

2021 National Education Research Conference convened in Changsha

The National Education Research Conference convened in Changsha, Hunan province on 26 April 2021. Vice Minister of Education Song Demin attended the conference and delivered a speech. Zhu Zhongming, Vice Governor of Hunan province, delivered a remark.



Song Demin underscored that during the 13th Five-Year Plan period, especially since the issue of the Opinions on Enhancing Educational Research in the New Era, researchers in education have paid great endeavors to turn research findings into teaching plan, policy decision-making and regime for the purpose of serving the central and overall situation, which has made great contribution to education reform and development in China. During the 14th Five-Year Plan period, researchers in education should facilitate the quality development of education research to establish a high-quality education system. First, we should strengthen Party leadership on educational research and improve the political sense of judgment, perception and executive force; Second, we should conduct theoretical and practical research on significant issues in education and emphasize problem-orientation and demand-orientation; Third, we should improve the quality of educational research and create positive environment for it; Fourth, we need to improve the governance of educational research; Fifth, we need to take the responsibilities of generating quality deliverable and contributing to policy decision-making in the new era.

Representatives from Education Department of Hunan Province, Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences, Central China Normal University, and Educational Science Research Institute of Shenzhen exchanged opinions. Participants also discussed on relevant documents on national management of educational research.

Cui Baoshi, President of NIES hosted the first plenary meeting and delivered a concluding remark. Vice-President of National Institute of Education Sciences Liu Guihua introduced the China Education Sciences Forum, the National Education Research Platform and the project on national satisfaction survey of education.

NIES hosts the first “Academic Brainstorming Forum” in 2021

The first “Academic Brainstorming Forum” in 2021 was held on 28 April. Professor Bao Chuanyou from Faculty of Education, Beijing Normal University attended the forum as the reviewer.



Associate Professor Wu Xiangrong from Education Inspection and Evaluation Research Center identified that government policy was the primary factor affecting the degree of satisfaction for teachers in rural areas based on survey among 8150 teachers. Assistant Professor Zhu Fuyan from Educational Development and Reform Research Center analyzed social integration of migrant workers' children and established an indicator system of cultural, economic and educational integration, etc. He then found out that gender, grade, hukou, parental occupation have great impacts on the social integration for migrant workers' children. Assistant Professor Liu Fangli from Physical, Health and Arts Education Research Center introduced the disadvantages of the policy on preventing adolescents from shortsightedness in China and proposed ten suggestions on targeting certain group of adolescents, implementation of policy and improving quality. Associate Professor Xiang Chun from Curriculum and Pedagogy Research Center introduced that solving the contradictions between advancing integrated development of students and learning competition should be the key factor for tackling the practical dilemma of developing all-round capacity simultaneously in virtue, intelligence, and physical aspects.

Prof. Bao Chuanyou commented that the four presentations have sound theoretical frameworks, accurate data and reliable research findings which could support future policy-making and teaching practices.

Researchers, post-docs, visiting scholars, representatives from Educational Science Publishing House as well as teachers from the affiliated school attended this forum.



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NIES hosts the Sino-British Apprenticeship Online Forum



NIES hosts the “2021 Sino-British Apprenticeship Online Forum on 28th April 2021. Ma Tao, the Vice-President of NIES, delivered a remark. Experts from China and the UK exchanged views from the perspectives of national government, higher education institutes and industry. Mr. Jonathan Ledger from Department for International Trade UK introduced the management of apprenticeship, establishment of curriculum standards as well as the mode of participation for industry employers, and proposed suggestions to respond to challenges encountered. The President of Guangdong Construction Polytechnic Zhao Pengfei introduced the development history and practical path of apprenticeship in China. Dr. Susan Relly from Oxford University displayed the model of skills education and training in the UK, and analyzed the background, limitations and challenges of continuing and vocational education in the UK. The Vice-President of Jinhua Polytechnic Cheng Jun discussed the practical significance of facilitating the development of modern apprenticeship in China based on investigating the four typical modes of modern apprenticeship. Mr. Gary Ramsden from Business School of Lincoln University of UK introduced experience of university-industry cooperation in the UK. The Director of Internet of Things Association of Guangdong Province Chen Yuqi shared the practical experience of talents development in modern apprenticeship.

The plenary members of the Steering Committee of National Modern Apprenticeship, staff members from the Research Center for Vocational and Continuing Education and Department for International Exchange in NIES attended the forum. There are around 13,000 audiences from more than 3000 vocational schools and research institutes participated in the online forum.



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New Reforms in School Education: Schools reluctant to part with traditional approach

Dr Indira Lilamani Ginige

a former Deputy Director General of the National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka.

(Continued) All in all the first curriculum reform of the new millennium attempted to move the system of education away from the objectives approach that considered knowledge, attitudes and skills separately to a competency approach where these were integrated. The reform also tried to move the system from lesson plans to activity plans, from an evaluation culture to an assessment culture, and from teacher-centred education to learner-centred practices that were very much needed for competency development. The learners thus coming to the fore in the new learning-teaching environment had to be active rather than passive. They also had to move away from the achievement tests that carried a pass mark of 40 to proficiency tests that required at least 60 marks to reach near proficiency. To make all these efforts successful, school-based assessment that was already there for formative evaluation was strengthened, and an authentic system of evaluation was introduced for summative evaluations conducted by the end of year school tests and the GCE OL examination. While continuous and formative evaluations thus introduced focused on the extent to which the students had attained the competency levels under concern, summative evaluations planned

on the basis of authentic situations tested their preparedness to use the abilities so developed in real life situations.

The purpose of all this was to provide the young of the nation with a good general education that could make them successful in any walk of life they select for their future. As a means of laying a sound foundation for this, the schools had to equip their students with a well-integrated personality that comprised three types of development - physical, intellectual and emotional. Intellectual development taking a central place here, had to go beyond knowledge to take account of the subject competencies that the students could master. Considering the fact that it is only in a healthy body that one can expect a healthy mind that is a must for intellectual development, the subject Health and Physical Education paid high attention to health, nutrition and physical fitness. The generic competencies that were newly introduced facilitated the emotional intelligence that the students needed for success in personal and work lives.

The reform also focused on gender disparity that was becoming visible in education. The girls with high endurance and better ability to learn by listening



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were outperforming the boys who were keen to learn by doing. At a time where many countries were focusing on multiple intelligences, the difficulty faced by our system in meeting at least the needs of the three main groups of learners – the auditory, visual and the tactile - was found alarming. The variety of methods that the reform introduced under its new methodology, however, could win the attention of all types of learners and make them active in the learning environment.

Irrespective of all these efforts made at the dawn of the new millennium, we find our schools still on the three traditional pillars. School teachers, who get their students to name, state and list things or define, describe and explain things have not given up the traditional method of imparting lower order mental skills to their students. Textbooks, teacher-made notes and answers written for model questions make the students cram for public examinations with limited understanding of the subject matter under concern. Short note books abundant in the market allow students to use them with no idea at least of the purpose of a short note. The mechanical and superficial learning of students merely for good examination results does not allow our schools to produce the type of citizen needed for the 21st century.

Many problems linked to both curriculum planning and implementation have not allowed the reforms of the new millennium to be institutionalized in our schools yet. Non alignment of textbooks and

examinations with the new curriculum and delays associated with political interventions due to lack of a national education policy are two major reasons that relate to curriculum planning. Open classrooms with limited space and heavy furniture, centralized facilities given prominence over mobile facilities, class sizes either too large or too small for group work and the inadequacy of the forty minute time period to complete the activities are a few examples of problems related to implementation. Replacing the bureaucratic organizational structures with matrix structures, introducing digital systems to acquaint all types of stakeholder groups on reform messages, changing the supervisory mechanisms that pay undue attention to examination success, and controlling pressure group action that cripples worthwhile ideas are some strategies proposed to overcome the problems.

The new thinking that is going on today towards a new system of education focuses on a skills oriented thematic curriculum that provides opportunity for authentic learning and assessment. This curriculum goes far beyond the currently available skills oriented subject curriculum that emphasize authentic assessment and evaluation. Considering the big gap between where we are and where we want to be, the success of any new reform proposed for the future depends on its actions to investigate the problems that have hindered the institutionalization of the skills oriented curriculum introduced in 2007.