

Abstract

The aim of this study was to study teachers' role in school-based assessments (SBAs) to enhance the teaching learning process. The study was conducted with four objectives: to identify the process of school-based assessments, to find out the teachers' preparedness to conduct school-based assessments, to find out the problems faced by the teachers when conducting the school-based assessments and to identify the strategies that can be used to implement the school-based assessments successfully. To achieve the above objectives, the survey method was used as the research design. A sample of 100 teachers who teach Sinhala, Mathematics, English, Science and aesthetic subjects in grade 10 and 11 classes, 10 principals and six In-Service-Advisors (ISAs) were selected from the Kaduwela education division representing 10 schools. Two (02) 1AB schools (schools with classes up to advanced level including science stream), three (03) 1C schools (schools with classes up to advanced level without science stream) and five (05) type 2 schools (schools with classes up to grade 11) were selected by following the stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using questionnaires and structured interviews. The process of SBAs was investigated through a literature review. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyze the data. Quantitative data were analyzed through percentages. Tables and graphs were used to present data.

Ninety-one percent (91%) of teachers had a good knowledge of SBAs, but only 49% had opportunities to attend professional development sessions on SBA. Twenty-three percent (23%) of the teachers in selected schools had positive attitudes towards SBA. Sixty-five percent (65%) perceived SBA as a burden. Sixty-percent (60%) of principals stated that the planning of assessments was at a good level, whereas 83% of ISAs stated that the level was average. The most popular type of assessment was written tests. Practical activities, assignments and creative activities were other popular types of assessment. As per the responses received from teachers, exhibitions, projects and observations were rarely used. The highest percentage of written tests was used in 1AB schools. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the teachers stated that they have an effective SBA committee in their schools. Fifty-six percent (56%) of teachers use SBA marks to improve their teaching learning process. Fifty-percent (50%) of the principals have agreed that the level of using SBA marks by the teachers was good, but 50% of ISAs perceived it was weak. It was identified that teachers encountered several problems in implementing SBA: Too much were documenting work, being extremely time consuming, difficulty of conducting different types of assessments with a large number of students in classes, absenteeism among

children, getting different instructions from external supervisions, students not completing assignments, insufficient time to provide feedback. Changing the attitudes of teachers and students towards SBA, improving the teachers' knowledge of the concept of SBA, conducting special supervision programmes, providing necessary formats and documents from the schools, conducting school-based teacher development programmes on SBA, providing specific regular methods to train teachers to improve their competency in carrying out SBA, conducting quality circles at school level to solve the problems regarding SBA, and directing teachers to use different modalities of assessments to enhance the teaching learning process are the strategies suggested to implement SBA effectively.