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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Research Agenda

Suggested Themes

Ministry of Education
Corporate Planning Unit
9/30/2011



Introduction

The process of reforming the education system in St. Lucia requires the Ministry of Education to be sufficiently informed so as to facilitate the implementation of new initiatives. Access to the relevant information provides policy makers with the necessary tools to make informed decisions in the process of initiating, implementing and instituting the required changes within the system.

Its system of surveys and group consultations prior to the implementation of new initiatives, allows the Ministry to acquire the appropriate information that would indicate its approach, its direction and its focus.

Additionally, the need to develop a culture of research and knowledge sharing within the education system is critical in initiating and sustaining improvements within the education sector. This would provide the Ministry of Education & Culture with empirical data that would better inform necessary changes. Hence, the Research Agenda is revised and published periodically in an effort to provide an indication of the Ministry's focus and areas of priority.

A number of areas on the previous Research Agenda reappear because they continue to be a priority for the Ministry. Currently, the implementation of the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP) 2009 - 2014 is ongoing. This plan is aimed specifically at increasing access to and improving the quality and relevance of education at all levels. In addition, the plan focuses on the promotion of excellence and raising the levels of literacy, numeracy, achievement and civic responsibility of all learners. Critical to the successful implementation of the ESDP is the need to develop a system of monitoring the various initiatives that have been undertaken. Hence, the Research Agenda highlights some challenges and concerns that may warrant investigation. The information gleaned from research will indicate the extent to which the outcomes pertinent to these areas have been achieved.

Themes in the Research Agenda have been categorized under three specific areas namely, Equity, Access and Quality. To provide a greater focus, the themes concerning Quality are classified under a number of sub-headings. This is to facilitate easier identification of areas of interest for persons who wish to engage in educational research.

The Research Agenda serves as a guide to persons wanting to undertake research within the education sector. In its effort to foster a culture of information and knowledge sharing within the entire education system, the Ministry of Education & Culture encourages persons who have completed research in the areas identified, to avail themselves of opportunities provided for sharing the findings/results of research within the education sector.

The Research Officer attached to the Corporate Planning Unit of the Ministry of Education can be contacted for further information and clarification of themes in the Research Agenda.

*P.S. Themes with asterisks * are priority studies*
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SAINT LUCIA
Ministry of Education

SUBJECT: RESEARCH AGENDA: SUGGESTED THEMES

ACCESS

1. Update Survey of School Conditions, Facilities and Equipment. *
2. Incorporating Pre-K programmes at Primary Schools.*

EQUITY

3. School Zoning: perceptions, forms/types
4. A feasibility study into the establishment of a partial zoning system whilst maintaining centres of excellence.
5. An Assessment of the psychosocial given by the Ministry of Education: Counseling Services, School Feeding Programme, transportation subsidy, school bursaries, insurance. *
6. Impact of Graduate teacher attrition on the Education System and vice versa.

QUALITY

Curriculum Development

7. The Development of Minimum Facilities Standards for Schools.
8. Curriculum Content: Core and optional, relevance and modernization.
9. An Assessment of: School Resource Centres, Libraries, Computer Laboratories.

Human Resource/Training

10. Review Teacher Training Programmes in Education: SALCC, MOE, Teachers' Union, its present configuration, and carry out Needs Analysis of Teacher Training in priority subject areas. *
11. Investigate Teacher Effectiveness, Competence and utilize their findings for teacher appraisal and teacher training/ professional development.
12. An Audit of existing Human Resource Skills within the Education System.

13. Meta Analysis of Teachers' Appraisals conducted within the last Five Years.
14. An Evaluation of the SALCC Bachelor of Education Programme
15. Reforming Teacher Education: Impact of CSME, CARICOM's Proposal for Teaching Councils
16. Comparative Study: Teacher Commitment, Years of Service and Student Performance.
17. To what extent do existing initial teacher training programmes facilitate early detection of learning problems among primary school children? *
18. Evaluation Methodologies for Curriculum, and modalities for Improvement of Existing Methodologies. *
19. Teacher performance: A comparative study of teacher performance and years of service before and after attaining permanent status.
20. An investigation into the impact of training with regard to teacher competence and attitudes in the delivery of classroom instruction among trained/qualified teachers.
21. A comparative study on the impact of teaching and learning among graduate trained teachers and graduate untrained teachers.
22. Tracer study on Secondary Graduates.

Classroom Instruction

23. Detailed Analysis of the Minimum Standards Tests and the Common Entrance Examinations to quantify the Literacy and Numeracy problems at the primary and early secondary levels and develop remediation guidelines. *
24. Remedial Programmes for Students Performing below Minimum Standards Tests.*
25. Investigation into the use of assessment in planning and executing classroom instruction. *
26. Delineating Benchmark Competencies for Transition to Secondary Education.
27. An investigation into the extent to which the performance of students in the Minimum Standards Examinations influence the development and planning of remedial programmes. *

28. An investigation into the perceptions of parents, teachers and students of alternatives to Common Entrance Examinations.
29. Case Studies on students scoring less than '30' at the Minimum Standards Tests, Common Entrance Examination.
30. Expectations of students who scored less than '20' in the Common Entrance Examination entering secondary schools under USE
31. An investigation into factors that contribute to a decline in the number of students who choose to sit the CSEC Proficiency examinations in separate sciences. *
32. Investigation into available software, ICT Based Systems, assessment systems for analyzing tests results
33. An investigation into Alternative/ Authentic forms of Assessment in:
 - Primary Schools
 - Secondary Schools
34. An investigation into the factors contributing to the low entries for technical subjects at CSEC.
35. A feasibility study towards the development of an intensive/ modified programme for students.
36. An investigation into the transition of students from at various levels within the education system: early childhood to primary schools, primary to secondary schools.
37. An investigation into the barriers to effective planning in the instructional process
38. An investigation into:
 - School Performance
 - Student Performance
39. The effectiveness of structured cultural programmes in promoting national pride.

Literacy and Numeracy

40. Factors influencing performance in Language Arts and Mathematics at all levels of the Education System. *
41. An investigation into the impact of training in Literacy and Numeracy at the primary level provided by the Ministry of Education.

- 42. An analysis of factors that contribute to the poor performance in English and Mathematics at the primary and secondary levels. *
- 43. Reading Practices among children and adults, and the use of the Public Library Services.
- 44. An investigation into the Literacy Practices of Adolescent Boys.
- 45. Identifying Early Predictors of Reading Difficulties
- 46. Reading for Understanding: A Programme for Improving Reading Comprehension
- 47. An Assessment of the Quality of Literacy and Numeracy Instruction at Preschools

Technical and Vocational Training

- 48. Curriculum Planning and Certification for Technical and Vocational Training.
- 49. Assessment Strategies and Certification for Worker Competence in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. *
- 50. Technical Vocational Education and Training in Relation to Manpower Planning.
- 51. Technical Vocational Education and Training Curriculum Reform in St. Lucia.

Information and Communication Technology in Education

- 52. Perceptions of principals, teachers and students on the introduction of Design and Technology at the lower secondary level
- 53. MOE Millenium Project: Accomplishments and Prospects
- 54. The impact of information and communication technology on the education system in St. Lucia after ten (10) years (1999-2009) *
- 55. Costs benefit analysis on the use of technology in the education system? *
- 56. The Principal as a technology leader: Managing change *
- 57. The role of science and technology in St. Lucia's education system.
- 58. Has Information Technology at the CSEC level provides students with skills at the entry level for employment?

59. Investigating the feasibility of IT certification programs as an alternative to CXC IT at the secondary schools *
60. Critical evaluation of the computer-based curriculum at the Ciceron Secondary School *
61. Factors affecting the successful integration of ICT into other subject areas at the secondary schools *
62. A tracer study on a group of students at the Ciceron Secondary School as it relates to the ICT based curriculum.

Support Services

63. Can schools in St. Lucia fully practice “Inclusion” of students with special needs?
64. Drop-out Prevention Strategies for at risk students*
65. An investigation into the impact of counseling on indiscipline at secondary schools *
66. To what extent are special programmes introduced in schools to cater for gifted children?
67. Reasons why children do not attend school:
 - Who are those children?
 - Where are they located?
 - What are the reasons for non-attendance?
68. An investigation into the use of developmentally Appropriate Practices in the infant years (K-Grade 2) of primary education in Saint Lucia.
69. Teacher perception of students at selected schools.
70. Capacity of Student support in Saint Lucia
71. Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of educators towards the Special Education Needs programme in Saint Lucia

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

72. Investigate School Networking for improved Information Sharing and Management. *
73. Review criteria for New EMIS Software and research EMIS Options.
74. Development of a database with core information on the quality of each school management.
75. Communications and Networking: Flow within the MOE, Departments, Units, Sub-Offices. *
76. Needs Assessment Analysis for use of EMIS in schools*
77. Computerized Information System for Library Services.
78. Policy Guidelines for Library Services.
79. Needs Assessment of the Human and Material Resources of Library Services.

School Management

80. School Improvement Policies.
81. School Community Partnerships; Home-School Relationships/Links. (What are the Preferences of Parents? What are the Perceptions of Parents?)
82. Parental Involvement in School Activities; Perception of St. Lucian Parents.
83. Current Human Resource Management Policies.
84. Teacher Performance Appraisals Instrument. *
85. Current Roles of District Officers and Support Services provided by District Offices.
86. An investigation into the specific functions of Education Officers in conducting supervision.
87. Strengthening the roles and functions of the District Education Office.
88. Accountability in the education system in St. Lucia.
89. Impact of the Gender of School Principals on Discipline, Ethos, School Climate, & Morale.

School Quality/Improvement

90. Establishment of a formal school review system
91. School Context and School Change – Implications for Effective Planning*
92. A Case Study of School-Lead Reform
93. An investigation into the Merging of Schools. What are the implications?
94. Review of the Universal Secondary Education Policy and Practice.*