

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT YOUTH & SPORTS**

**RESEARCH
AGENDA:
SUGGESTED
THEMES
2004/2005**

Introduction

The process of reforming the education system in St. Lucia requires the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth & Sports to be sufficiently informed in the implementation of any new initiatives. Further, gaining access to the relevant information to make informed decisions in initiating and implementing policy is critical to instituting the necessary changes within the system.

The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth & Sports has instituted a system of consultation and conducting of surveys prior to the implementation of any new initiatives. This process allows the Ministry to obtain relevant information that would indicate its direction and approach in undertaking the necessary activity.

Additionally, the need to develop a culture of research and knowledge sharing within the education system is seen as essential in initiating and sustaining improvements within the education sector. This would provide the Ministry of Education empirical data that could better inform necessary changes. In an attempt to provide an indication of the Ministry's focus and areas of priority the Research Agenda is revised and published periodically.

This year a number of areas on the previous Research Agenda reappear as those areas continue to fall within the Ministry's priority areas. Currently the Ministry of Education is in the process of implementing the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Education Development Project (OEDP), a project aimed specifically at increasing access to and improving the quality of secondary education. Critical to the successful implementation of this project is the need to develop a system of monitoring the various initiatives undertaken. The Research Agenda reflects areas under the OEDP which warrant investigation. The information gleaned from the research will provide an indication of the extent to which the expectations/outcomes of these have been achieved.

Themes in the Research Agenda have been categorized under three major areas encompassing issues in Equity, Access and Quality. To provide a greater focus, the themes under the area of Quality are classified under a number of sub-headings. This is to facilitate easier identification of areas of interest for persons engaging in educational research.

The Research Agenda generally serves as a guide to persons desirous of undertaking research within the education sector. In its thrust to develop and institute a culture of information and knowledge sharing within the entire education system; the Ministry of Education encourages persons who have completed research in the areas identified, to avail themselves of opportunities provided for sharing the findings/results of their research.

The Research Officer can be contacted for further information and clarification of themes in the Research Agenda.

SAINT LUCIA
Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports

SUBJECT: RESEARCH AGENDA: SUGGESTED THEMES

ACCESS

1. Update Survey of School Conditions, Facilities and Equipment. *

EQUITY

1. School Zoning.
2. An investigation into the perceptions of parents regarding zoning of schools.
3. Assessment of Needy Students participating in the School Feeding Programme. *
4. Impact of Extension of School Year.
5. Impact on the Education System of Graduate Teacher Attrition

QUALITY

Curriculum Development

1. Curriculum Content for Specified Subjects: Core and Optional.
2. School Resource Centres, Libraries, Computer Laboratories.
3. Impact of the New Lower Secondary School Curriculum in secondary schools

Teacher Education/Training

1. 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. *
2. Investigate Teacher Effectiveness, Competence and Attrition and utilize their findings for teacher appraisal and teacher training/ professional development.
3. Comparative Study: Teacher Commitment, Years of Service and Student Performance.

4. To what extent do existing teacher training programmes facilitate early detection of learning problems among primary school children*
5. Evaluation Methodologies for Curriculum, and modalities for Improvement of Existing Methodologies.
6. Teacher performance: A comparative study of teacher performance and years of service after completion of training at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College – Division of Teacher Education and Educational Administration.
7. An investigation into the impact of training with regard to teacher competence and attitudes in the delivery of classroom instruction among trained/qualified teachers.
8. A comparative study: Trained teachers from the Division of Teacher Education and teacher recruits from the Division of Arts and Science, their impact on teaching and learning.
9. A comparative study on the impact of teaching and learning among graduate trained teachers and graduate untrained teachers.
10. Perceptions of training among trained teachers at secondary schools
11. Tracer study on University Graduates. *
12. An investigation into current teacher training programmes: Are teachers sufficiently equipped in the areas of:
 - Behaviour Management
 - Counseling
 - Integration of technology Education

Assessment/Classroom Instruction

1. 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. *
2. Remedial Programmes for Students Performing below Minimum Standards
4. Case Studies on students scoring '0' at the Minimum Standards Tests.
5. Investigation into the use of assessment in planning and executing classroom instruction. *

6. An investigation into the extent to which the performance of students in the Minimum Standards Examinations influence the development and planning of remedial programmes.
7. An investigation into the perceptions of parents, teachers and students of alternatives to Common Entrance Examinations
8. Linking Assessment and Instruction to Learning.
9. An investigation into the role of Curriculum Officers in providing instructional support to schools.
10. An investigation into the effectiveness of the scheme and record book in the instructional process.
11. An investigation into the transition of students from primary to secondary schools*
12. An investigation into factors that contribute to a decline in the number of students who choose to sit the CXC General Proficiency examinations in the separate sciences. *
13. An investigation into the role of Parents in:
 School Performance
 Student Performance
14. Impact of Teacher Student Ratio on Schools' Instructional Programmes and Student Performance.
15. Investigation into assessment systems for analyzing tests results
16. Comparative Inquiry
 Continuous assessment vs. Examinations
17. Conducting Needs Assessment of:
 Students
 Teachers (Professional)
 Principals (Professional)
 Ancillary Staff
 Parents
18. An investigation into Continuous Assessment in:
 Primary Schools
 Secondary Schools

Literacy and Numeracy

1. Factors influencing performance in Language Arts and Mathematics at all levels of the Education System. *
2. An investigation into the impact of Literacy and Numeracy Activities at the primary level promoted by the Ministry of Education on student performance in reading and mathematics.
3. An analysis of factors that contribute to the poor performance in English and Mathematics at the primary and secondary levels.
4. Reading Practices among children and adults, and the use of the Public Library Services.
5. Factors influencing reading competency levels of Primary and Secondary School students. *
6. Impact of Compensatory literacy programmes*
7. Impact of Compensatory numeracy programmes*
8. Implementation of Lower Secondary School Standardised Curriculum*

Technical and Vocational Training

1. Curriculum planning for Technical and Vocational Training Institutes.
2. Technology Education in the Lower levels of Secondary Schools.
3. Assessment Strategies for Worker Competence in Technical and Vocational Education and Training. *
4. Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Relation to Manpower Planning.
5. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Curriculum Reform in St. Lucia.
6. Education and Training Implications of Economic and Social Development and Labour Market demands, and the relationship between Curricular trends and the requirements of Higher Education and the Labour Market.

Support Services

1. School Social Work and Support Services. *

2. An investigation into the impact of existing compensatory programmes on disadvantaged and at risk students.
3. Special Education Needs Teachers: Challenges posed to teaching children in mainstream schooling
4. Drop-out Prevention Strategies for at risk students*
5. An investigation into the causes of blindness in St. Lucia.
6. An investigation into the high incidence of Mental Retardation and Physical Disabilities in Soufriere. *
7. An investigation into the impact of counseling on indiscipline at secondary schools*
8. Classification of Deviant Behaviour
9. Does the School Register sufficiently serve its purpose in recording student attendance?
10. Reasons why children do not attend school:
 Who are those children?
 Where are they located?
 What are the reasons for non-attendance?

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Information Communication Technology/ Knowledge Management

1. Investigate School Networking for improved Information Sharing and Management. *
2. Review criteria for New EMIS Software and research EMIS Options.
3. Development of a database with core information on the quality of each school management
4. Communications and Networking: Flow within the MOE, Departments, Units, Sub – Offices. *
5. Needs Assessment Analysis for use of EMIS in schools*
6. Computerised Information System for Library Services
7. Policy Guidelines for Library Services

8. Needs Assessment of the Human and Material Resources of Library Services

School Management

1. School Improvement Policies.
2. School Community Partnerships; Home-School Relationships/Links. (What are the Preferences of Parents? What are the Perceptions of Parents?)
3. Parental Involvement in School Activities; Perception of St. Lucian Parents.
4. Current Human Resource Management Policies.
5. Teacher Performance Evaluation Instrument. *
6. Current Roles of District Officers and Support Services provided by District Offices.
7. An investigation into the specific tasks of Education Officers in conducting supervision.
8. Impact of the Gender of School Principals on Discipline.
9. Status of the St. Lucian Principal.
10. School Development Projects and Programmes; examination of public – private partnerships in school projects. *
11. Customer Service Charter and Service Directory for the MOE. *
12. Effectiveness/impact of Education Officers in the education System
13. School Personnel Policy.
14. What has been the impact of the decentralization of services on schools

School Quality/Improvement

1. An investigation into the impact of school development planning on school improvement/student achievement.
2. Establishment of a formal school review system
3. School-based management – Do teachers want more involvement in Decision-Making?
4. The Process of Change and the role of the principal

*P.S. Themes with asterisks * are priority studies*

Corporate Planning Unit

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5. School Context and School Change – Implications for Effective Planning*
6. Overcoming Barriers to Educational Change*
7. The role of the Principal in School Improvement
8. Organizational Arrangements at Effective Secondary Schools*
9. A study of School-based Reform
10. An investigation into the Merging of Schools. What are the implications?
11. Are schools conducting self reviews?
Why? Why not?
12. Resource Rooms – An effective model
13. Development of a formal system of quality control and monitoring to track the performance of SALCC Graduates who return to schools.
14. Time on task and other variables affecting the quality of education
15. An investigation into the Factors that contribute to Teacher Stress at the Primary School*
16. Impact of School Feeding Programme
17. Impact of Learning Resource Centres on student learning*
18. School Improvement Projects: To what extent are school improvement projects facilitating the development of partnerships within the school community?*
19. Student perceptions of student managed school projects*
20. Student support services: Availability and Needs Assessment*

School Maintenance

1. Development of a formal system of preventative maintenance to monitor the upkeep of school facilities (buildings, equipment furniture)*