

Literacy Performance among Lower Primary School Children : A Malaysian Case Study

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Abstract : Numerous studies on boys' performance relative to girls' have been conducted around the globe. However, little has been done in relation to the literacy of primary school boys in the Malaysian context. This paper discusses the results of a study that sought to determine the literacy performance of Grades 1, 2, and 3 primary school students in the state of Selangor, Malaysia. Data on approximately 85,000 students from each grade level were obtained from the Ministry of Education Malaysia, which conducts national screening on literacy and numeracy, or LINUS, in all government primary schools. Teachers' views were also sought through focus group interviews and journal entries. The results show that although there is an overall improvement in literacy performance in the Malay language among the students as they go into Grades 2 and 3, girls are found to outperform boys in every screening for all grade levels.

Keywords : boys' underperformance, literacy, literacy performance, reading

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