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Development of personality traits in primary school children

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As one aspect of a longitudinal study, the developmental patterns of personality traits and underlying variables of personality traits in the primary grades were studied. The sample consisted of 1021 students who entered Grade 1 classes in 41 selected schools that represented diverse educational backgrounds of the country in 2002. Four data collection instruments were developed using components related to personality traits in the five sets of competencies delineated by the National Education Commission. The instruments were prepared to find out changes in personal traits after the student had entered the school, to identify personal traits when the children are engaged in the four main subject areas in the classroom, to identify personal traits related to the essential learning competencies, and to find out the personal traits in the classroom and out of the classroom. The instrument was prepared to measure changes in 16 personal traits on four occasions in grade one. In grade two, personal traits through subject matter were measured. In grade four and five, personal traits related to linguistics, rhythmic, mathematical, spatial, motivational, inter personal and nature fields were measured. Each criterion was marked on a five point scale. Due to dropouts, deaths, absenteeism, transfers of the teachers, and changing of schools, after purification of data, the sample decreased from 1,171 to 673. Percentages were calculated on the exhibited personal traits for each grade and to understand the distribution of personal traits related to each grade, mean, standard deviation, histogram and kurtosis were calculated.

In grade one, the development of personal traits increased more than the average level. But the stability of personal traits decreased according to the dispersion of the standard deviation. Intellectual, creative, social and leadership personal traits developed systematically, but slowly, in grade two. The stability of mathematical traits was lower than the other traits. Linguistic traits in grade five were higher than the average level. The development of rhythmic traits in grade five was equal to that at grade four. The stability and the development of mathematical traits were lower in grade five than in grade four. The development of whole traits in grade five had a slight positive change compared to grade four. Issues with regard to the development of personal traits were at a minimum during the primary stage of education.

Acknowledgement: UNICEF for financial assistance

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