



PROJECT TITLE :
THE ASSESSMENT OF MATHS LEARNING
DIFFICULTIES (PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS) IN
PRIMARY THREE PUPILS
OF
SK ENCIK BUYONG, KUCHING

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to identify the degree and nature of problems in Maths for the particular group of Year 3 pupils, especially the problem in solving skills in Mathematics. The data findings were analysed quantitatively and descriptively. As a result, data findings showed that the respondents were lacking in many Mathematics skills, especially in Mathematical problem solving storytelling where many failed the test. The problems that arise related to the Maths test given were indifferent attitudes in answering the questions, careless, not understanding the concept, lack of focus in understanding the needs of questions, and not able to understand and memorize the four basic skills of operations. The questionnaire results showed that their attitudes were generally positive though the test results indicated otherwise. The identification of mathematics skills needed is essential to respond to the difficulties in mathematical problem-solving. These efforts could help pupils to be motivated in positive thinking and trying to improve their skills in mathematics problem-solving. The understanding of the issue, knowledge, skills and commitment of teachers are the keys to ensure this group of pupils' success in the future.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Background of the Study

Most schools either in primary nor secondary school were having difficulties in problem solving in Mathematics. Many Mathematics skills are involved in problem-solving. However, large numbers of students have not acquired the basic skills they need in Mathematics (Mohd Nizam and Rosaznisham 2004; Berch and Mazzocco 2007). Therefore, many students were reported to face difficulties in mathematics particularly in Mathematics problem solving (Tay Lay Heong 2005; Mohd Johan 2002 and Zalina 2005)

Although the prevalence of reading problems on one hand and Mathematics learning problems on the other hand seems to be equal (Desoete, Roeyers, and De Clercq, 2004; Dowker, 2005; Ruijssenaars, Van Luit, and Van Lieshout, 2006), this is not reflected in the amount of research focusing on each field (Mazzocco and Myers, 2003). Far more research needs to be set up in the field of reading, while the field of Mathematics remains underdeveloped.

The present study tackles this shortcoming by focusing on Mathematics learning difficulties. Moreover, taken into account the research indicating that early interventions are effective (Dowker, 2004, Kroesbergen and Van Luit, 2003; Van Luit and Schopman, 2000) while Mathematics learning difficulties in primary education is the focus of this study.

1.1 Statement of the problem

According to Ernest (2000), 'Solving problems is one of the most important activities in Mathematics'. When solving problems children will need to know general strategies. General strategies are methods or procedures that guide the choice of which skills or knowledge to use at each stage in problem solving.

Solving problem is a field of mathematics that is distinctive and special as this matter is more closely related to everyday situations and experiences. It is the culmination of completing every topic and concept that studied Mathematics because it examines the strategic thinking and other skills such as proficiency in basic facts, reasoning problems, operations which includes addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, organize data, using various mathematical concepts and logical review.

In addition, it requires an understanding of the text and command and counting