Castro Education and Youth Policies Fact Sheet and Questions

At the start of Castro’s regime in 1959 Cuba had a very ill-educated population.

In April 1959 there where 817 literacy centers that where available which is impressive however not many attended.

School where not accessible to the poorest Cuban children or family’s resulting in a very low literacy rate in rural areas compared to main cities like Havana.

In 1959 Cubans over the age of 15 years 23.6% were found to be illiterate and 60% where semi-illiterate

In 1961 Castro was determined to help eliminate illiteracy and it was designated the 1961 was the ‘year of education’.

Castro made School and university free to everyone including the poor

The new revolutionary government had taken over all private and church schools

They had over 100,000 volunteers for student teachers many of which were teenagers.

More than 3000 schools where built in the first year of the new policy and over 300,000 children attended school for the first time.

Over 1 million where taught to read and write in Cuba which fulfilled Castro’s promise.

In 1974 the labor force had an average census of an 6th grade student 5 years later in 1979 it had improved to an eight-grade census.

At the end of the 1960s there were over 30,000 students at technical schools and 40,000 at universities, compared to 6,000 and 20,000 in 1958.

Castro managed to eliminate illiteracy rate from 23.6% to 3.6% especially in rural areas.

After improving the education there was a high value placed on intellectual people as universities had a higher demand. There was a higher importance placed on advance education in universities often them prioritizing scientists and engineers.

in 1961 there was 100,000 volunteers for teachers. In 1989, university professors, along with doctors, were at the top of the salary scale.

But after that their relative pay declined in comparison to others, such as small private farmers and the "self-employed" in black markets. Many qualified professionals, including teachers, moved to these sectors—sometimes into private tutoring.

 The university dropout rate rose to more than 30 percent and students increasingly looked elsewhere to earn money, and absenteeism among both students and teachers became common.

The proportion of women in the labor force doubled from the 1950s to the 1980s as well as providing females with equal pay.

More than 60% of university students are female,70% of student in medicine are female and 47% of university instructors are women

The University Reform produced changes in both the academic and social spheres. Among them was the establishment of a comprehensive system of free scholarships which, over the years, enabled thousands of children of workers and peasants to become the first university graduates in their families.

The Institute conducted this Improvement up to its implementation in stages between 1975 and 1986. This meant a change in the structure of the Subsystems that make up the National Education System and in the contents of school curricula and programs, as well as in the preparation of textbooks, in addition to school supplies.

The process involved the participation of dozens of experts from different disciplines and scholars who collaborated extensively. Teacher Training in the Higher Pedagogical Institutes was also adjusted

Questions and Answers

What happened in 1961?

1961 was the ‘year of education’ were Castro helped eliminate illiteracy.

True or false women got more equal rights during Castro’s campaign?

True False

How many student volunteers participated in 1961?

50,000. 75,000. 100,000. 125,000

What does the NCS stand for?

National Education System

What was an outcome of the increase in importance of education in Cuba?

there was a high value placed on intellectual people as universities had a higher demand. There was a higher importance placed on advance education in universities often them prioritizing scientists and engineers

what was the initial illiteracy rate in Cuba in 1959?

24.9%. 26.2%. 21.3%. 23.6%

What did the illiteracy rate drop down to?

4.5%. 2.4%. 6.3%. 3.6%

What changed allowing more kids to go to school?

Castro made School and university free to everyone including the poor

What did the revolutionary government take to help spread education?

the new revolutionary government had taken over all private and church schools

At the end of the 1960s how many students where attending university?

40,000. 30,000. 20,000 10,000

At the end of the 1960s how many students where attending technical schools?

30,000 15,000. 45,000 35,000

how many new schools where built in 1961?

3,000. 2000 1000 500

How many student attended school in the first year of the new education policy?

300,000. 200,000. 150,000 100,000

How did the soviet union help with the new education policy?

The soviet union began to fund Cuba and got stronger support from the soviet union as they began to fund the educational program due to the massive advances and impact it had made on the Cuban nation and their economy.