

"Curriculum Reform : A Study of Teachers' Perception of the First Experience of School-Based Curriculum in Thailand"

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Objectives of the Study

The population of the study consists of teachers in 979 primary schools under jurisdiction of the Office of the National Primary Education Commission. Each school implemented school-based curriculum(SBC) in 2002. A total of 432 teachers was drawn on the basis of the stratified random sampling technique to participate in this study. The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To study the teachers' perceptions of SBC in general.
2. To study the teachers' readiness to develop the SBC.
3. To identify the problems likely to be faced by teachers while developing SBC.
4. To find out if there is significant difference in perception about SBC among male and female teachers.
5. To find out if there is significant difference in perception about SBC among teachers of different age groups.
6. To find out if there is significant difference in perception about SBC among teachers of varying teaching experience.
7. To find out if there is significant difference in perception about SBC among teachers of different educational backgrounds.
8. To make suggestions for facilitating development of SBC.

Research Results

1. **teachers' Perception Regarding School-based Curriculum in General**

Most of the teacher indicated that SBC was advantageous and national standards specified by the central office were appropriate. As far as suitability and placement of benchmarks was concerned, a large number of teachers mentioned that current placement of the benchmarks, specified at every key schooling levels (grade 3, 6, 9, and 12) was suitable. In addition, more than half of the teachers that the curricular documents produced by the central office were appropriate and helpful.

2. Teachers Readiness for School-based Curriculum Development

The results indicated that the overall readiness of teachers was moderate for developing the SBC. Teachers reported moderate knowledge about the philosophy of SBC, curriculum development process, subject areas, training to design the school curriculum and their ability to help their schools to develop the curriculum.

3. The Problems Encountered by Teachers While Developing SBC

Designing the evaluation/assessment tools seems to be the most problematic area. The other areas reported as problematic included writing lesson plans, designing units, analyzing benchmarks and designing learning experiences for the learners etc. The most crucial constraints teachers face while developing the school curriculum seem to be lack of experience, lack of clarity about curriculum development process. The teachers also reported that they needed guidance and clarity about practical process to develop the school curriculum, training in developing SBC, guidance in developing measurement and evaluation tools. In addition, as far as the teachers' suggestions for making SBCD successful are concerned, the teachers suggested that knowledge about standard-based curriculum should be promoted, provision of the scope and sequence to be taught, conducting a follow-up program of the SBC project etc.

4. Teachers' Perception about SBC varying by Sex, Age, Teaching Experience, Educational Background

It could be concluded that there seemed to be no significant difference in perception about SBC among male and female teachers, teachers of different age groups, teachers at different levels of teaching experience, and teachers of different educational backgrounds.