

Curriculum Reform Implementation in Iufi-Iufa Primary School in the Eastern Highlands Province

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Introduction

Edward Taki Apuki is my name and I come from Bogia District in the Madang Province. I am married with five children. My wife is also a teacher who has been very cooperative during the implementation period. I began the teaching career in 1991 and this is my 14th year of service. This write-up is a brief presentation, which is the highlight of what I have planned, prepared, and ready for the conference.

My Role Before and After Implementation

Curriculum Reform Implementation Programme is a historical experience in our education system. It all began in 1993 when the “Philosophy of Education”, a kept away vision for our Education Department, came into implementation.

In 1994, Madang Province was one of the so-called pilot provinces to take on board the Education Reform. In fact, I personally felt that it was only the establishment of the Grades 7 and 8 to the community/primary schools from the lower secondary or the high schools. *Paraide, (1999, p.1)* simplified the old and the new structure as follows:

I was one of the appointed pioneer teachers that year to take the specialist teaching in grades 7 and 8, in the community/primary division. Sr. Jane Francis Milne (*Former Principal of the Malala Catholic High School*) was the Provincial Reform Coordinator.

With a total of three teachers and two grade 7 classes, we took on board the challenge. Our first Provincial In-service week was arranged that the high school teachers presented the grade 7 and 8 course contents according to its speciality. The community/primary teachers', who were trained as the generalists, were able to adopt. Being interested and enthusiastic, with the best of my ability, I did present the grades 7 and 8 course contents well to the students. I continued as a grade 7 and 8 teacher, specialised in Mathematics and Science, even when I transferred to the Eastern Highlands Province in 1996. I

performed as a Senior Subject Coordinator (SSC) and a Senior Teacher since 1996 in one of the schools that enrolled their first Grade 7 class in the Eastern Highlands Province.

I played various important roles in supervising, advising and ensured that my teachers performed according to the measurable functions. I coordinated the administration of the grades assessment, and other assistance to the administration. For assessments, I ensured that the records (*children's progression*) were kept in order. I did forward planning for the terms and also endorsed teaching documents for use for my subordinates. I liaised well with the specialist teachers from the nearest high school (*particularly Bena Bena Provincial High School*) that they conducted in-services on the borrowed course contents, assessments and its procedures, and also provided for other assistance.

The cooperating high school teachers who practically undermined the reform, its structure and curriculum, have spent their time and assisted accordingly, as requested. They conducted various in-services. I have worked well with the high school teachers that enabled me to master the speciality, basically the courses I taught in grades 7 and 8. For the four years, the school I was serving had very good results. The education authorities in the Province are aware and they will surely support me if interviewed. I meant that, most of the students have scored high achievements, compared to the other newly set up primary schools. That has happened for three years consecutively.

The modified approaches in the Reform in Education came into reality in 2003. That is the full swinging of the Structure and the Curriculum from the elementary to grade 8. That was when I was doing my Bachelors Degree of Education at the University of Goroka. I majored Curriculum and Teaching and minored Planning and Administration. In the course of study, the main forecast was on the philosophical perspective of the Structural and the Curriculum Reform in Education. The School Based Curriculum and its aspects became a need in the implementation period and therefore, strategies were identified. It broadened my knowledge on the know-how of the current Reform in Education and its implementation in the classroom in particular.

According to the *Matane Report*, "*The Philosophy of Education*", the Five National Goals and Directive Principles highlighted, gave us a direction toward education, which should be relevant, and that is the root. After finishing the two years of study, I decided to be situated back in the classroom, which was where I began. I aimed to ensure that the implementation should at least make a start. This is one of my expectations on this Reform in Education. The structural reform has eventuated. Now let us look forward to the full implementation of the Curriculum Reform.

Comparing Changes on the Old/New Curriculum

In reference to the attached diagram on the Old and the New Structure of Education, there are numerous changes that have taken place. Firstly, as the structure changed, the course contents also were changed. The grades 7 and 8 were classified under the community/primary division. There is also pressure on the teachers to upgrade their qualifications.

I personally felt that it was the right time I undertook the studies in Curriculum and Teaching. I was given the task in coordinating the implementation in my school, it at least looked successful. I should honestly comment here as a practical implementer that, most of the teaching traditions also changed. The approach should be children-centred and not teacher-centred or lecturing. Resource centres should be created and the assessments are criterion-based and continuous throughout the school year, which are a few mentioned.

In 1994, the grades 7 and 8 courses were basically: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, which are classified as the core subjects while Commerce, Basic Technology and Library are the non-core subjects. The Expressive Arts, Physical Education and Religious Instructions are the electives.

Furthermore, comparing the old curriculum to the new curriculum changes, which took place, are on the courses. The restructured courses in grades 6, 7 and 8 namely are: Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Science and Personal Development, Making a Living and Arts. The grade 6, 7 and 8 are classified as the upper primary. In reference by DoE, (2004), p.31), is understood and is expressed,

1994-2002 Courses	2003 Course
English	Language
Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science
Social Science	Social Science
Commerce	Personal Development
Basic Technology	Arts
Expressive Arts	Making a Living
Physical Education	Religious Education
Religious Education	

The lower primary grades 3, 4 and 5 had their courses also changed and are on trial namely, Language, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Community Living, Arts and Physical Education. The planning and programming is done thematically. A lot of integration in the approach with the use of various teaching learning strategies.

What I did to change from the old curriculum is that, I have shown greater interest in upgrading my qualification. It was then in 1995 when I was selected to attend the

Diploma in Education Primary when it first started. I never attended due to underestimation, for it was only my fifth year of teaching and the selfish way of thinking by the Catholic Agency in Madang. I was never released for study. I was fortunate in 1998 for the Diploma in Education Primary In-service (DEP-I). I decided to continue on to the University of Goroka for the Bachelors Degree in Education, which I fortunately completed and successfully graduated. Which the speciality in Curriculum and Teaching, I find it worthwhile, back in the classroom for this implementation exercise.

At the provincial level, as a trainer of trainers on various workshops, I have found it very convenient to convince others in regards to the curriculum implementation. I got heavily involved in the implementation programme in the year 2004 with my grade 6 class in my class. I find myself very successful despite plenty of work as everyone seemed to comment.

Enclosed are some of the clips of the course related with the staff and students' and other personnel's involvement in and out of the classroom.

The grade 6 students are making headdress – Arts.

Two grade 6 boys show their cultural expression in their traditional costumes and enclosed the Appointment Officer and the BOM Chairman – Social Science.

DHT-Mek appreciates the green clean environment – Making a Living.

Identifying the safe and unsafe places and grow responsible in making places safe – Personal Development.

As a qualified officer, a trainer and a practical implementer in the upper primary grades, and also assisting the lower primary and their implementation, I felt these changes from the old curriculum to the new curriculum are just more than workable in the Papua New Guinea education situations.

Challenges/Successes

There are many challenges during the implementation period. While on study, my wife who is a very committed teacher, assisted in the trialling and writing of the Language Syllabus and the Teachers Guide in 2002. As a grade 7 teacher and taking the English subject, she exercised the implementation in line with the draft syllabuses from the Language Curriculum Coordinator and writer Annette Appa. I assisted her very well in trial planning and programming of the now Language course. Other courses were trialled out in other provinces.

Unfortunately, it then turned sour on the following year 2003, when taking the same class in grade 8. Her new head teacher undermined the trial Language draft, which she was implementing. Lots of doubts rose. These teachers were stubborn, too slow to meet up with the changes and the challenges. They grew negative without allowing the implementation to go on trial and error bases, or later assessing critically and later evaluate, totally went against her implementation. It became an issue.

In order to avoid more of their uncooperativeness and underestimations, she resigned taking the grade 8 class and its Language course under my instruction. She made a swap with another lower class. She then moved into the integration or thematic approaches and bridging for grade 3, which was well suited for her. That all happened because the head teacher was indecisive.

In 2004, I took the grade 6 class and using my initiatives and resources, I tried my very best to coordinate the implementation in both lower and upper primary whether comrades liked or disliked. It went very well, that there were a lot of positive comments from the head teacher, other comrades, my area inspectors and others that witnessed the implementation. I should not forget the CRIP Advisor, Mr. Gordon Shirley. I proved commented which then convinced the children who then told the news to their parents, which made them convinced too. The curriculum reform proved workable. Everyone realised the changes in the students' attitudes. The administration and the staff decided and we all aimed for the full implementation in 2005 and it did happen.

Therefore, this year 2005, we have allocated a teacher per class from grades 3-8. We agreed to accept the fact-of-the-matter that the Reform in Education is here to stay. The truth is that, it is workable as evaluated by every individual in our institution.

Evidence

As I have already stated in my report, that the implementation exercise in the year 2004 was very successful for me. Another teacher and I took the two grade 6 class on trial on implementation on the reform curriculum. The way the courses are arranged has a greater impact on the students learning. It has already been integrated. The use of the teaching and learning strategies, have helped the learning in students very well.

In the past, the approach was teacher-controlled or teacher-centred. Our children are assessed on their academic abilities only and that's all. It has changed to the child-orientated, which I fully agree. Furthermore, Papua New Guineans have attitude problems. Therefore, a lot of concentration should be based on correcting the attitudes, morals and ethics, which did happen in my classes and the school as a whole.

Each course was designed in an integrated way, which has links from one concept to another or different course to another. Whatever theory presented is worthwhile in reality. Enclosed are some of the clips of individuals and groups who would prove my implementation and can supply a lot of evidence at their own level with subsidy explanations.

Attitudes towards my style of working

In the start of the Education Reform in 1994, adopting the high school system seemed easy. My head teacher with all other staff members, were ready for this change. The inspectors were coordinating very well with the help from the high schools.

In 1996, in the Eastern Highlands Province, I worked under an exploring head teacher, who was supportive to implement. I was very manipulative, creative and innovative that most of the comrades whom I worked with always submitted to me. Moving around in three various schools, I pressured for the reform to take place. My third school was quite optimistic and that was because I was absent for study. My wife, who is also a teacher, continued the implementation exercise had to face a lot of challenges.

The draft Teachers Guides and Teachers Syllabuses for the grade 6, 7 and 8 sent, done by the Curriculum Development Division were sent around to school. Mrs. Taki (*my wife*) implemented that for the Language course but was bombarded by her undermining comrades. Her head teacher in 2002 and 2003 lacked a lot on their implementation skills that she gave up and was submitted to the old adopted way.

I resumed in 2004, took a grade 6 class and possessing the curriculum background, I was appointed the team leader in the implementation of the curriculum in our school. The draft Planning/Programming was done after the Province In-service Training week in 2004. These are the basic teaching documents. My head teacher was very supportive and allowed the implementation to take place. I was very practical and that convinced my comrades.

This year 2005, we all welcomed the implementation. A teacher per class from grade 3-5, required courses in their thematic or integrated approach. The grades 6-8 have a teacher per class and the required courses. Our school was fortunate to have the “Live Telecast” programs for our children, which is an additional session. With a variety of the use of the teaching and learning strategies, we have proven ourselves the positive benefits on the development in our children. That is labelled affront as our aims and objectives.

Presentation (Conference Paper)

- Planning and Programming of:
 - ✓ Upper Primary
 - ✓ Lower Primary

- (*Optional*) Brief Highlights on the
 - ✓ Students learning
 - ✓ Assessments

References:

Department of Education (1999) *Primary Education Handbook, Papua New Guinea.*

Matane P. (1986) *A Philosophy of Education for Papua New Guinea.*
Ministerial Committee Report, Papua New Guinea.

Paraide P. (1999) *Our Children in Primary School,* Papua New Guinea.

