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ABSTRACT

There had been, since the inception of the educational reforms in Sri Lanka in 1972, a controversy over the claim of Business studies to the status of Pre-vocational studies. The critics denied both the adequacy of manual skills in, as well as the potency of Business studies to shape new social attitudes. The writer decided to investigate these issues. The investigation of these issues led the writer to also elucidate the theory and practice of Pre-vocational education. This was necessitated as the subject of Pre-vocational education had not been researched upon previously. The theoretical study formed the first stage of this dissertation while the second stage consisted of a study of the practice of Pre-vocational education with special reference to Business study.

Various publications both local and foreign formed the source for stage I of this study which consisted of the following sections :

Review of the objectives of Pre-vocational education.

An analysis of the concept of Pre-vocational education.

A comparative study of this concept.

A study of the psychology of manual skills.

A discussion of the philosophical concepts.

A review of the organisation of Pre-vocational education in Sri Lanka.

A discussion of the system of evaluation in Sri Lanka.

The writer using interview and questionnaire techniques investigated the practice of Pre-vocational Business studies in

the schools of Sri Lanka. The data thus collected were analysed under six heads or areas. The following conclusions were arrived at in respect of general trends.

1. The pupils and teachers had not adequately grasped the 'objectives' of Pre-vocational education.
2. The pupils, teachers and education officers had failed to comprehend both the meaning and the dimensions of the concept of manual skill.
3. The methods of teaching advocated by the Curriculum Development Centre as outlined in the Teachers' Guide, had not been followed by teachers.
4. Facilities required for the proper teaching of the subject were not available in the schools.
5. The Pre-vocational Business studies course lacked manual skills to sufficiently justify its status as a Pre-vocational subject.
6. There appeared to have been a favourable trend in respect of the development of social skills and attitudes.

The findings were interpreted bearing in mind the limitations of this study. Some implications as well as related problems have also been identified for further research. Though this study reveals the formation of favourable attitudes in

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respect of social skills and attitudes, it cannot be attributed

to the prevocation commerce subject only, as the teaching of

other prevocational subjects also could have contributed. How-

ever, it is beyond the scope of this study to delineate any such

interactive effect.

reliability of Teacher-responses

Rank Order Correlation co-efficient