

ABSTRACT

The G.C.E. Advanced Level zoology curriculum of Sri Lanka has been an adapted one of the British tradition, until 1976. Attempts at reforming it to suit the present socio-economic context of Sri Lanka were made thereafter. The new zoology curriculum which is in effect from 1979 has become the second of such attempts.

As there are common and characteristic defects with respect to the accepted developmental process of a curriculum, such as the lack of pilot testing and evaluation of different content material newly introduced,

the teachers have to face problems in teaching them; certain uncertainties prevail among the students and parents with regard to the present scope of the subject; and the overall performance at the public examination becomes rather disappointing.

In this respect, the comments made by the above groups have always been with certain foundation. Therefore, the necessity of a thorough and systematic evaluation enabling the identification of the implications of the new Zoology Curriculum, is understandable.

In view of this situation the writer, motivated by his own experience in the field of Biological Education, attempted to investigate into this problem in the manner described in this thesis.

Since this evaluation was carried out as a separate exercise, side by side with the process of developing this curriculum and its implementation, it was identified by the writer under the notion of "Concurrent evaluation".

The working model here, is that due to Keith Cooper (1976); the latest accepted model of curriculum evaluation according to which curriculum evaluation involves the functions of collecting and providing evidence which can be used as a basis to take decisions about the feasibility, effectiveness and the educational value of a curriculum.

Out of the available techniques of curriculum evaluation all the suitable techniques were employed to varying degrees and as much as possible, to obtain worthwhile evidence to test the hypotheses which were used as basis for the study.

The investigation consists of five major aspects under which several relevant activities were performed.

- (1) Historical evaluation under which, the historical development of the subject zoology in Sri Lanka and the historical record of events which led to the

development of the new zoology curriculum were traced. It resulted in useful information about the educational value of it,

- (ii) Intrinsic evaluation under which the governing principles, the aims and objectives, the characteristic methodology of teaching were studied, with a view to ascertaining the feasibility and the educational value of the curriculum,
- (iii) Measurement of the attitude of teachers towards the curriculum as a measure of acceptance of the curriculum and the extent of motivation to teach it. It serves as a means of obtaining formative feedback, to use as a basis to ascertain the feasibility, effectiveness, and the educational value of the curriculum,
- (iv) Contextual evaluation, describing the curriculum context and processes based on feedback information so as to determine the feasibility and the effectiveness of the curriculum,
- (v) Analysis of data on performance in zoology at the public examination, as a means of testing attainment and assessing the theoretical worth of the testing instrument in order to ascertain the effectiveness of the curriculum.

It was seen that most of the findings are consistent with the ascertions made as complaints, by the people who

experience a direct impact of this curriculum.

The strengths and weaknesses thus revealed about the curriculum have been summarized and in the light of these findings certain recommendations have been made which would be useful in making the necessary adjustments in the present zoology curriculum and as basis for developing a more suitable curriculum in future.