



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Male', Republic of Maldives

WORKSHOP ON SECONDARY CURRICULUM

RECOMMENDATIONS

ISLAMIC CENTRE, 12 – 14 OCTOBER 1986
Male', Republic of Maldives

FOREWORD

The Minister of Education, Hon. Uz. Mohamed Zahir Hussain, appointed a working committee in March 1986 to prepare the ground for a workshop on secondary curriculum. This Committee included representatives from the Ministry of Education, Aminiya School, Majeediya School and the Science Education Centre.

The terms of reference of the Committee were as follows:

- (1) Identify the short comings in the present secondary school curriculum in the light of the National goals and aspirations.
- (2) Suggest general aims of secondary education relevant to the Maldives.
- (3) While maintaining the GCE AL/OL (London) Examinations, suggest suitable and feasible combination of subjects for the Arts, Science and Commerce streams.
- (4) Consider possibilities of widening the present Secondary School Certificate Examinations to include areas of study in the English medium pertaining to national history, culture and resources and development.
- (5) Develop an organizational framework for the forthcoming workshop.

Guided by the terms of reference, the members of the Committee set themselves the task of preparing discussion papers on the major areas and issues raised therein. These papers were discussed in detail by the Committee, in more than eighteen sittings, and the recommendations to be presented at the Workshop were formulated.

A survey was carried out among the various Ministries, Departments and other Organizations to have some idea of the skills and abilities desired by the employers in the secondary school leavers. Similarly, a survey was conducted among the students of Aminiya and Majeediya Schools to ascertain their subject preferences and their opinion of the secondary curriculum.

The Committee took note of the goals of education stated in the Educational and Human Resources Development Plan for the Period 1985 - 1995.

Based on the discussion papers mentioned earlier, and opinions expressed at the discussions, lead papers and discussion guides for the Workshop were prepared by the members of the Committee.

The fruitful deliberations during the Workshop and the resulting recommendations were facilitated by the useful preparatory work of the Committee.

It is earnestly hoped that the recommendations adopted at the Workshop will promote further the healthy development of secondary education in the Maldives.

1. AIMS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

In the light of the factors influencing the curriculum, namely national needs, students' needs, educational continuity and certification; and in keeping with the goals of education stated in the Educational and Human Resource Development Plan for the period 1985 - 1995, it is proposed that secondary education should:

- (i) enable the students to maintain satisfactory physical and mental health;
- (ii) develop in them basic knowledge, skills and attitudes to pursue a career or further training;
- (iii) help them to attain proficiency in the use of their mother tongue and contribute towards its development;
- (iv) enable them to achieve sufficient command of English to communicate clearly and effectively, in speech and writing;
- (v) enrich their knowledge and understanding of Islam and its practices and enable them to apply Islamic principles in day to day life;
- (iv) widen their knowledge and understanding of human society at its various levels of organization;
- (vii) enable them to gather adequate knowledge about their country; its resources and their conservation and the physical world around them;
- (viii) introduce them to the methods of Science, its applications and its contributions to human progress, helping them to adopt a scientific attitude in their approach to problems;
- (ix) enable them to acquire a knowledge and understanding of their cultural heritage and values and their stabilizing influence on the society;
- (x) instil in them a national consciousness and understanding of their duties and obligations towards the family, the community and the nation;
- (xi) develop in them a healthy aesthetic sense by providing them opportunities to participate in appropriate aesthetic activities;
- (xii) develop a global perspective by broadening their knowledge of problems shared by humanity and the efforts made through regional and international cooperation to solve them.

2. SUBSIDIARY AIMS

As it has been observed aims (vi), (vii), and (ix) are not sufficiently emphasized in the present curriculum, it is recommended that the following remedial measures be taken.

- (i) supplementing existing syllabuses to reflect Maldives' situation,
- (ii) widening the present Fisheries Science syllabus,
- (iii) and developing a new subject tailored to achieve these aims.

3. TEACHERS

- (1) Schools presently face a shortage of teachers, in particular Dhivehi and Islam teachers, partly attributable to their lower salaries and poorer conditions of service. Therefore, it is recommended that the salaries of Dhivehi and Islam teachers be increased. The teachers presently in service may be given the opportunity to undergo courses in methodology at the satisfactory completion of which they may be given the allowance now granted to those trained at the Institute of Teacher Education.
- (2) Since some expatriate teachers now being recruited lack the desired competence, it is recommended that the recruitment procedure be revised to strengthen it further.
- (3) Owing to the difficulty in recruiting and retraining competent teachers within the age limit prescribed by the Ministry of Education, it is recommended that these regulations be revised. Submission of a medical certificate from an authorized physician should be made a requirement of the recruitment procedure. Teachers already in service may be allowed to continue if they are judged to be physically and mentally fit.
- (4) To provide greater incentives for Maldivian teachers it is recommended that their children be given places in government schools on the same basis as the children of expatriate teachers.
- (5) To reduce the existing disparities between the government schools and the private schools it is suggested that all expatriate teachers, irrespective of where they work, should be given the same opportunities in remitting their income overseas.
- (6) It is felt that an association of secondary school teachers could be formed to explore ways of seeking professional development for its members and generally assist in their welfare.

- (7) Classroom observation, teacher-initiated visits to schools, regular meetings among teachers, workshops, etc. may help teachers improve their teaching methods. It is recommended that teachers be encouraged to engage in these activities more often.

4. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

Whenever in-service seminars and workshops are organised for professional development of teachers it is recommended that the time and date of such seminars and workshops be fixed in consultation with teachers to encourage better participation and attendance.

5. SUPERVISORS FOR ARTS STREAM AND SCIENCE STREAM

The supervision and use of library and laboratory facilities and other aspects of secondary education may be improved by the appointment of competent supervisors for the science stream and art stream.

6. PRIVATE TUITION

It is felt that private tuition has become wide spread to such an extent that it may be considered a problem. The Ministry of Education may form a committee to identify various aspects of this problem and to suggest effective means to control it.

7. MEDIA CENTRE

To take advantage of scale and to provide equal opportunities to all schools, it is recommended that available resources be pooled and a media centre be developed.

8. CLASS SIZE

In order to avoid overcrowding in class rooms, it is recommended that efforts be made towards limiting class size to 30 - 32 students.

9. LIBRARY AND LABORATORY

- (1) In order to improve the management of the library it is felt that the librarians must be given adequate training. It is also recommended that their conditions of service be revised to attract suitable applicants for that post.
- (2) It is considered necessary to improve the laboratory facilities in the schools. Underuse of equipment already available must be avoided by proper supervision of laboratory work.

- (3) In order to encourage availability and easy access to reading materials, it is recommended that the magazines, reference books and other reading material approved by the Ministry of Education be exempted from import duty.
- (4) It is recommended that a central students library or an extension to the National Library be established for the use of secondary school students.

10. SPORTS ACTIVITIES

- (1) With a view to promoting sports related activities it is desirable to have a common playground for schools. A multi-purpose gymnasium should be included in the future plans for the improvement of schools.
- (2) Since too many activities disrupt the working of the schools it is recommended that organizations outside the Ministry of Education be requested to inform the Ministry before the beginning of the year about their proposed activities involving school children. The Ministry would then circulate a calendar of such activities.
- (3) In the field of sports, too, to avoid too many activities it is recommended that certain activities such as the Athletics meet be held every other year and only a few selected games be held every year.
- (4) The number of games that a student could specialize in and take part in, in inter-house tournaments should be restricted to not more than one out door and one indoor game.

11. SCHOOL CALENDAR

The present arrangement of four quarters along with the Ramazan days of restricted work causes too many breaks. To avoid this shortcoming it is advisable to organise the school calendar into three terms where term holidays coincide as much possible with the special holidays and Ramazan.

12. PROMOTION CRITERIA

It was generally felt that there is a need to review the present evaluation scheme. It is recommended that the matter be further studied and action taken where necessary.

13. DISCIPLINE AND COUNSELLING

- (1) Due to the present insufficient information regarding career opportunities available to school leavers, it is recommended that career guidance counselling be organized systematically, either through guidance personnel or through seminars and talks with this objective in view.

- (2) Since school discipline is a matter of great concern, it was agreed that the parents, in particular, be educated through the activities of the Parent Teacher Association and through available media on the possible causes of student indiscipline.

14. GEOGRAPHY

Since several aims of secondary education may be achieved through a proper study of geography, it is recommended that the place of geography within the GCE O/L streams be reviewed.

15. STUDENT HEALTH

It is recommended that the Ministry of Education study ways and means of enabling secondary level students maintain satisfactory physical and mental health.

16. NUMBER OF SUBJECTS AT GCE O/L

It is recommended that the number of GCE O/L subjects students are taught be reduced from seven to six. However, able students may be given the opportunities to sit extra subjects.

17. COMPUTING SCIENCE

Following the evaluation of the present computer studies course at Majeediya school, and depending on the outcome of this evaluation, it is recommended that computing science be included in the secondary curriculum as an optional subject.

18. JUNIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

It is recommended that the Ministry of Education carry out an evaluation on the usefulness of the Junior School Certificate.

19. ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS AT THE HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL

- (1) It is recommended that Art and Accounting be introduced at the higher secondary level in 1987 and 1989 respectively if teachers and other resources can be procured.
- (2) It is recommended that applicants with good academic background be allowed to enrol in a fourth curricular elective on probation at the higher secondary level.
- (3) The combination of curricular electives which will not necessitate any infrastructural or personnel changes or changes to the budget projected for 1987 may be offered by the Science Education Centre in 1987 as this would allow a better utilization of the available resources.

- (4) To maintain and further the interests of students presented for the GCE O/L Fisheries Science, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education consider the introduction of an appropriate subject at the higher secondary level.
- (5) It is recommended that English language be introduced at the higher secondary level as a core subject.

20. EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

Should there be a need to discontinue the GCE O/L and GCE A/L examinations of the University of London, School Examinations Board, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education consider alternatives from other internationally recognised boards of examination. It is further recommended that all possible efforts be made to strengthen the existing local examination system in terms of evaluation techniques, personnel data processing, etc.

21. MALDIVIAN STUDIES

- (1) It is recommended that all areas of study relevant to the Maldives, not sufficiently emphasised in the present secondary curriculum, be taught as a new subject viz. Maldivian Studies/Social Studies. These areas may be taught initially through projects.
- (2) When Maldivian Studies/Social Studies is developed sufficiently as a subject it is recommended that the Ministry of Education study the possibility of including it in the GCE O/L as a mode 3 subject.

22. SCIENCE EDUCATION CENTRE ENTRY REGULATIONS

To provide greater flexibility and opportunity for the students it is recommended that students who have O/L passes in at least 3 subjects, of which not less than 2 are in their curricular electives, be admitted provided that such students pass at the first semester examination in the curricular elective in which they have no O/L pass.

23. ORDERING OF TEXTBOOKS

As any delay in the supply of textbooks at the beginning of the year will affect the students, it is suggested that the Ministry of Education supply the books through a government bookshop or place an order for textbooks with the State Trading Organisation (STO) instead of the present practice of supplying the STO with a list of recommended books.