

An Inquiry into the organization of lessons towards the intended outcomes of the science curriculum of 2007 at the junior secondary level in the schools of Sri Lanka

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Background

This study examines the lesson organization under the science curriculum of 2007 which expects to implement the constructivist views of learning science which are embedded in inquiry-based science teaching through the process of 5E learning cycle at the junior secondary span.

Methods

A descriptive study with a random sample of schools (16), 36 science teachers, and 4 science instructors from four divisions of the Sri Jayawardenepura education zone in the Colombo district was carried out. The data collected from observation schedules, teacher questionnaires and interview schedules were analyzed through qualitative methods.

Results

As revealed, less application of 5E learning cycle to structure lessons which contain inquiry-based elements, the dogmatic and authoritarian mode of teaching science, problems in the awareness of the expected role of the teacher (38.8%), interpreting the expected curriculum by the teaching staff, being less attentive (52.7%) in directing for effective transfer of learning were prominent. The inadequacies of the present supporting role of the in-service teacher education programme were apparent in terms of its most prime objectives. The most frequently used mode of disseminating the curriculum was the lecturing which may be the major cause for foresaid problems. These findings reveal that there are disparities among educational divisions and school types.

Conclusions

It suggests revisiting the present system of in-service teacher education programmes assuring to give science teachers an equal chance to understand the new curriculum expectations and proper skill in planning flexible and creative lessons.