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Exploring Parents' and Teachers' Views of Primary Pupils' Thinking Skills and Problem Solving Skills

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ABSTRACT

This article is based on a descriptive study using survey method and focus group interviews. Thinking skills and problem solving skills are vital for pupils in their daily lives and facing their future challenges. Therefore, parents and teachers play an important role in nurturing these skills among pupils. The objective of the study is to explore parents' and teachers' views of pupils' thinking skills and problem solving skills according to locations of the school (urban and rural). This study also explores parents' and teachers' suggestions to enhance pupils' thinking skills and problem solving skills. The sample consists of 302 parents of the pupils and 104 teachers who are teaching Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6. The quantitative data for the research was collected using questionnaires which were developed by the researchers. Each set of questionnaire consists of 23 items. While the qualitative data was collected through the focus group interview method among parents and teachers to get their suggestions on how to enhance pupils' thinking skills and problem solving skills. The findings show that the urban parents' views of children's thinking skills and problem solving skills is significantly higher than those from the rural. The results also indicate that there is no significant difference between the urban school teachers' and the rural school teachers' views of pupils' thinking skills and problem solving skills. Findings from the focus group interviews show that most parents engage their children in hands on activities at home to enhance their thinking skills and problem solving skills. On the other hand, teachers encourage active participation of pupils in co-curricular activities to enhance pupils' thinking skills and problem solving skills.

KEYWORDS

Thinking Skills; Problem Solving Skills; Teachers' and Parents' Views; Urban and Rural National Schools

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