

Abstract

The effects of process-oriented writing portfolios on students' quality of writing and attitude towards writing were investigated using a pre and post-test design. The sample comprised 103 fourth graders (42 boys and 61 girls) from six intact classes in three rural schools in a particular educational school district in St. Lucia. Three teachers were trained for one month, by the researcher, to implement a process-oriented writing portfolio instructional programme: the experimental and control groups were instructed using process-oriented writing portfolios and traditional product approach respectively, for two months. Data were provided by pre and post tests, which included students' writing attitude survey and composition tests; teachers' questionnaire; observations, informal interviews; writing samples and students' portfolios.

The results obtained from the t- tests for paired samples revealed that students in the experimental and the control groups had improved significantly in the quality of their writing with the former showing a higher statistically significant improvement than the latter. Additionally, the t-tests and ANCOVA procedure confirmed that the experimental students exhibited statistically significant and positive attitudinal changes. There were statistically significant gender differences in the improvement in the quality of students' writing and their attitudes towards writing. These were in favour of girls. Additionally, there were statistically significant correlations between students' attitudinal change and the improvement in their writings' quality. There were also statistically significant

relationships between teachers' attitudes towards teaching writing and their students' attitude and writing quality. Teachers' participation in the training programme and their involvement in implementing the process-oriented portfolio instructional programme had a positive impact on the teachers' pedagogical strategies and attitude. The study provided empirical evidence that process-oriented writing portfolios can be an effective instructional strategy for fostering writing and facilitating students' positive attitude towards writing.