



National Education Assessment 2021-Grade III Report

4th February, 2023

Press Release

Overview

Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment (BCSEA), MoESD launched the National Education Assessment 2021- Grade III Report on 4th March 2023 at MoESD Conference Hall, Thimphu.

The NEA Project (2019-2022) is funded by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) under Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant (ESPIG) with the support from United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Save the Children International-Bhutan (SCI). BCSEA as an implementing agency, executed the NEA project (2019-2022) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD) and Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) with technical support from Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

NEA is a triennial sample-based large-scale assessment of student learning at various key stages (grades III, VI and IX) in English Reading Literacy and English Writing Literacy; Dzongkha Reading Literacy and Dzongkha Writing Literacy; Mathematical Literacy; and Scientific Literacy to gauge their knowledge, skills and attitude across these foundational subjects. The NEA contributes towards sound data, information and analysis of the existing system, which will lead towards strengthening the existing education policies, strategies and programmes that underpins the quality of education in the country.

The NEA cognitive instruments were administered to 4,685 grade III students including students with special needs (24) from 184 schools across 24 Dzongkhags and Thromdes from November 25 to December 15, 2022. Similarly, the background questionnaires were also administered to Teachers (558), Principals (184) and CDEOs/CTEOs (24) to ascertain the factors influencing the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The 184 sample schools were selected by an international sampling consortium using proportional random sampling techniques.

Key Findings

- ✓ 84 percent of students in Dzongkha Reading literacy, 90 percent in English Reading literacy and 93 percent in Mathematical literacy were able to meet the minimum proficiencies for grade III.
- ✓ The mean score of the girls was slightly higher than that of the boys.
- ✓ There was no significant performance difference between the performance of students from rural areas and those from urban areas in Dzongkha Reading Literacy while a significant difference was detected in English Reading Literacy and in Mathematical Literacy.
- ✓ There was no significant performance difference between the students studying in private schools and public schools in Dzongkha Reading Literacy, whereas a clear performance difference was shown in English Reading and Mathematical Literacy with private schools outperforming public schools.
- ✓ Students with higher family income level scored higher across the three domains and there was statistical significance in both English Reading Literacy and Mathematical Literacy except in Dzongkha Reading Literacy.



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- ✓ Students evaluated the environment of their schools positively indicating that the school is safe and that they are happy.
 - ✓ According to teachers, PD activities were higher in the areas directly related to teaching such as subject content and ICT while it was less in the areas of SEN and action research. They found that PD programmes were more effective in the areas of assessment practices, teaching methods, ICT, and subject content.
 - ✓ Principals evaluated their school environments as safe, happy, and friendly which was also found in the responses from students and teachers.
 - ✓ CDEOs and CTEOs indicated that they visited schools more than twice a year to provide crucial feedback on the areas that need improvement in accordance with their School Improvement Plan and observed classes during their visits.

Way forwards

- Strengthen the resources in the rural schools to bridge education disparity.
- Carry out school consolidation for cost savings and enhancing fairness and quality education.
- MoESD to review guidelines for school discipline policy and come up with comprehensive and coherent discipline and anti-bullying policy.
- Enhance the WASH programme at homes and in schools.
- Schools to continue enhancing diverse PD programmes.
- Review and revise Dzongkha reading and learning materials at lower grades.

The study indicated that by and large majority of the students across the country were at proficiency Level 2. External factors, besides classroom teaching and learning have influence over student achievements. There is, thus, a need to carefully understand the findings and to have consultations to devise appropriate strategies to address the same. It is also critical to discuss and disseminate the findings with all relevant stakeholders and to take appropriate action thereafter. Efforts need to be made by all stakeholders in their respective areas to promote the quality of education.

For detail information please visit www.bcsea.bt or contact NEA Project Manager at arjunkumargurung@bcsea.bt

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