

ABSTRACT

An Evaluation of the Primary Science Programme in St. Kitts and Nevis

Lincoln Leroy Carty

Social and technological changes in St. Kitts and Nevis render it necessary for science education to help students appreciate the personal, social, and national relevance of science, in addition to learning concepts. There is concern, however, that the Primary Science Programme may not be effectively achieving this aim. Programme evaluation is employed as an initial step to science education reform.

In this thesis, student achievement, judgemental, and observational evidence are utilized in evaluating the main characteristics of the Primary Science Programme. The data also help to provide the rationale for renewal of primary science education in St. Kitts and Nevis. A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis provides the basis for judging the merit of the current science programme.

The results of the study suggest that much emphasis is being placed on learning science content and developing positive attitudes to science. Process skill

development is only marginal, and very little effort is placed on problem solving and decision-making. Teachers appear to be concerned about their lack of expertise, lack of adequate facilities, and lack of emphasis on inquiry techniques.

Teachers and students agree that a modified primary science programme will more effectively meet the students' needs. Primary science education reform can lead to the kind of science programme which emphasizes relationships between science, technology, and mankind. The relevance of science is to be found in these interrelationships. In attempting to clarify measures required for improving primary science education in St. Kitts and Nevis, the researcher makes recommendations aimed at creating the environment in which students are supplied with meaning and understanding of both the physical and the technological world.