

ABSTRACT

Reading Challenges of Mixed Ability Classes

Jody Madho

This study addressed the reading challenges faced by two Standard 1 and two Standard 2 teachers of mixed ability classes in a co-educational government primary school in East Trinidad. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and questionnaires. The findings revealed that the teachers used the “one size fits all” method for both instruction and evaluation. Instruction was geared toward the average learner, with little or no consideration given to students with differing learning abilities or with multiple intelligences. All teachers used the recommended basal reader, with very little additional reading material being sourced. It was also found that they were lacking in knowledge of theories and research-based strategies. Further, their answers to interviews were at times contradictory, which suggested that they had not given proper thought to their responses, and this appeared to be reflected in their classroom practices.

Keywords: Reading instruction; Teaching techniques; Teacher attitudes; Primary school teachers; Classroom methods; Coeducational schools; Trinidad and Tobago