

ACCELERATED REMEDIAL TEACHING PROGRAMME TO DEVELOP THE ESSENTIAL LEARNING COMPETENCIES IN MATHEMATICS FOR THE STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 6

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Primary school stage is the most important and decisive stage in child's development, because the potentials needed to act as a successful citizen in future are built up and shaped up during this period of time. The duration of the formal primary education is five years. It consists of three key stages called key stage one, two and three. Here each student is expected to acquire some specific competencies, which are called essential learning competencies. Competency based curriculum in the primary stage comprises of language, religion, mathematics and environment related activities. Here mathematics is considered as an important subject area which develops the ability to reason logically and to express thoughts precisely, clearly and accurately.

According to the recommendations of National Institute of Education, students are expected to complete 40 essential learning competencies relevant to mathematics during the primary education stage. However, the completion of learning competencies has become less important nowadays as the grade 5 scholarship examination has created a big competition among students, teachers and parents. So the purpose of this study is to investigate the present situation of achievement of the competencies by the students entering grade 6 and to create an accelerated remedial teaching programme to develop these essential learning competencies regarding mathematics before starting the grade 6 mathematics syllabus.

1494 students from grade 6 of Giriulla Education Zone were taken as the sample for the Diagnostic test. This test was prepared to find out the achievement of 6 competencies selected from key stage three, which can be tested using a written test. The Diagnostic test was conducted at the beginning of the 1st term of the year 2013 and on the basis of the results; an accelerated remedial teaching programme was planned and conducted for selected 100 of students from grade 6 of the same education zone. These 100 students consist of 30 of 1 AB, 55 from 1 C and 15 from Type 2 according to the school type. A post test which was similar in structure to the Diagnostic test was given to measure the progress of the achievements of the students. The results of the two tests were tabulated and analysed using computer software package Excel.

The findings of this study revealed that 97% of the students entering grade 6 have not achieved the essential learning competencies relevant to mathematics, and the percentage of competent students decreases as the school type changes from 1 AB, 1 C and Type 2

respectively. According to the results of the Posttest, the accelerated remedial teaching programme conducted has been successful enough to increase the individual achievements of 87% of students of the experimental group. When comparing the results of the post test of controlled group (which includes 100 students from the same schools of experimental group, with the results of the experimental group it clearly shows that the programme conducted has been highly effective for the improvements of the students of the experimental group.

The results and information highlighted in the chapters of discussions and conclusions will be useful for all the stake holders in the field of education including the principals, teachers and parents. At the end of the report, suggestions have been forwarded to improve the remedial programme conducted and to give some kind of guidance for further studies in the relevant field.