

ABSTRACT

A Comparative study of cognitive readiness and some factors which could impact on it.

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Cognitive readiness relates to the development of mental capacities enabling children to accomplish different intellectual tasks. It means therefore, that in appraising cognitive readiness one has to consider all relevant age-level changes in ability to cope with different levels of subject matter.

This project looked at the cognitive readiness of pre-school children in two basic schools in St. Ann and some factors which could impact on it. Three categories of readiness tests were designed to measure the children's level of mastery in Visual Motor Co-ordination, Language Development and Number Readiness.

Two schools were selected in St. Ann, one in the central part of the town and the other in a rural village.

The sample consisted of children from the middle and low socio-economic status.

The results of the tests showed that the children in the rural area displayed higher levels of mastery in all three types of tests, especially in number readiness. This was in spite of the fact that both schools use the same curriculum advised by the Ministry of Education, are supervised by the same Education Officer and the teachers attend the same workshops.

The conclusion, based on the results of the tests, was that much more needs to be done to stimulate teachers to introduce children to numbers early as this could be one of the possible causes for the lack of readiness and mastery the students showed in Mathematics.

Based on the results of the tests, four recommendations were made:

1. That efforts be made to expose teachers in Early Childhood institutions to a variety of interesting methods with which to initiate children into number usage.
2. That there be a teacher exchange programme between rural/urban settings in the basic schools.
3. That there be more evidence of

children's contribution to charts etc.,
on display in the classroom.

4. That more attention be paid to the
development of motor skills (Eye-and-
Hand Co-ordination).