

Study of the Implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction Curriculum in Secondary Schools in the Philippines and Myanmar

Aye Nandar Win

Keywords: Disaster Education, Disaster Risk Reduction curriculum, Disaster Risk Reduction, Educational Reform

This study examines disaster education development in Myanmar. Educational reform is now being carried out by conducting comparative study in another ASEAN country, the Philippines. The Philippines was selected because both are Southeast Asian countries prone to natural disasters, including cyclones and earthquakes. In addition, educational reform was carried out in the Philippines, including improved infusion of Disaster Risk Reduction Education (DRRE) in the formal curriculum. DRRE for schools seeks to improve the resilience of students and school buildings by building a culture of safety and skills for managing disaster risks. The DRRE curriculum is created based on the local context and should be vertically integrated through formal and non-formal educational approaches throughout the student's schooling. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) curriculum and the students' perception on DRR in secondary schools in Myanmar and the Philippines. The research objectives were: to understand the effectiveness of the DRR curriculum through the linkage between the disaster management and educational systems, and to analyze the perception and behavior of students on DRR through their learning experience and experiential knowledge. The methodology included qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the subjects included two curriculum developers, six school administrative, 55 teachers and 300 students at six public secondary schools, three each in Insein township in Myanmar and Quezon City in the Philippines, respectively. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and administrators and students were assessed with written surveys on their knowledge, attitude and behavior on DRR. The overall results for student knowledge in both countries was different, with students in Myanmar scoring lower on disaster behavior statements. When the student's perception on DRR was assessed with independent samples *t*-test, students' knowledge ($t = -3.89$, $p = 0.00 < 0.05$) and behavior ($t = -14.68$, $p = 0.00 < 0.05$) found that the difference was significant but it is no significant difference in attitude scores. Myanmar was found to have weak policy links between disaster management and the education system and many teachers ignored DRR components included in the curriculum. The study recommended that the DRR curriculum in Myanmar should be enhanced with co-curricular activities such as hazard drills and systematic evaluation be conducted of student knowledge of DRR. In addition, DRRE should be closely correlated with disaster management policy and activities. For the Philippines, it is recommended that DRR curriculum should be improved in non-formal education to foster DRR knowledge and attitudes for those who have left school. Then, schools should be provided with appropriate materials to assist teachers to implement the curriculum.