

## **Factors influencing learning outcomes of Grade 4 students in Mathematics and Language**

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The objective of this case study was to find out factors influencing student learning outcomes of Grade 4 students in Mathematics and Language with special reference to learning dispositions and assessment methods. The research questions are based on the learning outcome of Grade 4 students in maths and language vis a vis different assessment methods.

The study was designed to gather data in two phases. In phase one, 253 Grade 4 students, from nine Sinhala medium schools in the Negombo educational zone participated in paper and pencil tests in the Maths and Sinhala language. In phase two 67 students from two selected schools participated in set-up activities. They were observed and informally assessed through a profile framework. Ten students participated in focus group interviews. Three major data collection methods were used; semi-structured focus group interviews, documentary (students attendance details) and tests for Mathematics and Language.

The findings of the study led to the following conclusions. Student learning disposition articulated can be classified according to two broad types of learning disposition “producing learning disposition” and “inventing learning disposition”. Different school types (1AB, 1C, Type2 and Type 3) have a bearing on student performance in Maths

and Language paper and pencil tests. The focus on small groups showed that they had many capabilities irrespective of school type yet they were not manifested within the traditional paper and pencil assessment method. Traditional assessment contains understanding of students as meaning-makers and communicators of meaning through language, and conclusions about their different performance in language.

The study suggests the development of profile framework for informal assessment methods relevant to the local context, and will give the best picture of what students know and what students can do.

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