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An Evaluation of "School of Quality" in Primary Education in Lao PDR

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Abstract This study aimed to describe the effectiveness of "School of Quality" (SoQ) in terms of teachers' capability, students' achievement scores, and quality education outcome indicators performance in comparison with Conventional Schools (CS) in Primary Education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR. Quantitative research using Scriven's summative evaluation model and descriptive statistics to analyze data collected from 259 teachers, 750 students, and 1069 students' scores from 30 schools (15SoQ and 15 CS) and documentation were employed. The following are the results: (1) SoQ teachers had lower educational qualification; (2) SoQ teachers had longer experience; (3) SoQ teachers had betterperformance; (4) SoQ had higher mean scores obtained both in school's final and nationally conducted examinations; (5) SoQ had lower dropout rates in grades 1 and 2, higher in grades 3 and 4; (6) SoQ had lower promotion rates in grades 1 to 4 but in grade 5 SoQ had higher promotion; and (7) SoQ had higher repetition rates in grades 1 to 4 but in grade 5 had lower repetition rates. In conclusion, the SoQ approach was found effective in teachers' performance and students' achievement but not in teacher's educational qualification and quality education outcomes.

Keywords: School of quality, teachers' capacity, students' achievement

The foundation of an individual's growth determines not only personal but also societal and economic development. Millennium Development Goals number 2 states: "Achieve universal primary education" by 2015 where children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling" towards eradicating poverty (UN, 2008). Obtaining the 3Rs of basic literacy, like reading, 'riting (writing), and 'rithmetic (arithmetic) and computer literacy will equip people with basic life skills to have decent lives. However, according to the United Nations (UN, 2008), "in all regions, inequalities in access to education continue to pose major barriers to fully attain the MDG 2

target…" Lao PDR is no exception. The UN also reported that apart from access, quality, and school governance complicate the condition. Thus, UNICEF in 2004 piloted the "Child Friendly School (CFS) or "School of Quality" (SoQ) approach that addresses access and quality in basic education. The concept of SoQ has been implemented in more than 40 countries worldwide and is highly consistent with the real context of Lao PDR. This was implemented with UNICEF's support in 765 schools in 9 provinces in 2004. Evaluated in 2009, results showed that the SoQ approach made a positive difference to the lives of children especially in relation to the shift towards child-centred learning as opposed to teacher-centered learning. SoQ reflects an environment of good quality characterized by six essential dimensions: (1) it is inclusive of children; (2) it is effective for learning; (3) it is healthy, safe, and protective of children; (4) it is gender-sensitive; (5) it is involved with children, families, and communities; and (6) it has effective school management and leadership.

School construction in Lao PDR is generally left to the Village Education Development Committee. This implies that the community members contribute in cash, kind, or labor to construct the school with whatever light materials are available in the forest with no guidelines on how to construct one. Only in 2014 when the Department of Planning of the Ministry of Education and Sports started providing a template for school principals and VEDC head to prepare a proposal for school construction or improvement. This application is true only for public schools.

UNICEF supported SoQs, on the other hand, provided provisions to meet SoQ requirements in the first instance. While some government schools did the same, not all schools were accorded similar provisions due to cost. This is the reason why the study was conducted. Do all dimensions need to be met or could these be prioritized? However, results showed that these dimensions did not matter much which implies that conventional schools fared well as far as quality education outcomes are concerned.

Unfortunately, school construction in Lao PDR did not take into account healthy environments and gender sensitivity. Community involvement, however, is a mass being a socialist country initially. Hence, the Government of Lao PDR adopted the same model in Primary Education delivery to a limited extent due to budget constraints. In 2008-2009, the number of SoQ reached 773 out of the current 8,871 or a mere 17.33%. More so, cost to be incurred in putting up SoQs would definitely be higher which government cannot afford to implement at once. The question now is would it be possible to employ the SoQ approach on a priority-based dimension approach? Which of these dimensions could directly contribute to quality education?

Primary Education in Laos consists of five years. Pupils start schooling at age 6 and finish grade 5 at 10 years old. The subjects taught include: Mathematics, Lao Language, Dictation, World Around Us, Physical Education, Handicraft Education, and Arts - Music Education. Classes start on 1 September and ends in May or a total of eight months. Normally, only one teacher handles all subjects per class consisting of a maximum of 34 students ideally but in reality numbers could be higher due to lack of schools. The purpose of Primary Education in Lao PDR is to provide a strong foundation in general education curriculum with emphasis on four subjects

(Mathematics, Lao Language, Dictation, and World Around Us). Thus, national examinations are conducted at the end of Grade 5. However, only students who have passed at least two of the subjects are allowed to take the examination.

Investigating the case of an SoQ can provide some insights and lessons on how best the approach can be implemented to fast track compliance to MDG2. In order to determine what school model performed better and thus more appropriate for a least developed country like Lao PDR to achieve faster economic growth, a comparative study on the performance of SoQ and CS in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR was carried out. Measures of performance was assumed to be determined by level of teacher's capability, students' achievement in school and nationally conducted examinations, and quality education outcomes. Thus, the evaluation focused on quality education outcomes (cohort survival rate, repetition rate, and completion rate). It did not look at the six dimensions of quality that UNICEF implemented. Findings, however, were related to these dimensions to explain the results. The quality education outcomes can then be attributed to quality characteristics of the SoQ.

Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (1985) state that the purpose of the evaluation is to improve not prove, so the evaluator does not intend to prove whether the object being evaluated has value or not, but provide information and recommendations on how to improve the quality of the object being evaluated. On the contrary, Scriven believes that summative evaluation has to be conducted to determine if the product is more effective than the competition. Summative evaluation is intended to provide information about the worth of a program. It is useful in determining the extent to which the final, end-of-project goals of the program were actually met (Fitzpatrick, 2011). Thus, the evaluation model to be used is Michael Scriven's Summative Evaluation Model. Summative evaluation focused on measuring outcomes and achievements and what probably led or influenced it. Stake in his Keynote presentation at a conference on "New Trends in Evaluation" in October 1973, at the Institute of Education at Göteborg University calls this "aimless evaluation." The approach aims to exclude any personal discussions with implementers. The achievement of goals is judged by its results, in this case, performance in quality education outcomes, student achievement scores, and teacher's capability as the major or key influential factors.

According to UNICEF (2009), improved student learning outcomes are being achieved in schools, which have adopted the SoQ approach. Sufficient data were collected to verify that schools classified as SoQ are, overall, experiencing increased enrollment and attendance, improved student completion and retention, and that dropout and repetition rates are declining. A study done by Lee and Barro (1998) shows that family inputs and school resources are closely related to school outcomes, as measured by internationally comparable test scores, repetition rates, and dropout rates. Family characteristics, such as income and education of parents, have strong effects on student performance. The findings also indicate that more school resources- especially smaller class sizes but probably also higher teacher salaries and greater school length- enhance educational outcomes.

The Ministry of Education Lao PDR (2010a) studies done by the Research Institute for Educational Sciences (RIES) of the Ministry of Education of Lao PDR revealed that socio-economic factors strongly affect achievement in all three-subject areas (Lao language, Mathematics, and World Around Us). Grade 5 pupil population of Laos appear to be slightly weaker in mathematics, with the vast majority of students (65.4%) performing in the lower two levels. This indicates that student of primary school achievement, especially in mathematics is low. Implications for teacher training are perhaps apparent here too. The Ministry of Education of Lao PDR (2010b) in a study found that there are some factors that inhibit students to go to school. One of which is mother's education. Mothers have very low education compared to fathers' respondents. Notwithstanding the gender differentials in educational attainment, the education level of parents was still low. With low educational attainment, some parents seem to have very little influence or inclination to send their children to school beyond the basic primary education. Others, however, who pushed their children to have better education will not be able to help their children in school works, especially homework and the little importance they may assign to sending their children to school to complete their education. Low family income greatly affects school attendance of children. Noting that most of the children who were interviewed were at risk of dropping out, it was qualified during the interviews that children of poor families have to stop going to school because they have to help in doing household chores or work in the farm to augment family income. Another reason is distance from the school to the house. In Lao PDR, 23% of respondents live more than 10 km from the nearest school while another 25% live more than 5 km but less than 10 km away from the nearest school for secondary education. This could affect learning effectiveness due to fatigue, noting that distance could be further aggravated by the rugged and sometimes hilly terrain in some cases. Ethnic groups, 49 of those in Lao PDR have different socio-economic conditions. The composite data show that 85% of respondents have low socio-economic condition in life. Based on these results, the general objective of evaluating the SoQ model is to find out how effective it is in producing desired teacher capability, student achievement scores and quality education outcome indicators.

The study submits that SoQ indicators like (1) inclusive of children; (2) effective for learning; (3) healthy, safe, and protective of children; (4) gender-sensitive; (5) involved with children, families, and communities; and (6) has effective school management and leadership are six independent variables that can ensure better teacher ability, student achievement scores, and education quality outcome indicators. In a like manner, dropout rate, promotion rate and repetition rate may be affected by literacy rates of the locality. Education outcomes such as low dropout rate, low repetition rate, and high promotion rate are determined by SoQ factors to ensure student retention in the school system. However, other factors such as socio-cultural, gender, education data, low family income, distance from the school to house, socio-economic condition and family size may also affect student retention as gleaned from the review of related studies. In this study, it can be assumed that SoQ indicators can influence teacher ability, student achievement scores and education quality outcome

indicators. Teacher ability is seen from his/her qualification, experience, and performance. Recruitment and qualifications of teachers in all government schools are the same. This affects student achievement and education outcome indicators indirectly. How well students achieve their score is dependent on how well the teacher taught them.

Method

The study was conducted among Primary Education schools in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR. The province was purposely chosen due to its economic category, being peri-urban. As well, Vientiane Province is relatively close to the capital but more rural than urban. It can be assumed further that areas close to the city are more developed and have access to new developments in education compared to far-flung areas. Hence, there should be no difference in access to information but in the manner of how the school is managed. This research was conducted from January to March 2013. Data were collected from15 SoQs in Phonhong District and 15 CS in Viengkham District as sample. This study used secondary data for two academic years: SY 2011-2012 for teachers' education qualification and teachers' experience, students' achievement scores in school- and nationally conducted examinations and quality education outcome indicators; and 2012-2013 to obtain data for teachers' performance. Data were collected through two techniques: documentation and questionnaire. Quantitative data was divided into 3 parts: one, for teachers' capability indicators (educational qualification, experience and performance); second, for students' achievement indicators (scores in school-conducted examinations and nationally conducted examinations); and third, for quality education outcome indicators (dropout rates, repetition rates, and promotion rates). Quantitative data were also obtained from the students while teachers' performance was determined using a self-administered questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The scores of each respondent in each component were summed. The mean score, frequency, and percentages of each component were taken. First, results were interpreted into frequency and percentages, and the grand mean score for each component. Second, it is to determine the categories of sum scores obtained from respondents by employing the evaluation criteria standard based on the normal curve. These criteria have been supported by Saifuddin (2012). Third, all frequencies and percentages are placed in each category. Finally, the grand mean score is put in category to find the status of the performance or how very good or very effective each component was. Table 1 presents the evaluation criteria standard for normal curve score.

Table 1
The Evaluation Criteria Standard for Normal Curve Score

Score Mean ($\overline{X}$)	Categories
$\overline{X}$> M + 1.5 SD	Very Good/Very Effective
M + 0.5 SD <$\overline{X}$≤ M + 1.5 SD	Good/Effective
M - 0.5 SD <$\overline{X}$ ≤ M + 0.5 SD	Fair/Fairly Effective
M - 1.5 SD <$\overline{X}$ ≤ M - 0.5 SD	Poor/Not Very Effective
$\overline{X}$ ≤ M - 1.5 SD	Very Poor/Not Effective

Note:
$\overline{X}$= mean score
M = ideal mean of concerned component in this research
M = 1/2 (highest ideal score + lowest ideal score)
SD = ideal standard deviation of each component
SD = 1/6 (highest ideal score – lowest ideal score)

Teachers' performance questionnaire consisted of 11 questions. Ten questions (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11) used evaluation criteria using a scale of 1-4 with 4 as the highest. Thus, ideal mean = ½ (4 +1) = 2.5 and a standard deviation ideally = 1/6 (4 - 1) = 0.5. Further limitations teacher performance evaluation categories are as follows:

Table 2
The Evaluation Criteria for Teachers' Performance

Score mean ($\overline{X}$)	Categories
$\overline{X}$> 3.25	Very Good/Very Effective
2.75 <$\overline{X}$ ≤ 3.25	Good/Effective
2.25 <$\overline{X}$ ≤ 2.75	Fair/Fairly Effective
1.75 <$\overline{X}$ ≤ 2.25	Poor/Not Very Effective
$\overline{X}$ ≤ 1.75	Very Poor/Not Effective

A questionnaire consisting of 11 questions was distributed to students. Questions 1 and 2 dealt with teachers' punctuality in starting and dismissing the class as scheduled. Question 3 was on teacher's preparedness in coming to class with instructional materials for the days' lesson. Questions 4, 5, and 6 were on teacher's mastery of the subject matter and manner of facilitating question and answer in the classroom. Questions 7, 8, 10, and 11 referred to teachers plan for homework, assessment, and feedback provision. Question 9 was on conveying to the class coverage of examinations prior to the conduct of the examination.

Students were given 4 choices to choose their answers from except question number 9 with 2 choices. The choices to choose from were arranged from the highest to lowest or descending order indicated by the letters a, b, c, or d. Thus, 'a' was the most positive choice and 'd' was the least positive. The questionnaire was distributed to Grades 1 to 5 students in each school. The total number of respondents was 750, equally distributed into 375 students from SoQ and 375 students from Conventional School. In interpreting teacher performance, choices a, b, c, and d were converted into scores. For instance, 'a' has a score of 4; 'b' has a score of 3; 'c' has a score of 2; and 'd' has a score of 1. Therefore, the highest ideal

score in the 10 items is 40 while the lowest score is 10. Using the converted score, the following categories were developed to describe performance. A score of 3.25 or greater means the teacher performed very well or very effectively. A score of 2.75 but not more than 3.25 means the teacher is good or effective. A score of 2.25 to less than 2.75 means the teacher's performance is fair or fairly effective. A score of 1.75 but not more than 2.25 means the teacher's performance is poor or not very effective and a score below 1.75 means the teacher's performance is very poor or not effective.

Students' achievement score was determined by getting the mean of the score of four subjects taken (Mathematics, Lao Language, World Around Us, and Dictation) from samples. Each of students' achievement subject mean of SoQ and CS were computed. Standard deviation of each subject means from SoQ was obtained and compared with CS. Standard deviation was used to look at the variance between means.

School performance was analyzed by comparing results of both SoQ and CS in terms of quality education outcome indicators such as dropout rate, repetition rate, and promotion rate using descriptive statistics. For quality education outcome indicators' results, the conditions were: if the percentage mean of SoQ is lower than that of CS, it means that dropout rate was effective or that SoQ has better or lower dropout rate. But if the dropout rate mean of SoQ and CS were the same, it means SoQ was fairly effective. Then, if the mean of CS is higher than that of SoQ, it means that SoQ was not effective or CS has better or lower dropout rate. For promotion rate, if the mean of SoQ is higher than that of CS, this means that SoQ was effective. The same interpretations were used for repetition rates.

Findings and Discussion

In terms of teachers' capability, results showed that of the 141 teachers surveyed in SoQ, 70.21% have obtained Under Diploma the minimum qualification to teach in Primary school since 2006, while 57.63% obtained the same educational qualification level for CS. Worthy of note is the higher percentage (26.27%) of teachers with diplomas in CS compared to SoQ's 11.35%. Only 3.39% of teachers are with bachelors degree in CS compared to SoQ's 2.13%. Overall, results showed that the teachers with Primary Education Certificate in SoQ is higher than that of CS but teachers who have obtained Diploma and Bachelor's degree in SoQ is lower compared to CS. Hence, this implies that teachers in CS have better educational qualifications compared to SoQ.

In terms of teaching experience or number of years among teachers in both school types, duration ranged from 0 to 35 years. Overall, length of service in both school types suggests relatively young teachers handling the four major subjects in the Primary Education level. Notable is the more or less equal distribution of teachers in both school types by grade level. Overall, results showed that across grade levels, that is from Grades 1 to 5, the mean was 16.56 years with a standard deviation of 9.60. This means that the experience of SoQ teachers in teaching general education subjects is better than the norm. The long teaching duration implies mastery of what they are doing. Similarly, the number of years of teaching experience among

CS teachers has a mean of 15.33 years which is slightly lower with a standard deviation of 10.42, indicating a slightly longer teaching experience as norm. The distribution of teachers by grade level shows regularity across grade levels. However, teachers teaching general education subjects in SoQ had longer experience in years of teaching than that of CS with total mean of 16.56 and 15.33, respectively.

The third indicator to measure teacher's capability is their performance in carrying out the teaching-learning process. The questions are the following: (1) Does the teacher come to teach in the classroom on time as scheduled?; (2) Does the teacher leave the classroom after the lesson is finished as scheduled?; (3) Does the teacher come to class with well-prepared lessons/materials?; (4) Does the teacher know about the subject that he/she teaches well?; (5) Does the teacher give students a chance to ask questions?; (6) Does the teacher answer students questions clearly?; (7) Does the teacher give homework after giving the lesson?; (8) Doesthe teacher return student's homework result?; (9) Does the coverage of examination conveyed to students prior to the examination?; (10) Overall, how would you rate the relevance and use of the content delivered in this subject?; and (11) How much knowledge did you get from learning this subject?.

Results showed that in SoQ, teachers performance was found very effective or very good in all items asked and good performance on question no. 11. Moreover, in SoQ, teachers had an average performance rating of 3.49, which means very good or very effective. On the other hand, in CS teachers performance was found very effective or very good in terms of questions no. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and performance of good for question numbers 2, 7, and 11. Moreover, in CS, teachers had an average performance rating of 3.34, which means very good or very effective also. As expected, SoQ teachers performed a little better compared to CS. While there are concerns to be attended to, teacher's performance in both schools is acceptable. However, mean results of both SoQ and CS do not deviate much from the standard deviation of 0.32 and 0.40, respectively.

Students' achievement as one indicator of school performance was considered to determine quality of outputs. Average scores of Grade 5 students in the school-conducted examination in the four major subjects were compared with the average performance score in the national examination on the four main subjects. The four major subjects consisted of Mathematics, Lao Language, World Around Us, and Dictation. The contents of the school-conducted and national examinations were on these subjects. Only grade 5 students sit for the examination to determine the knowledge gained from grades 1 to 5. Comparing the scores of SoQ and CS to national examination results was resorted to in order to establish quality of outputs. It is assumed that SoQ average scores examination would be higher compared to CS and national examination average scores. Normally, a perfect score in examinations means 100 with a passing score of 75 or 60 depending on the school or country standards. In Laos, scores are computed from 1 to 10, with 5 as the passing mark. Hence, desired average scores of at least 5 or higher or 2 of 4 subjects must have a score of at least 5 or higher. Results showed that SoQ examination scores were higher compared to CS, 6.7 and 6.2, respectively. However, performance in CS is acceptable.

Comparing it with national examinations scores, it appears that examinations scores in school-conducted examinations are relatively higher compared to nationally conducted examinations at 7.3 and 5.8 of SoQ and 6.7 and 5.6 of CS, respectively. This could be attributed to the teaching-learning style in schools where teachers convey the coverage of topics to be included in the examination unlike in the national examination. Scores in both school-conducted and national examinations are at acceptable levels implying that the quality of Primary Education in the country is relatively good.

Quality education outcome indicators for this study were limited to three, namely; dropout rate, repetition rate, and promotion rate among the many other indicators of quality like completion rates, survival rates, etc. These indicators were drawn from secondary data provided by the District Education and Sports Bureau. In comparing the performance of both schools as far as dropout rates are concerned, categories were developed. In grade 1, the dropout rate in SoQ was 1.2 which means that SoQ had better or lower dropout rate because the mean of SoQ was lower than the mean of CS of 1.57. In grade 2, the dropout rate of SoQ was also better or lower than CSat 0.94 and 1.08, respectively. In grade 3, the dropout rate of SoQ is not effective because the mean of SoQ is higher than the mean of CS at 0.85 and 0.33, respectively. In grade 4, the dropout rate of SoQ is not effective because the mean of SoQ is higher than the mean of CS at 1.17 and 0.68, respectively. In grade 5, the dropout rate of SoQ is fairly effective because the mean of SoQ is the same with that of the mean of CS, 0 and 0. Moreover, these findings showed that the total mean ($\overline{X}$) of SoQ is higher than the mean of CS at 0.83 and 0.73, respectively. However, both school types are two units away from the standard deviation of 2.11 and 2.21, respectively. This means that the dropout rate of SoQ is not effective in terms of the mean of dropout rate in all grade levels or CS performed better in terms of the mean of dropout rate in all grade levels.

The promotion rate is another quality education indicator that was investigated. Promotion rate is proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who study in the next grade in the following school year. Comparing the results of promotion rates performance between SoQ and CS, results showed that CS performed better than SoQ across grade levels. In grade 1, the performance in promotion rates of SoQ is not effective because it's lower than the promotion rate mean of CS at 87.19 and 96.10, respectively. In grade 2, the performance in promotion rates of SoQ is not effective because it's lower than the promotion rate mean of CS at 92.92 and 94.14, respectively. In grade 3, the performance in promotion rates of SoQ is not effective because the promotion rate mean of SoQ is lower than the promotion rate mean of CS at 93.24 and 96.05, respectively. In grade 4, the performance in promotion rates in SoQ is not effective because it is lower than the promotion rate mean of CS at 94.92 and 98.70, respectively. In grade 5, the performance in promotion rates of SoQ is effective because it's higher than the promotion rate mean of CS at 100 and 99.23, respectively. However, overall, findings showed that the total promotion rate mean ($\overline{X}$) of SoQ is lower than the promotion rate mean of CS at 93.65 and 96.84, respectively. As well, both school types are two units away from the standard deviation of 6.61 and

4.49, respectively. This means that the promotion rate of SoQ is not effective.

On the other hand, repetition rate is the proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who study in the same grade in the following school year. Results of SoQ and CS performance showed that the total repetition rate mean ($\overline{X}$) of SoQ is higher than the repetition rate mean of CS at 5.52 and 2.42, respectively.However, both results do not deviate much from the standard deviation of 5.91 and 3.52, respectively. Therefore, the repetition rate performance of SoQ is not yet effective.

Conclusion

Based on results and discussion done, the following are the conclusions of the study:

1. Teachers' educational qualification of School of Quality is lower compared to Conventional School in primary education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR;
2. Teachers' teaching experience of School of Quality is longer compared to Conventional School in primary education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR;
3. Teachers' performance of School of Quality is better compared to Conventional School in primary education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR;
4. Students' achievement of School of Quality was better than that of Conventional School based on mean scores among school examination, national examination, and both examinations conducted in primary education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR;
5. The dropout rates of School of Quality are lower than Conventional School only for grades 1 and 2, in grades 3 and 4 School of Quality are higher. However,in grade 5 there was no difference in dropout rates in primary education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR;
6. The promotion rates of Conventional school are higher compared to School of Quality for grades 1 to 4. In grade 5,School of Quality has higher promotion rates than that of Conventional School in primary education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR; and
7. The repetition rates of Conventional School are lower than School of Quality for grades 1 to 4. In grade 5 Conventional School has higher repetition rates than that of School of Quality in primary education in Vientiane Province, Lao PDR.

Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions, the following recommendations are forwarded as follows:

For the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES):

- The MoES should continue implementing the School of Quality (SoQ) approach, now the Education Quality Standards (EQS).However, since there are a number of requirements to comply with, priority must be given to teacher training. As evidenced by the results of all indicators measured especially students' achievement scores,the most influential factor was teacher performance.

- The MoES may need to study further the implementation of Education Quality Standard (EQS). It appears that quality education is not only a function of quality standards but also performance of teachers. It follows that the need is to upgrade teacher's qualification and teaching-learning techniques to ensure learning from grade 1 to grade 5 is consistently of high quality.
- The MoES should look at the hiring pattern of teachers. In cases where teachers are not qualified then they should not be hired or if there are no available teachers, these teachers must be trained while they are currently teaching on a part-time basis. The Teacher Training Department should adjust their training schedule to accommodate in-service training.

For the District Education and Sports Bureau (DESB):

- The DESBs should ensure that teachers hired by schools are qualified. They should pay regular visits especially Conventional School and observe how the teaching-learning process is carried out.
- The DESB should also check how teachers formulate school-conducted examinations and compare those with national examinations to ensure alignment.
- Pedagogical advisors should ensure that teachers have the core competencies and know what competencies and skills should the different grade levels possess. In this manner, student achievement scores are better grounded on basic or core competencies that they should possess as graduates of elementary education.

For school principals:

- School principals should monitor the teaching-learning process.
- They should ensure that only teachers with the right qualification could teach the right subjects.
- School principals should ensure that teachers come to class and dismiss the class on time. Doing otherwise would greatly affect other activities that students have to attend to. It also shows a bad example to students who would later join the workforce.

For the teachers of School of Quality (SoQ) and Conventional School (CS):

- Teachers should be trained on student-centred learning being the mode in School of Quality. It appears that this particular methodology gave School of Quality students an edge in the national examinations.
- For teachers who have been teaching for some time, they should need some retooling on new techniques in the teaching-learning process.

For the Department of Pre-Elementary and Primary Education (DPPE):

- The DPPE should closely monitor and evaluate teachers' teaching and learning methodologies to ensure that quality education is imparted. It implies that School of Quality characteristics have little to do with

quality education. It is the teachers who have to be capacitated in order to ensure quality education.

- The DPPE should also make sure that teachers have mastery of the subject matter through the teachers' guides prepared for them.

For the Department of Inspection (DoI):

- The Department of Inspection should have a more objective measure to determine performance of school principals. In this way, the teaching-learning process can be inspected more fully. The instrument for inspection must be modified to include ability to determine how teachers perform in class.

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