



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

23 FEBRUARY 2021

HON. JOHANNES MARTIN

CONTRIBUTION TO THE MOTION ON EDUCATION CURRICULUM CHANGE

Honorable Speaker,
Honorable members,

I arise today to contribute to the motion on the Education Curriculum change that was recently introduced by Honorable Nico Smit, especially on grade 11 pupils.

Let me start off with a quote from Apostle Levy Moyo who said: "Politicians are so evil that when it comes to political violence they organise other people's children. But when it comes to business opportunities and other big benefits they organise their own children and relatives".

This can be liken to our current education curriculum changes, where children of the well-off politicians are put to study at well-resourced and structured schools that give them free open doors to do Advance Subsidiary Level because their parents-who are politicians have provided them with the latest technology to excel while children of the poor villagers are dumped to suffer depression in the streets.

Honorable Speaker,
Honorable members,

The plan of creating vocational institutions to cater for grade 11 leavers is not fully realised. Their current structure is not different from when we had previous grade 12 with high level curriculum or old curriculum. The current grade 11 failures are still expected to be dumped in the street just like the previous grade 12 failures. The current NSSCAS is basically an equivalent to the previous NSSCHL, though the envisaged curriculum was supposed to incorporate vocational subjects from early grades in order to respond to the economic changes. With the new curriculum, what is changed is the entry level and requirements to the NSSCAS as opposed to the previous NSSCHL.

Honorable Speaker,
Honorable members,

If the situation persists that some institution of higher learning refuses to admit grade 11s, then how long should these learners be in such a vacuum? Are these institutions refusing grade 11 leavers because the ministry of higher education has perhaps failed to consult them?

Was this new curriculum adopted perhaps from SADC countries, and approved by Cambridge so that our learners becomes relevant to the rest of the world because after all the world is now a global village?

The idea of the new curriculum might be a good move and relevant but it's being handled like the liquidation process of Air Namibia because there are still so many issues surrounding it that needs to be ironed out. For long we have witnessed the hiccups in our education systems, and one is left to wonder: Have we implemented the resolutions from the previous curriculum effectively? Maybe this disaster would have been avoided.

Honorable Speaker,
Honorable members,

As a country, we may have benchmark this curriculum from other countries due to the fact that we have seen it working well for them, but not everything work out as planned from one system to another.

Developed countries have more resources and funds to implement their plans effectively, not as opposed to countries like ours which is led by corrupt individuals who are stealing taxpayer's money for their own use rather than investing it into the future of the country.

^{Sri Lanka's government} (We) ^(your) are goodⁱⁿ initiating policies, and ~~our~~ ideas are good. Coming up with policies and procedures are an essential part of any country. Together, policies and procedures provide a roadmap for day-to-day operations. They ensure compliance with laws and regulations, give guidance for decision-making, and streamline internal processes. Unfortunately, ^{Sri Lanka is} (we) are very poor at implementing those brilliant ideas correctly.

For the new curriculum to work, I believe that, so much still need to be done to bring it to the standard that will benefit all pupils.

Honorable Speaker,

Honorable members,

A brilliant Mathematician that taught me once said "Any number multiplied by zero gives you zero, means zero always bring down

numbers to zero and any number multiplied by one remain unchanged no matter how big it is".

With this, I am saying that, there are some curriculum which are liken to the number zero in certain countries, and even if you associate with them- no matter how great your value is- they will still bring you down to zero.

The same Mathematician has also taught me that "Any number multiplied by one remain unchanged or remain the same". And this is where our education ministry is at, the number one which it is multiplying in the new curriculum forgetting that all resources, infrastructure and approaches to education remain unchanged, so at the end we remain with the old curriculum approach which leads us to the same results of failure.

Honorable Speaker,

Honorable members,

Introducing a new curriculum without proper consultation can be compared to bringing in a new machine to a factory without consulting the workers who will be using it. MoEAC did not consult the institution of higher learning or consider training teachers specifically for that purpose prior to the implementation of the revised curriculum. Now it appears the ministry want to bulldoze the management of the high education without their proposal. For a proper planning and avoid

bulldozing matters of national concern, the ministry should listen to the inputs which stakeholders may have.

A Namibian child should not have to endure the sufferings as a result of poor planning and hazardous decision made by Cabinet which lacks consultation and at least common sense.

The revised curriculum has not been reviewed well in conjunction with all stakeholders. Parents and guardians are disappointed by the poor planning of the MoEAC. The ministry should go back to the drawing board, consult with all stakeholders and various institution of higher learning on the ongoing revision of the curriculum. This will allow institutions of higher learning to revisit their decision and refusal to admit grade 11 leavers. This in turn will allow the ministry to evaluate the curriculum content to be ideal for university students.

Honorable Speaker,

Honorable members,

The new curriculum has also seen a number of challenges, such as:

- * The placement of teachers who use to teach grade 4
- * Placement of teachers that use to teach grade 10
- * Implementation of reading lesson appearing from grade 1 - 11
- * Lack of adequate & relevant textbooks

- * Lack of physical resources and human resources
- * Transition from one phase to the other
- * Lack of workshop and pre-vocational subject teachers

Honorable Speaker,
Honorable members,

Government should stop implementing systems without adequate facilities and resources to cater for the new changes. It is evident that the Swapo-led government has run out of ideas to fix the education system, which has been in a bad state for years.

How on earth one can put a government plan in place where grade 11 leavers exist school to access institution such as vocational training centers when they have not yet equipped vocational training centers to accommodate the already many young people flocking there? If filtering and costs cutting was the mission, then the Swapo-led government should stop pulling political stunts such as introducing free-education across the board prematurely as they did.

Instead, the government should consider introducing the Junior Secondary as a two-year course with a certificate at grade 9- level so that such successful candidates can opt either for a three-year course of Advance

Subsidiary Level or Ordinary Level at grade 10 - 12 Senior Secondary Curriculum. This will also give ample time for learners to be ready for tertiary education and sharpen their critical thinking skills without pressure.

Honorable Speaker,

Honorable Members,

In conclusion, the MoEAC should do an assessment on the implementation of the new curriculum:

1. Have we incorporated subjects that are offered at the vocational training institution in the high school curriculum?
2. Are there enough institutions of higher learning in our regions to absorb the O - Level school leavers?
3. Are there any guidance for the subject choices done at AS Level to influence the career path to the University? I ask this because, some schools in the villages were given the new grade 11 as an additional grade at Combined Schools that usually only ends at grade 10 (Old curriculum).
4. Have we empowered our secondary schools in terms of resources in order for learners to cope with the new curriculum?

5. What study or interventions have we conducted with regards to rural learners and those in remote villages to ensure that they are well prepared for the new curriculum, knowing very well that most of them never done subjects on higher level (which is the Old curriculum)?

I THANK YOU.

