

Summary of findings

Science at secondary School level is a compulsory subject and all candidates of High school Leaving Certificate Examination (HSLC Exam.) run by the Board of Secondary Education, Assam (SEBA) are to compulsorily clear the science paper with other papers for qualifying themselves in the HSLC Examination. The results of HSLC Examinations under Board of Secondary Education, Assam (SEBA) reveal that a good number of HSLC candidates every year fail in Science. The current project was proposed with a view to take an indepth study of "Status of Science Teaching in Secondary Schools of Assam". Relevant data were collected from sample schools and analyzed. The analysis led to the following findings :

1. (Science is one of the three core subjects namely) Mathematics, Science and English where a large number of candidates fail. Not only in HSLC Final Examination but in Annual Exams. of class VIII and class IX also, the numbers of students failing in Science are considerable. In some years more than one-third of the examinees failed to clear the subject in HSLC exam. Information on HSLC exam. results of the sample schools show that in certain year (as high as 41% examinees of these schools failed in Science.)
2. (Dropouts in Secondary schools are high.) In class VIII, dropouts are comparatively low, but in class IX, it is high and that too more (in rural schools. In a large number of cases dropouts in class IX are more or less around one third of the enrolled students. In other words, (one third of the students quit their study before reaching class X.)
3. (Infrastructure for teaching science effectively in secondary schools of Assam is not adequate.) There is no science laboratory in the High schools. Some schools have been provided with some science equipments, but these are being rarely used. The reason for not using the equipments is reported as lack of space to demonstrate these.
4. So far as number of science teachers is concerned, the survey reveals that currently the (schools have on average 3 science teachers.) Ofcourse, exception is there.
5. A common complaint of the science teachers is that they are not trained for fruitful science teachings.) Changes have been brought in science syllabus frequently) and new topics included. Teachers require adequate training for teaching, particularly the new courses.
6. Due to changes brought in course syllabi, examination system, question pattern, evaluation system etc. percentage of pass in HSLC examination has notably increased in recent years. Even then the fail percentage is high. Introduction of practical examination in science in the line of CBSE is expected to reduce fail rate in science.

7. SEBA has three types of schools under it, namely, Government, Provincialized and Private. (Govt. school results are generally poor and have been a matter of concern.) Some Provincialized schools are showing good performance while majority of them are not that good. Better performances are being shown by Private schools and that too majority of them English medium schools. A few Private vernacular medium schools are also showing laudable performance for consecutive years. Ofcourse, number of such schools is few.
8. (Better performances of Private schools may be attributed to better administration, responsibility and accountability of the teachers and better infrastucture facilities.) Besides, Parents'/Guardians' involvement in their wards' academic and co-curricular activities play an important role in these schools.
9. (The irony is that the Govt. and Provincialized school teachers draw comparatively higher salary than their counterparts in Private schools.) Parents' and Guardians' involvement in the Govt. and Provincialized schools is negligible.
10. Measures may be taken to recruit suitable persons in teaching posts and involve parents/guardians in the academic process for which certain norms may be fixed.
11. (It is felt that like mathematics, science also should have two separate papers, one General Science and the other the Advanced Science.) While General Science would be a compulsory paper for all candidates, the Advanced science may be a selective subject. It is expected that the system would result in higher percentage of pass in science.