

Principal Leadership Style and Teacher Satisfaction among a Sample of Secondary School Teachers in Barbados

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This study was designed to investigate the relationship between principal leadership style as measured by the independent variables of planning, decision making, communicating, organizing and coordinating, delegating, evaluating, and social and professional support, and the dependent variable of teacher satisfaction. The study focused on four research questions as follows: (1) what are teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership style? (2) Is there a relationship between principals' leadership style and teacher satisfaction? (3) Is there a difference in male and female teachers' perceptions of principal leadership style? (4) Is there a difference in the male and female teachers' level of satisfaction? The study employed purposive sampling to survey a cohort of 101 educators as follows: ninety (90) teachers and eleven (11) principals drawn from eleven secondary schools. The study found significant correlations between the dependent variable of teacher satisfaction and principal leadership style as measured by planning $r = .332$ $p < 0.01$, decision making $r = .326$ $p < 0.01$, communicating $r = .325$ $p < 0.01$, organising $r = .360$ $p < 0.01$, professional support $r = .263$ $p < 0.01$, and evaluating $r = .398$ $p < 0.01$. The study also found a significant difference in one of the sub-scales of principal leadership. In the area of delegation was there a significant difference in the way in which male and female teachers perceived principal leadership style. Female teachers ($M = 42.6$, $SD = 6.0$) reported significantly higher means than male teachers ($M = 39.5$, $SD = 5.5$), $t(88) = -2.449$, $p < .05$. However, male teachers ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.1$) and female teachers ($M = 3.00$, $SD = .71$) did not differ significantly on levels of satisfaction, $t(88) = .533$, $p = n.s$. The present research findings suggest that every effort must be made by principals to adapt their leadership styles to promote school environments that would engender greater levels of teacher satisfaction. More specifically, principals would need to engage in leadership practices that promote higher levels of teacher empowerment, and teacher professional development.

Keywords: principal leadership style, teacher satisfaction, Barbados, teacher perceptions.

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