

The Academic Achievement of Grade I and Grade II Pupils in the Multigrade Class

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Abstract: *The primary purpose of this study was to determine the academic achievement of the Grade I and II multi-grade classes of Catagman Primary School as compared to the Grade I and Grade II single-Grade classes of Peñaplata Central Elementary School Sped Center in Samal District, Island Garden City of Samal Division, Department of Education, Philippines. This study made use of Standardized test. Results showed the following: that there was a significant difference between the pre test and post test scores of grade II pupils under single grade class, there was a significant difference between the pre test and post test scores of grade II pupils under multi grade class, there was no significant difference between the pre test scores of grade II pupils under single grade class and grade II pupils under multi grade class before classes start on June, there was no significant difference between the post test scores of grade II pupils under single grade class and grade II pupils under multi grade class when the school year ended in March, there was no significant difference between the post test scores of grade I pupils under single grade class and grade I pupils under multi grade class.*

Keywords: *Academic Achievement, Multi-grade Class, Quasi-Experimental Research Design, Philippines*

1. Introduction

Traditionally, the most favored option in primary school system throughout the world has been the single- grade or mono grade class structure where children are grouped into classes according to a narrow age band. The bringing together of large groups of same age children for instruction by one teacher in the one classroom was generally held to be the most administratively and economically expedient way of providing education for the maximum number of children. Today, the single-grade class structures still remains dominant at the primary level in most countries throughout the world. Teaching resources including curriculum statements and textbooks tend to reflect this (Little, 2001).

According to Hargreaves (2001) in some primary schools, single- grade structuring of classes is not an option. In many rural areas, for example, small pupil numbers make single- grade teaching unfeasible. Fluctuating pupil numbers in large schools may also result in the need to consider other options besides the single- grade one. The option usually considered in each of the above cases is the combination of two or more grade levels in one classroom with one teacher. Classes that are formed in this way are commonly referred to as multi-grade classes. Multi-grade classes are embedded to in the graded system. Children in multi grade classes retain their grade designation and their grade-specific textbooks and curricula. It is adherence to gradeness that makes multi-grade classes multi-grade and not multilevel, or multi-personality.

Multi grade teaching is prevalent in most educational system throughout the world. However, information on the extent of its usage in many countries is difficult to find or out of date. In many countries, data on multi grade teaching are not systematically collected (Little, 1996). Multi-grade classes are most prevalent in areas of sparse population- mainly in rural locations. They are also to be found in schools with fluctuating enrolment rates in more densely populated areas (Veenman, 1995). In developing countries, multi-grade teaching plays a significant part in efforts to improve the quality of educational provision in rural communities (Little, 2001).

In the Philippines, the multi-grade class is an answer to the problem for our children in the remote and isolated villages (Miguel, 1994). The Philippine government has the responsibility to provide free public education at the elementary and high school levels. So if there are certain situations where it is not possible or viable to maintain a complete elementary school or a high school in a particular barangay, a multi-grade classroom is viable alternative to fulfilling this important responsibility to all Filipino children.

In Region XI, there are nearly one thousand (1,000) multi-grade classes. Forty percent (40%) of multi-grade schools in this region performed poorly in the National Achievement Test for grade VI students (DepEd).

In the interim Division of Island Garden City of Samal (IGACOS) there are fifty two (52) elementary schools and fifteen (15) schools are multi-grade with thirty-two (32) multi-grade teachers. Since the Bureau of Elementary of Education (BEE) is committed to strengthening the multi-grade classes as an educational program that can really enable more children to complete their elementary schooling, the Catagman Primary School of IGACOS was then opened last July 2002 to cater school children of different ages from Grade I to IV. A combination of classes in Grade I & Grade II and Grade III & IV were organized since the number of pupils to be enrolled could not meet the required number to organize a single grade class.

Multi-grade teaching is different from single- grade teaching, yet little is known about the extent and nature of the differences (Mulryan- Kyne, 2005). And for that reason, the researcher believes that this study make provide important information on the real status of the children's academic performance in the multi-grade school particularly in Catagman Primary.

This research is conducted to respond to the growing needs and critical issues concerning the children in the multi-grade class, the level of their learning outcomes primarily, and to give points and views to whether pupils' achievement differs in multi-grade and single-grade classes.

2. Problem Statement

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the academic achievement of the Grade I and II multi-grade classes of Catagman Primary School as compared to the Grade I and Grade II single- Grade classes of Peñaplata Central Elementary School Sped Center in Samal District, Island Garden City of Samal Division.

Specifically, the study has the following objectives:

1. Is there a significant difference between the pre test and post test scores of Grade II pupils under the single- grade class?
2. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post test scores of Grade II pupils under the multi- grade class??
3. Is there a significant difference between the pre- test scores of Grade II pupils under single grade class and grade II pupils under multi- grade class?
4. Is there a significant difference between the post- test scores of Grade II pupils under single grade class and grade II pupils under multi- grade class?
5. Is there a significant difference between the post- test scores of Grade I pupils under single grade class and grade I pupils under multi- grade class?

3. Methodology

This study employed the descriptive comparative method also known as quasi-experimental or naturalistic research. It is descriptive comparative in the sense that it answers to the questions through the analysis of the relationship between variables presented and identified relative to the study. This study made use of the descriptive comparative method to determine the significant difference between the pre-test score of the Grade II pupils and the post-test scores of the Grade I and the Grade II pupils in the single-grade classroom.

Consequently, the academic achievement of the Grade I and Grade II pupils in the multi-grade class were based on the results of the pre-test and post-test scores.

4. Results

The following are the findings of the study:

1. It was found out that there was a significant difference between the pre test and post test scores of grade II pupils under single grade class.
2. There was a significant difference between the pre test and post test scores of grade II pupils under multi grade class.
3. There was no significant difference between the pre test scores of grade II pupils under single grade class and grade II pupils under multi grade class before classes start on June.
4. There was no significant difference between the post test scores of grade II pupils under single grade class and grade II pupils under multi grade class when the school year ended March.
5. There was no significant difference between the post test scores of grade I pupils under single grade class and grade I pupils under multi grade class.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings derived from the study, conclusions were drawn on the academic achievement of Grade II and Grade I pupils under multi grade class.

It can be concluded that Grade II pupils under single Grade class have learned better as shown by the big difference between the pre test and post test scores.

The pupils under multi grade class also showed tremendous improvement as evidence by the increase of their mean in the post test.

The non- significant difference between the post test scores of pupils under single grade class and pupils under multi grade class indicated that pupils

under multi grade class have learned as much those who were in the single grade class.

The academic performance of Grade I pupils under multi grade class is similar to the academic performance of Grade I pupils under single grade class.

6. Recommendation

The following recommendations were drawn based on the results of the study.

Based on the findings and conclusions gathered from the study the following recommendations are forwarded for consideration:

Parents should not be afraid to enroll their children in a multi grade classes if there are, because multi grade classes are similar with single grade classes as far as academic performance is concerned.

Results of the study here and abroad about multi grade classes should be made known to the teachers, parents, and school heads so that they will have a positive attitude towards multi grade classes.

Teachers and parents should not underestimate the multi grade classes because there were studies that would show that multi grade classes outperformed the single grade classes in terms of academic performance.

It is strongly recommended that another study will be conducted using higher grade level and greater population to reinforce the findings of this study.

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