IBE Alert User Survey Results

In order to ensure that the IBE alerts and digests are providing the service for which they were designed, a feedback exercise takes place approximately every three or four years. The last one took place in 2010. The 2014 survey was launched in April and included questions related to the usefulness of the service, its presentation, format, and contents, as well as the information needs that it could satisfy.

In total 128 responses were received. The breakdown by geographical region of those who replied is as follows: Europe and North America, 36%; Latin America and the Caribbean, 31%; Asia and the Pacific, 14%; Africa, 12%; and Arab States, 1% (the remaining 6% was not defined).

Overall satisfaction with the service was once again prevalent in the results with well over 80% positive feedback for all three services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alerts (bi-weekly)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digests of online reports (quarterly)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic alerts</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
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Legend:
- No opinion
- Poor
- Average
- Good
- Excellent

Graph showing the rating of the IBE Alerts and Digest services.
In terms of field of activity, the breakdown is shown in this pie chart:

![Pie chart showing work area distribution]

The ‘Other’ 9% of the respondents included: administrators, translators, editors, and commercial educational data providers.

Some interesting information emerged from analysing the data by region and line of work. For example, the teachers and teacher trainers who responded were mostly from Latin America and the Caribbean, the curriculum specialists were mostly from Africa and Latin America while researchers were more evenly distributed between Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean.
Overall, the results of this year’s feedback survey, like the previous ones, have provided very positive feedback. For example, one respondent remarked that:

“The IBE Digest and Alerts Service is a good means of acquiring facts and information of what is going round around the world especially where curriculum is concerned. It helps one to keep in touch with the whole world (in one place), all the information is there”.

This is valuable feedback because it suggests that the IBE alert services are helping to harness information overload by bringing relevant information and knowledge regarding the curriculum together in one place for people working in the education field all over the world.

Another respondent commented that: “The news articles give me a sense of the ‘pulse’ of some countries”, and another said that the alert “…gives education news that are targeted and let us know what various countries are about to do.”

A summary of the main outcomes of the survey is presented below. All the remarks and suggestions received will, in as far as possible, be taken into consideration in the future shaping and improvement of the service.

How do you rate the following alert services?

The vast majority of the respondents expressed high appreciation of the Alert and Digest services (see graph on page 1). The total of “excellent” and “good” ratings amounted to a positive feedback of 94% for the bi-weekly Alerts, 79% for the quarterly Digests and 81% for the Thematic alerts.

Which section of the alert do you use most for your work?

Some 40% use the alerts for the reports, 27% for articles, 23% for publications, and 10% for the items in the miscellaneous section.

For what purpose do you use the alert materials?

43% use the materials in the alerts to support their work, 34% for personal learning and development, 19% as a source of information that influences their organizational strategy and 4% answered ‘other’ which included mostly keeping up to date, planning and research.
Have you used or cited materials from the alert for any of the following:

Respondents could select more than one answer for this question, thereby expressing the diversity of the contexts in which the material from the alerts was used. Out of the total of declared usage and citation of the alerts, research is mentioned most (27%), followed by articles (22%) and works in the field of curriculum (17%).

The remaining 3% 'other' referred mostly to teaching and curriculum development activities.

It is also interesting to see the range of materials in which the alerts are cited across UNESCO regions:
How much do you agree with the following statements?

The majority of respondents agreed that the alert services help them to: be aware of current education trends; find information they need for their work; keep informed about ongoing curriculum developments; discover recent curriculum developments, and manage information overload.

How would you rate the IBE alert services compared to other education information sources that you use?

The following graph illustrates that the Alert services compared very favourably with similar services in terms of their geographical coverage, relevance, timeliness, reliability, presentation and ease of use.
Would you recommend this service to your colleagues?

In response to this question 93% of respondents answered that they would recommend the service, 5% said they would not, and 2% did not respond.

Do you use other comparable services?

Some 83 respondents said they did not use other comparable services. Those who answered that they did use other comparable services cited Google and OECD alerts, RSS feeds, blogs, and various newsletters and websites.

Do you have any general comments or suggestions?

The comments received were all very positive and appreciative of the service. The suggestions received were as follows:

Include papers presented at the seminars on Curriculum Development in Primary Education and Higher Education from both the developed or developing world;

Concentrate more on the improvement of general education system, and not only the curriculum issues;

Compile more thematic alerts;

Make the articles only accessible by password accessible to everyone;

Have more in the Area of Science and Technology and e-learning;

Include short summaries;

Translate contents that are in languages other than English;

Que les liens s'ouvrent dans une autre fenêtre. Qu'il y en ait davantage;

Submit all publications in at least two languages: English and Spanish;

Include open source materials;

Include documents regarding Policy making and/or North America;

Include Colombia’s curriculum news.

In conclusion, we will endeavour to incorporate as many of the suggestions as our resources allow. Articles accessible only by password come from the commercial service ProQuest, and so we are unable to give direct access to them. However ProQuest is found in most university libraries as well as the major public libraries. Unfortunately providing translations of articles is not within our means.

The IBE is very grateful to all respondents for taking the trouble to give us their feedback.