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USING SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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This study was carried out to determine the students, teachers and educators perception of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) programme which was introduced to the Sri Lankan education system in 1998, and to find out how to implement lessons effectively with different assessment tools to a classroom.

A questionnaire was administered to fifty (n=50) randomly selected teachers who teach science for tenth and eleventh graders in Kandy district schools. Informal interviews were carried out with the students, teachers and educators to find out their perception about SBA. As the second stage of the study, 34 lessons taken by 7 of the 50 teachers, who responded to the questionnaire were observed. Out of the seven teachers four taught in a girls school and the other three taught in a boys school. Both the schools were in the Gampola education zone. The teachers were allowed to use their usual teaching methods and their lessons were observed to find out whether they used different assessment tools to assess the students. As the third step, twelve lesson plans were prepared with different assessment tools for unit 4, “*Engages in prevention of diseases associated with the main systems of the human body*” of grade ten science. These lessons were implemented to a grade ten classroom in the girls school with the help of the teacher.

A teacher who had negative attitudes towards SBA gradually changed her attitudes after the unit was implemented. She was convinced that SBA could be applied effectively to improve teaching and learning after implementation because she was able to see very satisfactory student participation during the implemented unit. Other than that she was able to observe that student skills and attitudes about learning changed positively. The informal interviews with the teachers revealed that the teachers need more support from the education officers to improve their knowledge about the practice of SBA. The education officers accept that SBA is very effective in the teaching-learning process but it is not applied in the expected manner in Sri Lankan classrooms as priority is given for passing examinations.

The study revealed that SBA is an effective method to improve teaching and learning. There should be training programmes for teachers that would help to change their negative attitudes towards the practice.