

An investigation to determine effectiveness of different strategies in the teaching of Reading in four Multigrade schools namely Cristo Rey R.C , San Pedro Government, Buena Vista R.C. and Concepcion R.C. School

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Trained Teacher's Diploma in the Belize Teacher's Training College.

Submitted by

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Introduction

Education is very important in everyone's life. Belize has an educational system from Pre-school to University Level. Education impacts and determines one's means of survival and placement in society. Primary education which is recognized as the lowest level consists of children with age ranging from five to fourteen years old. Children between these years most attend schools and go through eight years of primary school starting from Infant one to Standard six.

Like in many other countries some primary schools in Belize are monograde while others are multigrade schools. Monograde is a situation where one teacher teaches one class and this is practiced mainly in the urban and in bigger villages. Multigrade teaching is a situation where one teacher is responsible to teach two or more classes in the same room. This is practiced in most rural schools, throughout the country of Belize.

In Corozal District there is a total amount of thirty-five schools of which fourteen are multigrade schools. The researcher has spoken to many teachers about such areas, who the majority reacted negatively towards multigrade teaching. The researcher has also gotten the opportunity to teach in a multigrade schools and as such can say that does days were very difficult and frustrating. The researcher found it difficult to teach reading to a multigrade school. The researcher's son was attending a multigrade school and had a lot of problems in reading.

It is in this view that the researcher decided to conduct an investigation to determine effective

Reading strategies used in four multigrade schools.

Background

Every Belizean child has a right to at least a primary Education. In Corozal District there are a total amount of thirty-five schools. Out of the thirty-five schools fourteen of them are multigrade. Most of these schools are located in the rural areas and remote villages. Multigrade teaching is a system in which students from more than one grade level are grouped together in a class.

The researcher was very concerned about this topic firstly because she had taught in a multigrade school for only one month. The school the researcher taught was Buena Vista R.C and the classes were Infants one and two. During that time the researcher had no knowledge of teaching reading in a multigrade schools. That month for the researcher seemed like a year, struggling all day and trying to cope with the day's work.

Secondly the researcher was very concerned for her son who is presently attending a multigrade school . In the first year of school the researcher's son attended a multigrade school in Cristo Rey R.C.. According to his class teacher, the child was a slow learner. The researcher's son had problems especially in reading. Whenever it was reading time in school, he used to cry or sometimes escape for school. Due to this problem the child hated school. At the end of the schools year the researcher's son grade was 70.5 and of course failed reading. During his second year , the child was taken to a monograde school, whereby the principal wanted to demote him to Infant 1. Fortunately the researcher spoke to the class teacher and she promised to help him. At the end of the school year the researcher's son grade was 80.1 a great difference. The re-

searcher's son is now able to read his book , not fluently but at least joined the symbols and take sometime to get the word. Now the researcher's son is again in a multigrade school and the researcher is very worried.

Thirdly the researcher wants to gather effective reading strategies in multigrade schools so as to help her fellow teachers.

Problem Statement/ Identification

The following questions will be used to develop the research:

How are teachers coping with multigrade teaching?

What strategies are they using when teaching reading in multigrade schools?

Do they feel they are using the best or up to date reading strategies.

Yes or No

If No

Why don't you try other reading strategies?

Purpose of the the Study

The purpose of the study is to:

- (1) Determine the effectiveness of Reading Strategies used in four multigrade schools in the Corozal District namely Cristo Rey R.C., San Pedro Government, Buena Vista R.C. and Concepcion R.C. School.
- (2) To find out if teachers are satisfied with their R.T.S. used in multigrade schools.
- (3) Compare the different reading strategies and select the most effective ones used in the four multigrade schools.

Significance of the study

It is hoped that the study will:

Teachers

- (1) make teachers aware that M.T. is not only done or practiced in Corozal District but all over Belize.
- (2) let them be flexible and resourceful when teaching reading in multigrade schools.
- (3) motivate them to implement and try different reading strategies and identify the most effective ones,
- (4) Motivate them to attend Reading workshops when available.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

- (1) have Reading Teaching Strategies written in handouts for all districts.
- (2) have more multigrade workshops for all districts.
- (3) Evaluate teachers on how they are performing in a regular basis especially in reading.

PRINCIPALS

- (1) assist their teachers with Reading Strategies.
- (2) have them attend Reading Seminars and workshops.
- (3) Evaluated teachers on how they are performing in a regular basis.

Definition of Terms

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| (1) M.T. | Multigrade Teaching |
| (2) M.T.S. | Multigrade Teaching Strategies |
| (3) R.T.S. | Reading Teaching Strategies |
| (4) Multigrade | More than one class clustered in one room |
| (5) Multigrade Teaching | Teaching more than one class at the same time |
| (6) Monograde | One class in one room with one teacher teaching |

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Gausted J (1994), a researcher with the Oregon School Study Council, Multigrade teaching can be levelled as "monograded", "mixed aged", "ungraded", "non-agedgraded" "family grouping", "multilevel" and "multiclass." Makin S (1997) SAYS "Multigrade teaching is a situation whereby a teacher combines techniques and strategies to give instructions to two or more levels in a single class." Multigrade teaching is practiced in both rich and poor countries all over the world mostly in rural and remote areas. In Belize multigrade teaching is not an exception, an example is Corozal, out of thirty-five schools there are fourteen multigrade schools with teachers trying to do their best to teach children of very different abilities.

According to Arthur, M and Thompson C, (1996) Researchers found out the following:

Farrant (1986) indicates that in Portugal, 80% of all pupils attend schools with no more than two classrooms, Thomas Shaw (1992) pointed out that 22% of Mexican primary schools are unitary, offering six grades but with one teacher, Collingwood (1992) states that in India 77% of primary schools follow the multigrade system so once more Belize being a small country in Central America is not an exception. Our teachers should be aware that multigrade is common all over the world and should be prepared to teach in a multigrade school when requested. The researcher spoke with some principals and teachers concerning their point of view in regards to multigrade. Mr. Perez, principal of Cristo Rey R.C., stated "Indeed multigrade teaching is very challenging but teachers should be flexible and well organized so as to cope with children's work

and talents."He also said that teachers should remember that even in a monograde school, children, have different abilities so multigrade is also practiced in a monograde schools.

According to the Multigrade Modules in Belize multigrade is used for a number of reasons such as (1) the country has financial problems and can cater for only a limited amount of teachers, (2) small schools in remote areas (3) teachers are very reluctant to work in rural areas where life may be difficult. (4) Biennial Average, a copy of the letter will be presented in the reference, and (5) politics.

Eventhough some teachers dislike multigrade teaching it has advantages and disadvantages.

According to Grant J. Some of the advantages are (1) In very small multigrade schools teachers can meet the needs of each child in regards to his /her school work. (2) Children might develop a good social relationship and a positive attitude towards children and adults, (3) Being in small multigrade classes children value each other uniqueness. (4) The same teacher teaches the same children each year and is able to know the child's weaknesses and strenghts and as aresult help where necessary. (5) Teacher can try different strategies when teaching reading and other subjects and thus encourage children to learn independly. (6) students feel successful, confident and self-reliant as they progress.

Some of the disadvantages are (1) children will not learn what is planned if the necessary material are not available and if teachers are not properly trained (2) Teacher must be flexible when working with multigrade but not all teachers are (3) If the classes (amount of children) are too

big teacher will not be able to cope with the work, (4) If the classroom is too small and crowded, teacher will not be able to work in groups (5) distraction when teacher is teaching one group and the other working, (6) No curriculum guide is designed for multigrade schools, (7) Teachers should be very industrious and organized. So comments such as multigrade school teachers should be paid more than monograde teachers should stop since monograde teachers also practice multigrade teaching.

According to the Multigrade Modules Thomas and Shaw (1992), Miller (1998) they identified six areas which are very important for multigrade teaching. This six areas are very important so as to have an exciting and prosperous school year. This six areas are "instructional delivery and grouping, self-directed activities, planning and using peer tutoring, classroom management and discipline, classroom organization and instructional organization." If a multigrade teacher follows these six suggestions, he/she may have a successful year. They also stated that multigrade schools should be moving through the curriculum as the monograde or even faster and be competent at reading, writing and basic math and "learn how to learn"

Multigrade teachers should consider multigrade as a challenge which they can overcome using different teaching strategies rather than using only the chalk-and-talk method. Collingwood (1991) assures that provided total class members are not big multigrade children can do better than monograde counterparts. For this to happen our country should have competent and trained teachers so as to meet the needs of multigrade children. When teaching multigrade

classes, activities should be child centered and if possible self directed rather than teacher centered

The researcher was very concerned in effective reading strategies in multigrade schools because of her child attending one and the negative comments heard from teachers working in multigrade schools. Reading is one of the subjects that is difficult to teach both in multigrade and monograde schools. The researcher spoke with one of the many multigrade teachers so as to help identify problems found in her schools when teaching reading. The teacher said that the first problem encountered is the children's language. She also mentioned about her school which is Buena Vista R.C. School, she stated that the children had problems when reading and especially in comprehension. The main reason for this problem is the children's first language which is spanish.

To help with this problem the researcher will share some reading strategies that can be used in multigrade classes. According to Cushman K,(1993) "A multigrade teacher should group her/his children. Grouping can be done in different ways but effective if it is well organized and the task is appropriate. The different types of grouping that can be used when teaching in multigrade schools are (1) "by age (2) by ability (3) mixed or non-ability (4) pairs (5) individual work." When using these types of grouping children have advantages. (1) it provides reinforcement for brighter students (2) it is child centered (3) It builds confidence and self-esteem in slower children (4) some children can be reading while the teacher works with other group (5) it helps children to become leaders and give opinions.

Apart from grouping teacher needs to have a reading corner which provides interesting books for the different age levels of the children. The reading corner should be attractively arranged so that the child's attention is caught.. Another way of helping children is reading is peering teaching. The researcher mentions it again because children doing it in class. In this strategy the smartest or older child helps the slower or younger learners with their reading. It does not only help children to read but they learn to socialize.

Multigrade teaching is also used in monograde schools since all children cannot have the same ability and age. So the researcher found out that all teachers are multigrade teachers!

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

METHOD

This study is designed to determine effective reading strategies in four Multigrade Schools namely Cristo Rey R.C., San Pedro Government, Buena Vista R.C and Concepcion R.C. School. The researcher drafted and designed questionnaires to conduct the survey, which was distributed to all three schools , principals and teachers. Each questionnaire consisted of three parts (1) biographical questions (2) open and closed questions and (3) Likert Type statements. The researcher personally collected all questionnaires and analyzed using tables.

SAMPLE

The population for this study consisted of teachers from all grade levels who practiced multigrade teaching in fourteen schools in the Corozal District. Four Schools were selected through a random sampling. All fourteen school names were placed inside a box to ensure equal chances to be in the sample. A volunteer was asked to draw one paper from the box, read the name and put it again, This was done until all four names were gotten. This was done until all four names were gotten. All the teachers who taught in those specific multigrade schools became a part of the sample automatically.

The sample is made up of 15 teachers including principals and class teachers in these schools. Most teachers in these schools have at least a first class certificate. Five of the teachers

have 0-1 years of teaching experience in a multigrade school.

INSTRUMENT

The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part of the questionnaire contained five questions to deduce biographical information on sex, years of teaching experience in multigrade schools, grades presently teaching, age, and qualification. The second part consisted of 2 closed and 3 open questions. An example of an open question is Define multigrade in your own words. An example of a closed question is Do you like teaching in a multigrade school? Yes/No. The third part contained 9 Likert Type items to gather information of teachers' efficiency, challenges, effectiveness, advantages and disadvantages in relation to reading strategies used in multigrade schools. The responses to each statement were obtained by placing a check mark above the appropriate SA-strongly agree, A-agree, SD-strongly disagree, D-disagree and NS-not sure. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix.

METHOD OF COLLECTING DATA

The researcher sent a letter to the principal of the four schools involved in the study requesting for permission to have their staff answer the questionnaire, which with no hesitation was granted. Fifteen questionnaires were distributed to the teachers in the different schools chosen. The researcher personally delivered questionnaires to the principals and teachers.

The time given to answer the questionnaires was one week. After the week passed the researcher went back to the schools to collect the questionnaires from the principals and teachers. In Cristo Rey R.C. three were completed, Sanpedro Government four were completed, Buena Vista two were completed, and Concepcion three were completed, For those teachers that did not complete the questionnaire, the researcher gave them two more days to complete it. At the end of the two days all the other questionnaires were given to the principals who personally delivered them to the researcher.

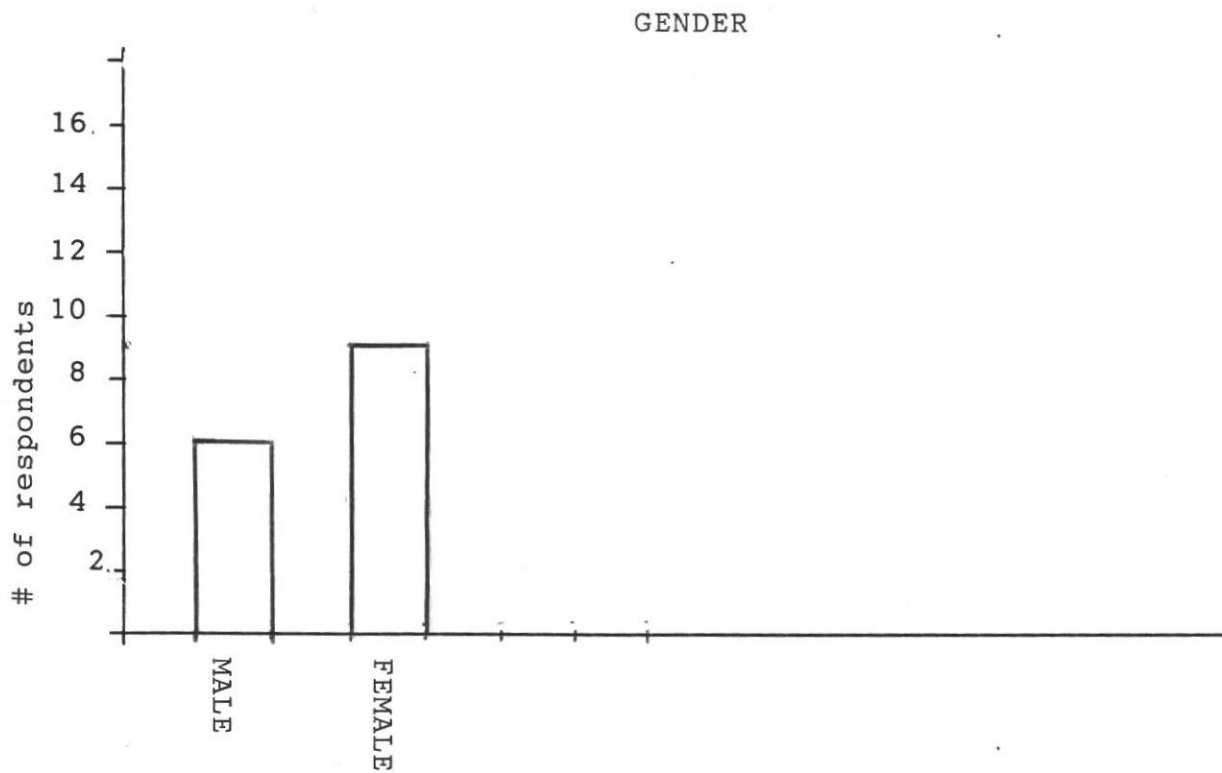
Analysis Procedure

The first section of the questionnaire consisted of Biographical data of the sample which was presented on bar graphs and a pie chart. The researcher counted the number of respondents for each question on that section. The results were recorded. Similarly in Section two with the closed questions yes or no to the 2 items of that section. The result was recorded. This section also consisted of 3 open ended questions which were analyzed using narrative description of the responses given. Section 3 which used the five point scale, was also counted to find out how responses were made. Strongly agree and agree were combined to form an agreed response similarly strongly disagree and disagree responses were combined to make a disagreed response. The higher percentage determined the attitude of the respondent as positive or negative. It was also found using the following formula:
$$\text{Average} = \frac{\text{Total points}}{\text{Score}} \div \text{the number of respondents.}$$

The biographical data was combined with the attitudes statement as well as with the open ended and closed questions so as to see if there was any relationship between personal characteristics such as level of training and teachers attitudes towards reading in multigrade schools.

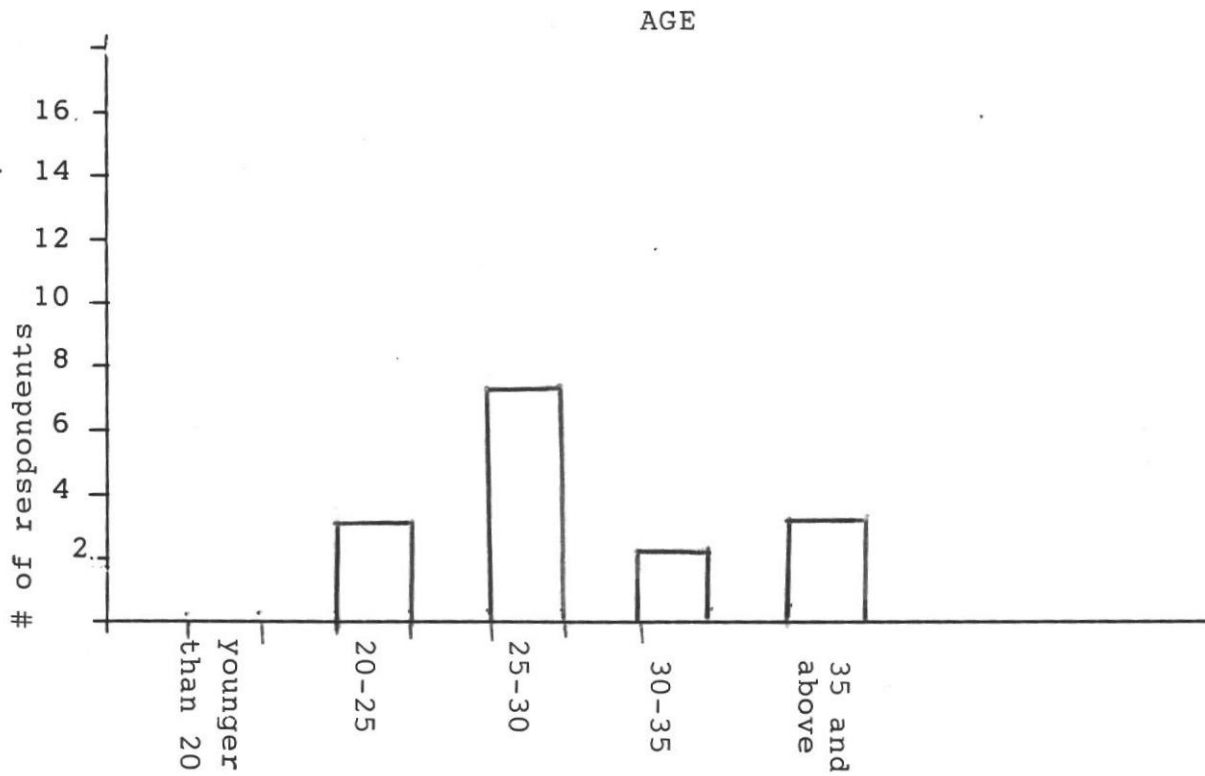
Section I

GRAPH 1



Graph 1 shows that 6 of the respondents were males and 9 of the respondents are females. It also shows that more females are posted in multigrade schools.

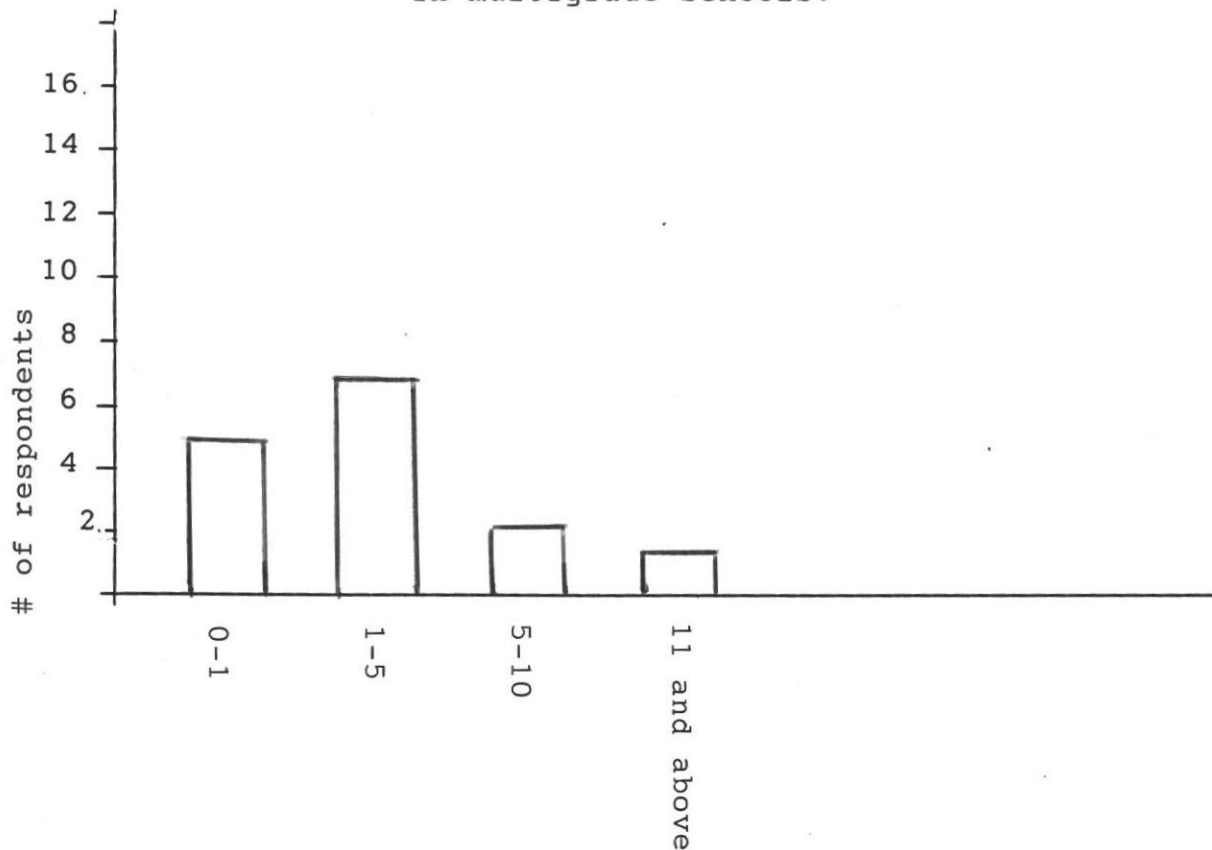
GRAPH 2



Graph 2 shows that no teacher was younger than 20, 3 teachers are between 20-25 years, 7 teachers between 25-30 years and 2 teachers between 30-35 years and 3 teachers are 35 and above

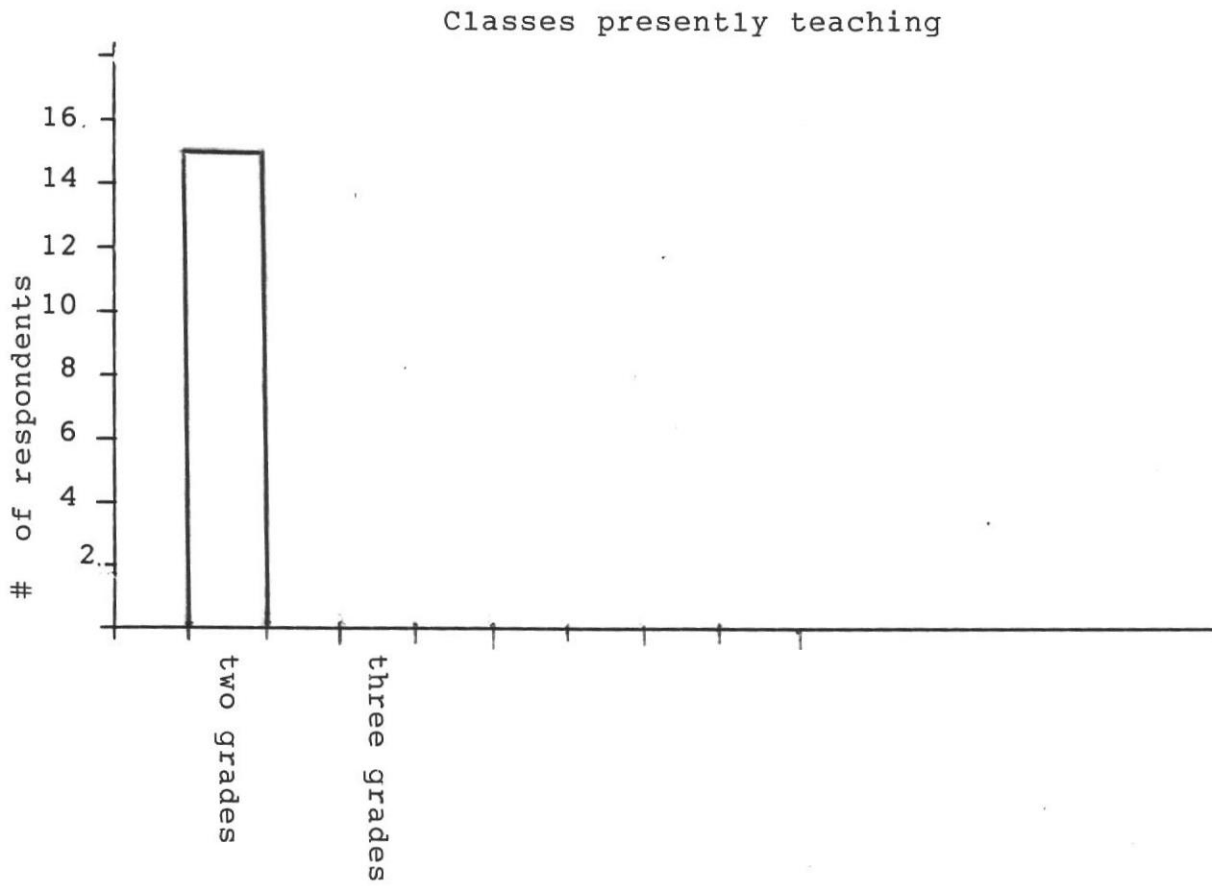
Graph 3

Years of teaching experience
in multigrade schools.



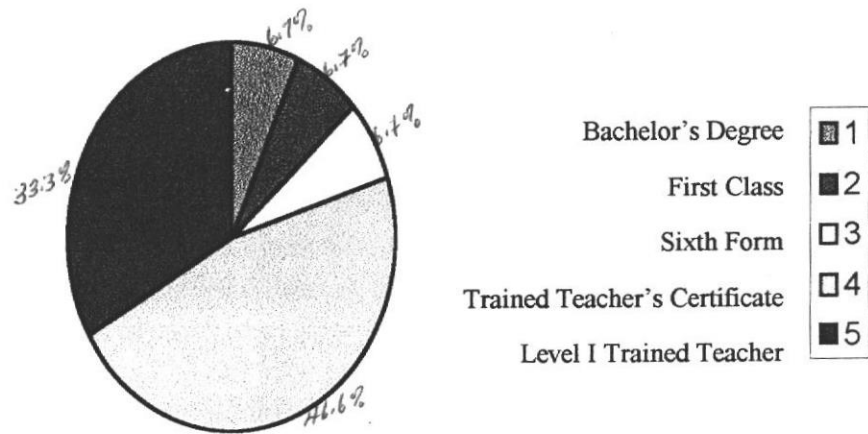
Graph 3 shows that five teachers have 0-1 years of teaching experience, 7 between 1-5 years, 2 between 5-10 and 1 teacher 11 and above. This suggest that the majority of teachers have a few years of teaching experience in multigrade schools as opposed to those that have a lot of years of teaching experience. This might also be the reason why the majority of teachers answered NO to section 2 questions 1 and 2.

GRAPH 4



Graph 4 shows that all teachers teach two classes in their respective school.

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION



SECTION 2

(1) Question - Do you like to teach in a multigrade school?

YES	%	NO	%
3	20	12	80

This table shows that 20% or 3 respondents like to teach in a multigrade school. On the other hand 80% or 12 teachers do not like to teach in a multigrade school. This suggests that teachers might be place there with out being consulted by their manager. It might also be that there is no other job so the respondent had to accept to work in a multigrade School. It might also be the reason why 100% of the respondents agreed with section 3 tables 3 and 9.

(2) Question - Do you feel comfortable to teach a reading lesson to a multigrade school?

YES	%	NO	%
5	33.3%	10	66.7

The above table shows that 33.3% or 5 respondents feel comfortable teaching a reading lesson to a multigrade school. On the other hand 66.7% or 10 respondents are not confident or comfortable teaching a reading lesson. This suggests that 66.7% might be trying different strategies (trial & error) so as to teach children in a multigrade school. In section 3 tables 3 and 9 all teachers agreed with the statement that teachers need training as to how to teach reading in a multigrade school.

3 Define Multigrade in your own words.

The majority of respondents (13) gave the definition as follows. Teaching more than one grade level in a Classroom. The other 2 gave ways how to teach in a multigrade class. They also mentioned the challenges encountered. They have 0-1 years experience which suggests that they might not know they are teaching in a multigrade school but were able to mention the difficulties and challenges encountered in their class.

4 Please explain how you plan activities for a reading lesson e.g. use groups, individually etc.

The majority of the respondents explained that they use grouping when teaching reading lessons.

According to Thomas and Shaw (1992) Collingwood (1992) Miller (1999) they identified six areas which are "delivery and grouping, self directed activities, planning and using peer tutoring, Classroom management and discipline, organization and instructional organization."

Other activities mentioned by the respondents are:

- (a) Vocabulary development, dictionary skills
- (b) Oral and silent reading, answers question
- (c) Whole class teaching for the introduction and concluding part either use group or individual.
- (d) used self directed activities
- (e) use games

(f) group children and then help the slower learners

(g) Use concrete objects or pictures

(h) peer tutoring

All these activities mentioned have something in common with the Educators point of view mentioned.

(5) Which strategy have you noticed that is best/must effective when teaching a reading lesson to a multigrade class.

The majority of respondents responded that the best strategy used for reading in a multigrade class is grouping.

Other strategies mentioned are:

- * Dramatization

- * peer tutoring

- *Reading stories

SECTION 3

TABLE 1

Statement - Teaching reading in a multigrade school requires a lot of planning.

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	11	3	0	1	0		
percent	73.3	20	0	6.7	0		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	11	6	0	4	0		
total pts.					21		
average					1.4	*	

Table I indicates that 11 respondents strongly agreed, 3 agreed, 1 disagreed, none strongly agreed and none not sure with the statement. The statement therefore received a total of 21 points with an average of 1.4 showing a positive response towards the statement. The above table shows the 6.7% for the respondents opposed the statement and 93.3% agreed with the statement. This suggests that the teachers responded positively to the statement making it seem that indeed teaching reading in a multigrade school requires a lot of planning.

The above table indicates that one respondent opposed the statement the reason might be that she has a few years of teaching experience in a multigrade school.

TABLE 2

statement - The curriculum guides are very useful in planning effective reading lessons in multigrade schools.

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	0	3	0	9	3		
percent	0	20	0	60	20		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	0	6	0	36	15		
total pts.					57		*
average					3.8		

Table 2 shows that none of the respondents strongly agreed, 9 disagreed, 3 agreed, 3 strongly disagreed and none not sure with the statement. The statement therefore received a total of 57 points with an average of 3.8 showing a negative response towards the statement. The above table shows that 80 % of the respondents opposed the statement and 20% agreed with the statement. This suggests that the teachers responded negatively making it seem that the curriculum guides are not very useful in planning effective reading lessons in multigrade schools.

The three respondents that opposed the statement might be of the following reasons (A) 1 respondent has 11 and above of years of experience and is a trained teacher (B) 1 respondent has 0-1 year of teaching experience on the other hand has a Bachelors degree. (C) 1 respondent has 1-5 years of teaching experience and is a level 1 trained teacher.

table 3

Statement - As a multigrade teacher I feel the need for formal training on effective Reading strategies used in multigrade schools.

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	11	4	0	0	0		
percent	73.3	26.7	0	0	0		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	11	8	0	0	0		
total pts.					19		
average					1.26	*	

Table 3 shows that 11 respondents strongly agreed and 4 agreed with the statement. On the other hand none were not sure, disagree and strongly disagreed. The statement obtained 19 points which gives an average of 1.26 indicating that the statement received a positive response. This shows that 100% of the respondents agreed with the statement. There fore it suggest that all mul tigrade teachers agreed that they are in need for formal training on effective Reading strategies used in multigrade schools.

TABLE 4

Statement - Multigrade schools need various levels of reading textbooks to accomodate independent learning.

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	8	6	0	1	0		
percent	53.3	40	0	6.7	0		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	8	12	0	4	0		
total pts.					24		
average					1.6	*	

Table 4 shows that 8 respondents strongly agreed, 6 agreed. none not sure, 1 disagreed and none strongly disagreed with the statement. The statement obtained 24 points which gives an average of 1.6 indicating that the statement received a positive response. This shows that 93.3% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 6.7% disagreed. This suggests that the teachers responded positively to the statement making it seem that multigrade schools need various levels of reading textbooks to accomodate independent learning.

The one respondent that disagreed with the statement might be because she has a few years of teaching experience on the other hand she is a level 1 trained teacher. May be as agreed on statement 3 and 4 by all respondents that training is needed for all teachers teaching in multigrade school. It might also help this teacher realize that indeed textbooks are needed for independent learning.

TABLE 5

Statement - Teaching Reading in a Multigrade School is tiresome and frustrating.

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	0	7	0	8	0		
percent	0	46.7	0	53.3	0		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	0	14	0	32	0		
total pts.					46		
average					3.06		*

Table 5 indicates that no respondents strongly agreed, 7 agreed, none not sure, 8 disagreed and none strongly agreed with the statement. The statement therefore received a total of 46 points with an average of 3.06 showing a negative response towards the statement. The above table shows that 46.7% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 53.3% disagreed. This suggests that the majority of the respondents have a negative response towards the statement making it seem that teaching reading in a multigrade school is not tiresome and frustrating.

In the above table 7 respondents agreed with the statement the reason might be that those 7 teachers have less experience than those who disagreed. It might also be that those 8 teachers that disagreed are trained as opposed to those who agreed with the statement. Since in Table 3 and 9 all teachers agreed that training is necessary for the improvement of teaching reading in multigrade schools it might be that those who disagreed really need training so as to avoid being frustrated and tired.

TABLE 6

Statement 6 - Using different Reading strategies and styles enhance learning in Multigrade schools.

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	7	8	0	0	0		
percent	46.7	53.3	0	0	0		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	7	16	0	0	0		
total pts.					23		
average					1.53	*	

Table 7 shows that 7 of the respondents strongly agreed, 8 agreed, none not sure, disagreed nor strongly agreed. The statement obtained 23 points which gives an average of 1.53 indicating that 100% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 0% disagreed. Therefore it suggests that all teachers agreed that using different reading strategies and styles enhance learning in Multigrade schools.

TABLE 7

Statement - Grouping children by ability when teaching in a multigrade school is very important .

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	5	9	0	1	0		
percent	33.3	60	0	6.7	0		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	5	18	0	4	0		
total pts.					27		
average					1.8	*	

Table 7 shows that 5 of the respondents strongly agreed, 9 agreed, none not sure, 1 disagreed and none strongly agreed. The statement obtained 27 points which gives an average of 1.8 indicating that the statement received a positive response. This shows that 93.3% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 6.7% disagreed . This suggests that the majority of the respondents have a positive response towards the statement making it seem that grouping children by ability when teaching in a multigrade school is very important.

The table above shows the one respondent disagreed with the statement it might be because the respondent has 0-1 years of experience teaching in a multigrade school. The respondent qualification is a Bachelors degree but might not have the proper training to teach in a multigrade school. This might be seemed correct because all teachers agreed with table 3 and 9. It might also be that the respondent does not like to teach in a multigrade school as mentioned on Section 2 question 1.

TABLE 9

Statement - Teachers should be given the opportunity to be trained so as to be successful when teaching in a multigrade school.

Scale	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Pos.	Neg.
# of respondents	10	5	0	0	0		
percent	66.7	33.3	0	0	0		
points	1	2	3	4	5		
total	10	10	0	0	0		
total pts.					20		
average					1.3	*	

Table 9 shows that 10 of the respondent strongly agreed, 5 agreed, with the statement. On the other hand none were not sure, disagreed and strongly disagreed. The statement obtained 20 points which gives an average of 1.3 indicating that the statement received a positive response. This shows that 100% of the respondents agreed with the statement. Therefore it suggests that all teachers should be given the opportunity to be trained so as to be successful when teaching in a multigrade school.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Motivated by the problem faced by the researcher's son and teachers in multigrade ^Ateaching schools, the researcher designed An Investigation to determine effectiveness of Different Strategies in the teaching of Reading in four Multigrade Schools namely Cristo Rey R.C., SanPedro Government , Buena Vista R.C. and Concepcion R.C. School. There were 15 teachers in total in the schools. A questionnaire was ^{given} _A to each teacher making a total ^{of} 15 questionnaires. All questionnaires were collected back, thus 15 represented the 100% of teachers involved in the study.

The tables in chapter 4 Section 2 tables 1 and 2 showed clearly that the majority of teachers do not like to teach in a multigrade school and also do not feel comfortable teaching a reading lesson to a multigrade class. Also on Section 3 tables 3 and 9, 100% of the teachers agreed that training is needed so as to cope with the teaching of reading in a multigrade school. The majority of children also agreed that grouping children by ability is the best strategy to use when teaching Reading in a Multigrade School. Other strategies mentioned are peer tutoring, dramatization, and using concrete objects or pictures.

Being aware of the teachers' view towards effective Reading Strategies in four Multigrade Schools , the researcher re-

commends that

- (1) a study be made to find out why teachers don't like to teach in a multigrade school.
- (2) provide multigrade teacher's with work shops so that they can cope with the teaching of reading in Multigrade schools.
- (3) use grouping by ability when teaching in a multigrade school.
- (4) Modify the curriculum in a way that multigrade teachers can benefit from it.
- (5) provide schools with books so as to encourage children to read.

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- (3) Cushman K, (1993). Multiage. The ways and Hows of the Multiage Primary Classroom. S.D. Whole Teaching Keeping children in the center of Curriculum and Instruction, The society For Developmental Education, U.S.A.
- (4) Grant J, (1990). Staying focused on the children (7) The society for developmental Education, Ten Sharon, Road, U.S.A.
- (5) Farrant J. s, (1990) Principles and Practice of Education Longman Group Ltd. UK Longman Singapore PTE . Ltd.
- (6) Makin S, (1997). A survey to determine Teachers opinions Towards Multigrade teaching at the Toledo Rural Schools, Belize. Belize Teachers College (Thesis)
- (7) Multigrade Modules

Belize Teachers Training College
University Drive
BelizeCity, Belize

April 23, 1998.

Dear Sir/Madam

This questionnaire is designed as a part of the requirement for a Trained Teachers Certificate. It is a study to find out effective Reading strategies used in Multi-grade Schools.

In light of this I am kindly requesting that you and your staff assist me by filling out this questionnaire . Your responses will be highly appreciated and kept confidential.

Thanks in advance.

Respectfully Yours,

Carmita Chan

CARMITA CHAN

SECTION 1

PLEASE PUT A CHECK MARK ON ALL APPROPRIATE BLANK SPACES.

(1) Sex : Male _____ Female _____

(2) My age falls in between the following range:

Younger than 20 _____

20-25 _____

25-30 _____

30-35 _____

35 and above _____

(3) My teaching experience in Multi-grade Schools

0-1 year _____

1-5 years _____

5-10 years _____

11 and above _____

(4) Number of classes presently teaching

Two Grades _____

Three Grades _____

More than 3 Grades _____

(5) My highest qualification is

Masters Degree _____

Bachelors Degree _____

Trained Teacher's Certificate _____

Level 1 Trained Teacher's Certificate _____

Sixth Form Graduate _____

1st Class Teacher's Certificate _____

High School Diploma _____

First Teacher's Certificate _____

Section 2

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

(1) Do you like to teach in a multigrade school?

yes _____ No _____

(2) Do you feel comfortable to teach a Reading lesson to a multigrade class? Yes _____ No _____

(3) Define Multigrade in your own words.

(4) Please explain how you plan activities for a reading lesson.
e.g. use groups, individually

(5) Which strategy have you noticed that is best/must effective when teaching a reading lesson to a multigrade class.

PLEASE READ EACH STATEMENT CAREFULLY THEN ✓ THE LETTER TO
INDICATE YOUR RESPONSE.

NS - NOT SURE

- (1) Teaching Reading in a Multigrade school requires a lot of planning.
- (2) The curriculum guides are very useful in planning effective Reading lessons in Multigrade schools.
- (3) As a Multigrade teacher I feel the need for formal training on effective Reading Strategies in Multigrade schools.
- (4) Multigrade Schools need various levels of READING textbooks to accomodate independent learning.
- (5) Teaching Reading in a Multigrade School is tiresome and frustrating.
- (6) Using different Reading Strategies and styles enhance learning in Multigrade schools.
- (7) Grouping children by ability when teaching in a Multigrade school is very important.

	SA	A	D	SD	NS
f					

(9) Multigrade teaching lowers the standard of Reading in my school.

(10) Teachers should be given the opportunity to be trained so as to be successful when teaching in a multigrade school.



Ministry of Education

Belmopan, Belize
Central America

Tel: (501) 8-22329
Fax: (501) 8-23389

*Rec'd
13-2-98
J. Perez*

EDN/784/98 (17)

9 February 1998

Mr G Perez
President PTA
Cristo Rey RC School
COROZAL DISTRICT

Dear Mr Perez

This is in reference to your letter addressed to the Minister of Education dated 5 December 1997.

Please be informed that the Ministry has assessed the pupil-teacher situation in your school and has found it to be adequate. (Kindly note that deployment of teachers is based on biennial average attendance - not enrollment). If the biennial average attendance of your school is between 101 - 125 then you should only have five teachers. Kindly inform us if your biennial average attendance is more than 125 pupils.

With best regards.

Sincerely

CLARA PASTOR (MRS)
for CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

CP/jmm

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