financial responsibilities.
- integrating local, state and national law.
- integrating directives and education policies.
- the efficient managing of their schools in a cost- effective way.

(Sergiovanni, 1995, p.119) Successful leaders not only set direction, organize, monitor and build relationships with the school community, but they also model values and practices consistent with those of the school so that “purposes which have initially seemed to be separate become fused”

References:

Hale, E. L., & Moorman, H. N. (2003). *Preparing school principals: A national perspective on policy and program innovations*. Washington D.C., Edwardsville, IL. : Institute for Educational Leadership. Illinois Education Research Council.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership and Management*, 28(1), 27-42.

Minister under Section 86 of the Education Act, “*The Education Act of Trinidad and Tobago*,” Chapter. 39:01.

Mohammed, J. (2001) “*Current Issues in Educational Administration*.” UWI.

Richard Du Four, "*The Learning Centered Principal, Educational Leadership*," May, 2002 p.15.

Sergiovanni, T.J.(1995) "*The Principalship: A reflective practice perspective*," Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Walker, K., Anderson, K., Sackney, L., Woolf, J. (Fall, 2003) "*Unexpected learning by Neophyte Principals: Factors related to Success of First Year Principals in Schools.*" *Managing Global Transitions*, 1 (2):195-213.