

Reduction of subjects from 4 to 3 and implementation of SBA at GCE advanced level

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In Sri Lanka education reforms were introduced in 1997 from early child hood to tertiary education to bring about the manpower needed for the country. The reduction of subjects from 4 to 3 introducing biology and combined mathematics as new subjects and introduction of school based assessment (SBA) were two major changes introduced at A/L science classes. The implementation of these reforms was started in 1998 throughout the country. This study focuses on the implementation of these two changes in the past five years. Fifty six schools (girls', boys' and mixed) were selected from 10% of 1 AB schools in all the nine provinces of the country, including urban, semi-urban and rural schools. The sample consisted of 2561 A/L science students, 5-7 teachers from each school who teach A/L science subjects, 5 parents from each school, 2 education officers from the educational zone to which the school belongs, 1 provincial officer from each province and a few university teachers who were involved in developing A/L science curriculum and examination work. Four questionnaires were developed to collect data from students, teachers administrative officers (principals and education officers) and parents.

It was revealed that 80% students, 36% teachers, 100% administrative officers and 59% parents agreed with the reduction of subjects from 4 to 3. Above 58% of all the respondent categories were agreed for having SBA in schools. As reasons for agreement students stated that it helped covering the syllabus, while teachers stated that four subjects allow students to gain a deep knowledge. All of the respondents agreed that SBA help to improve the teaching learning process. All had serious concerns about the way that reforms were implemented. It is an urgent need to make teachers aware of the concept behind integration and to strengthen the zonal monitoring panels to provide constructive feedback to achieve the anticipated objectives of the reforms.