

Abstract

This research study investigated some factors that are likely to impact on reading performance at grade 4. The factors researched are as under:

- I. Readiness for reading**
- II. Children's own interest and motivation for reading**
- III. Students' emotional status and reading performance**
- IV. The grade 4 classroom experience**
- V. The learning climate as it relates to school preparedness**

The students were selected from schools that participated in the National Pilot Test of the Grade One Assessment Test done in 1996. These students would have sat the Grade 4 Literacy Test in 2000. Results from their performance in these two tests were collected from the Ministry of Education and Culture. They were computed and analyzed in order to establish a relationship between the two variables investigated.

Questionnaires were administered to the students of Grade 4 on the constructs Interest/Motivation and Emotional Status. The data collected was computed and compared with the results of the students' performance at the Grade 4 Literacy Test done in 2000 in order to find the level of correlation with these factors and performance at Grade 4. The demographic data provided information on the classroom experience and the preparedness of the school for the teaching of reading. These are considered vital aspects in the teaching and learning of reading and as such comments will be made based on what was observed.

The findings have revealed that there is need to improve the teaching and learning of reading in schools at the lower grades so that the students are equipped with the necessary skills which will enable them to read proficiently at grade 4. Some of the factors to be considered are:

1. The home and school working together to provide a comfortable environment for the child as emotional stability impacts on learning to read.
2. The school should provide a reading programme that will appeal to the learners' cognitive and affective needs.
3. Much attention should be given to the result of the Grade One Inventory Test in order to administer to the children's individual needs.
4. Consistent assessment of the children's progress should be made and appropriate action taken to address any deficiencies observed.
5. The Ministry of Education should provide training in the teaching of reading for all teachers, especially those at the lower grades.

6. The Ministry of Education should mandate schools to develop a suitable reading programme and conduct consistent evaluation through to grade 4.

The teaching and learning of reading can be such a complicated task to students and teachers, that no one prescription for its accomplishment is considered the answer. It is hoped that other researchers will be challenged to conduct a more in-depth investigation on this topic.

Keywords

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Reading performance | 4. Interest/ Motivation |
| 2. Grade One assessment | 5. Emotional status |
| 3. Grade 4 Literacy Test | 6. Readiness for reading |