



Teachers' Perception on the Implementation of New National School Curriculum in Pachu Primary School

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

According to the definition from the Oxford languages, perception is the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses. The other definitions draws the intent of my work closer which states, the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted. It is of utmost significant that the perception of what we are actually required to do must be clear to us and must be able to interpret critically. However, there is possibility of our teachers delivering the curriculum with no proper understanding and direction in some cases. The Instructional Guides (IG) launched by ministry of education in 2022, which discourages full use of textbooks triggered some reservations in the minds of the teachers. Therefore, this study aims to explore the actual perception of the teachers on the implementation of the new national school curriculum in one of the remote primary schools, Pachu Primary School. Teachers do have number of issues to share on the implementation of the new national school curriculum from different perspectives. The study is optimistic to provide clearer picture of what the teachers are experiencing in the real field.

Keywords: Perception; implementation; new curriculum.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is more than decades that our national school curriculum has been experiencing numerous

changes almost on yearly basis, in the interest of reformation [1]. The need of changes and reformation has become inevitable with the changing time that demands unprecedented

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knowledge and skills from our school graduates. The brief orientation workshops on the revised and reviewed National School Curriculum (NSC) from the beginning of the 2022 academic session for various subjects and the Instructional Guides (IGs) have prompted our teachers to provide different perceptions on implementing the curriculum in the real field. The information and communication technology (ICT) based teaching learning has been triggering the paradigm shift of our curriculum.

1.1 Purpose

As a classroom practitioner, it is important that teacher know what is involved in implementing the prescribed curriculum [2]. The oxymoronic 'less is more' concept of the new normal curriculum and new national school curriculum somehow appeared to be one of the reasons our teachers could not provide the exact status of the curriculum implementation. Therefore, this study aims to bring some valid findings and recommendations on some valid unclear issues, thereby by contributing in the effective curriculum implementation in the school. The teachers in the fields often experience confusion and not able to keep themselves on tract of what is actually required as per the expectations of the new curriculum and discussion in this research paper is expected to make things clear for the teachers. This research paper therefore, will be discussing more of challenges encountered by the teachers while implementing the new national school curriculum [3]. There are various factors that influence curriculum implementation like, the learners, resource materials and facilities, the teacher, the school environment, culture and ideology, instructional supervision and assessment. The other purpose of this small research paper is to encourage the younger teachers in my school to practice research based teaching learning. Action research as process of systematic reflection by a teacher on the effectiveness of a teaching pedagogy employed to teach a certain topic allows the teacher full autonomy to explore alternative ways in improving teaching and learning practice.

2. LITERATURE

The biggest reason for a change in education based on demand for knowledge lies in the fact that the world around us is always changing [4]. Similarly, our country with this reason has been consistently revisiting the national curriculum for many years with the ministry of education's

initiation involving the educationists and concerned stakeholders. The need for our curriculum reform has been strongly felt when His Majesty addressed the nation on education during the 2021 National Day at Punakha [5]. We must revisit our curriculum, pedagogy, learning process, and assessments to either transform or rewrite them in view of the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century. Otherwise, continued focus on textbooks and content without integrating technology and social learning risks perpetuating passive modes of learning. The ministry of education has been very prompt in initiating the curriculum reform for the implementation in the schools across the nation at the soonest possible. However, the teachers have been facing their own share of difficulties and their perceptions from various perspectives on implementation of new curriculum in the real fields. While the objectives of new curriculum are for the noble cause, there are number of factors contributing towards minimal effectiveness of the curriculum, specifically for the developing nation like ours.

3. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was used to gain the general perceptions on implementation of new curriculum of the participants for this research paper [6]. The advantages of conducting qualitative research include an increased degree of flexibility in the research design. Unstructured Questionnaire was the major technique used for the data collection in this research paper [7]. This is a method of a survey that will combine a programmed set of open questions, with the chance to investigate further responses.

3.1 Research Site, Participants and Sampling

The study was conducted in the school with ten research participants, who were fully involved in the teaching the new curriculum. The participants consists of regular and trained, National Contract Teachers not trained but having served more than ten years and some participants includes National Contract Teacher recruited quite recently not having undergone any training. The selection of participants and samples for the research though were employee under my direct supervision did not have any possibility of coercion or undue influence on anything, since the purpose of the study is to bring improvement through the collection of different perceptions on the subject. More importantly, the regular

workplace activities are the topic of the research. However, the researcher as the ethical perspective safeguarded the confidentiality and the perceptions of each participant [8]. Except in unusual circumstances, investigators should not enroll employees under their direct supervision into research studies that involve greater than minimal risk without the prospect of direct benefit.

3.2 Data Collection Tools

Unstructured Questionnaire was the only data collection tool, used for this small study and with small research participants and sampling. The purpose of study being the finding of perceptions preferred using unstructured questionnaire for this qualitative method. A structured questionnaire collects quantitative (numerical) data, while an unstructured questionnaire collects qualitative data (like personal preferences).

3.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis summarizes collected data [9]. It involves the interpretation of collected data gathered with analytical and logical reasoning to determine patterns, relationship or trends. The data collected from the participants reveals less of advantages and more of challenges in implementing the new national school curriculum. Teachers have come up with number of factors contributing to the less effective curriculum implementation in Pachu Primary School owing to the location and school setting. The discussion of different factors would generate information for the curriculum developers, educationists and all the stakeholders involved. The data collected through informal conversations as had same perceptions to what they provided in unstructured questionnaire. The broad perception of the teachers on implementing the new national school curriculum revolved on having the good objectives and not being able to implement effectively for many factors. Some of the valid factors will be discussed here in detail for the recommendations and future improvement.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The teachers in this school do welcome the objectives of the new national school curriculum. The need for the experiential learning by the students to face the challenges of the changing world being inevitable is believed by every teacher. However, they are compelled to accept

the cliché it is easier said than done when it comes to the actual implementation of the curriculum in the school. In attempt to study the perceptions of the teachers on implementation of new national school curriculum in Pachu PS, the following four major factors emerged which are listed in the order of high to low priority.

4.1 Lack of Internet Connectivity

The issue of internet connectivity was the most common response of all the teacher participants as I expected. The need of the reliable internet for the delivery of the new curriculum is advocated from different perspectives. The implementation of new curriculum without internet makes even more challenging than delivery of textbook contents in the past. The instructional guides of new curriculum requires the maximum incorporation of ICT without which the teaching learning would fall back to the passive delivery of textbook contents like the past methods. The present society is characterized by its focus on information, its creation, and dissemination. Technology (ICT) plays an important role in making the needed information and knowledge easily accessible. CT has become an important enabling tool to create and share information in this twenty first society. The uniformity of childrens' ability to learn throughout the country is greatly affected due to the difference in school settings and facilities, specifically the access to ICT based teaching learning [10]. The digital divide is perpetuating inequalities that already divide countries and communities. Children and young people from the poorest households, rural and lower income states are falling even further behind their peers are left with very little opportunity to ever catch up. The teachers often get lost and demotivated to implement the curriculum effectively.

4.2 Heavy Workload of Teachers

The national curriculum review at different levels in the past-recommended instituting one teacher one subject policy, which could have served the purpose of effective implementation of the current curriculum today. Teachers having to teach two to three subjects and classes face great difficulty in concentrating on either of the subject or class thereby contributing to less effective implementation of the new curriculum.

4.3 Untrained Teachers

About 40% of my participants are the teachers who have not undergone any formal training on

teaching. Some of the teachers could not even attend the two-day orientation workshop on new curriculum conducted by the ministry of education. This was because they were recruited after the workshop was conducted. The teachers who have not undergone training having to teach two or more subjects was another factors pointed out for less effective curriculum implementation [11]. A lot of research has shown that there is a positive or significant relationship between teachers qualifications and students' academic performance. Most unqualified teachers lack the competence to deliver quality teaching to their pupils. The untrained teachers in this school not only face difficulty in quality delivery of curriculum, but also sometimes get frustrated in the classrooms.

4.4 Inadequate Teaching Learning Materials

The new national school curriculum requires substantial teaching learning materials and resources for the effective implementation. This has not been able to achieve due to the limited fund in the country after having hit by the pandemic. On the other hand, due to the remote location of the school, the opportunity for the conduct of place-based education is very less. Unlike in the urban setting, there are no learning resources such as factories, different shops and restaurants for the experiential learning by the children. The teachers despite their innovative measures are not able to derive sense of satisfaction in their ways of delivering the new curriculum [12]. The lack of resources in the classrooms can cause extreme distress on the students and teachers. Not only are the students and teachers in distress, but they are unable to their fullest potential because they are not being given the proper resources [13-16].

5. LIMITATION

The research being conducted within a school with small sample, would not really determine the true findings. A small sample size might make it difficult to determine if a particular outcome is a true finding.

6. CONCLUSION

In an effort to study the perceptions of teachers on implementing the new national school curriculum, came to its conclusion with more of challenges faced despite good objectives in it. The findings conclude that the uniform curriculum

implementation has less opportunity among schools across the country. This is mainly due to the different school locations, facilities. However, teachers are optimistic that one day or the other, things will improve and they will be able to experience maximum satisfaction in implementing the curriculum in the schools.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Prioritizing internet connectivity in the remote located schools at the earliest possible would make curriculum implementation more effective.

Downsizing teacher's workload by instituting one teacher one subject policy would motivate teachers to deliver quality curriculum.

Instituting effective induction course on national school curriculum for the untrained teachers would bring positive impacts in curriculum delivery in the schools.

Prioritizing and mobilizing funds for the improvement of teaching learning materials in the schools would greatly supplement the effective implementation of the new national school curriculum.

ETHICAL APPROVAL AND CONSENT

Permission was obtained from the Ministry of Education, TPSD and subsequently from Dzongkhag Education Office, Teachers of Pachu Primary School, and consent was obtained from participants for publication of this article.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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