This study was undertaken by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development, Ministry of Education to survey the availability and use of educational materials and the learning environment within schools, in order to set up a guideline for the development of educational quality in primary schools in the future. The survey covered 18 primary schools, 15 of which are under the Office of National Primary Education Commission and the rest are under the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA). The study looked into the availability of educational materials, teachers’ preparation of educational materials before use, the use of educational materials to improve learning in the classroom, and the learning environment in schools.

The analysis of data covered five topics, namely: (1) the availability of educational materials; (2) the acquisition of educational materials; (3) teachers’ preparation for using the educational materials; (4) the use of educational materials to improve learning in the classrooms and materials storage; and (5) the learning environment in schools.

The findings showed that the textbooks owned by most students were Mathematics, Life Experiences and the Thai Language and very few own textbooks on Character Development, Work-Oriented Experiences and English. Majority of teaching materials available in schools were pictures, realia, flash cards, cassette tapes and charts while there were only very few special teaching aids such as Computer-assisted instruction, slides and video tapes which are expensive and require relevant equipment for display. The majority of school textbooks and supplementary reading materials were given free of charge by the relevant educational administration agencies. Most of the textbooks for free distribution reached their destination before the school term started but on average this was at low scale. It was therefore recommended that the responsible authorities concerned should set up measures to ensure that books reach schools in time. With respect to the application of instructional materials, it was found that most of the teachers examined and tested the materials before using them. The teachers found the necessity to train them in the use of more sophisticated materials such as computer-assisted instruction, children's book production rather than the basic materials which were not so highly technical. Instructional materials frequently used by the teachers were flash cards, pictures, and textbooks. Materials occasionally used were supplementary readers, realia, games, charts, teaching kits and cassette tapes. CAI, video tapes and slides were rarely used. Teaching/learning methods at present lay focus on students as centres for development. Various teaching/learning activities have been created for this purpose, for example posing questions as complimentary to explanation on any subject, giving lectures, writing on the blackboard, group relationship-oriented activities, demonstration and report writing. It was concluded that in general, the environment in schools, personnel, students, premises and areas, was conducive to learning. A host of recommendations were presented in order to correct the weaknesses and gaps identified in the study.