

Title of the Study : Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Implementation of Educational Reforms at Secondary Level (Grades 6-11)
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Objectives / Terms of Reference

- Assess the extent to which the objectives of the curriculum reforms are reflected and communicated in the curriculum materials.
- Assess the extent to which, the required infrastructure has been made available to schools to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum.
- Assess the availability of qualified teachers to teach the subjects offered in the curriculum.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the content and methods of training programmes adopted to equip the teachers with the needed skills and attitudes for the implementation of the curriculum.
- Study the extent to which the instructional processes advocated by the reforms are being implemented.
- Evaluate the extent to which School-based Assessment is being satisfactorily implemented,
- Evaluate the effectiveness of supervision and monitoring mechanisms introduced to ensure successful implementation.
- Identify the extent to which the curriculum reforms are endorsed by the pupils, parents, teachers and principals.
- Identify the obstacles (if any) to successful implementation of new curriculum changes and make recommendations on how improvements can be made.

Methodology

The study used several methods of investigation such as surveys (a Mail survey and an administered questionnaire , and interviews), document analysis (analysis of curricular materials), and observation. The sample comprised 480 schools for the mail survey and 113 schools in which the questionnaires were administered for teachers and principals, drawn from eight districts, one from each province. A total of 1647 teachers representing Grades 6,9 and 11 and all subjects in the curriculum was selected. A total of 34 In-Service Advisers responded to the mail survey. For the observation of teachers, 307 classes were chosen. A total of 1024 parents and 276 student groups participated in the focus group discussions

Recommendations

Curricular materials

Curriculum development is a crucial activity in the implementation of any educational reform and especially in countries like Sri Lanka which attempt to develop the curriculum for its schools centrally, this activity demands priority. Curriculum theory advocates the use of a hierarchy of curricular aims which flow from National Goals/ Aims of Education, and from which specific objectives need to be derived.

Instructional Processes

The transformation of the classroom and its instructional processes is the firm base on which the successful implementation of educational reforms rests to a great extent. The cumulative impact of curriculum development, provision of infrastructure facilities, the

training of teachers and other personnel is demonstrated in the change that takes place in the classroom.

Qualifications and availability of teachers

Policy level initiatives to facilitate teachers upgrade their academic qualifications is urgently called for, if the ideal of an all-graduate profession is to be realized, and thereby, upgrade the quality of teachers in the system. The demand on the part of teachers is very high, as reflected in the large numbers of teachers with the Diploma in Teaching (NCOE) applying to enroll in the Bachelor of Education programme offered by the National Institute of Education. A path for career progression and academic credentialing to enable all NCOE qualified teachers to earn a bachelor's degree, giving credit to the diploma they already have earned, should be designed and institutionalized.

Implementation of School Based Assessment

A comprehensive and in-depth investigation into factors that affect the acceptability or otherwise of SBA in the system and, identification of changes if necessary that may improve acceptability and more effective implementation of SBA is suggested.

On a more practical level, intensive training on effective use of SBA for improvement of student learning by teacher-designed diagnostic interventions is suggested.

- (a) Stipulate clearly the designated role of the ISA
- (b) assign a duty list to ISAs accordingly
- (c) organize continuous in-service training programmes for ISAs to strengthen them with latest educational developments, clinical supervision and monitoring procedures, learner centered teaching methodologies etc.
- (d) guide them on how to cooperate with education officers, principals and teachers in implementing Educational Reforms.
- (e) provide them with sufficient facilities to carry out their tasks efficiently.

A properly linked, modernized, technically sound, network system has to be developed at the "Education Reforms Monitoring Cell" at the Line Ministry that is capable of

- (a) gathering necessary provincial, zonal and school and school information.
- (b) giving feedback to provinces, zones and schools.
- (c) monitoring the progress of programme implementation smoothly.

This network system can be used as an updated database for further reference and future planning activities.

In order to build up a facilitative and positive environment within the total education system awareness and training programmes have to be launched by the Education Reforms Monitoring Cell at the Line Ministry. These programmes should

- (a) cater to the needs of all the parties concerned.
- (b) be able to provide awareness/ training packages that suit the identified target groups
- (c) make use of strategies to facilitate learning within and learning for in preference to learning about, thereby leading to attitudinal changes.
- (d) develop a core group of resource personnel at National and Provincial levels who are qualified and capable of doing the job effectively