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## School students' academic performance with reference to grade level

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### Abstract

The research was conducted in Trilok Academy, Kathmandu, Nepal. The research was related to academic performance of Trilok Academic from Pre-Primary to Grade Ten students with reference to Grade levels. The respondents were 418, among them 160 (38.3%) secured A+, 104 (24.9%) A, 13 (3.1%) B+, 104 (24.9%) B, 20 (4.8%) C+, 15 (3.6%) C and 2 (0.5%) D+.

**Keywords:** grade level, academic performance

### 1. Introduction

Grading systems that exist in the education environment can powerfully frame the professional development of students. The primary purpose of any grading system is to measure student achievement of established learning objectives. Performance data lets students know where they stand in the development of needed competencies. A traditional grade stratifies students according to their level of achievement and can motivate students, reward effort and possibly signify suitability for a potential area of study (Miller, 2009) <sup>[9]</sup>.

Laska & Juarez (1992) <sup>[7]</sup> wrote in the context of higher education, they suggested that the use of grades for learning has been the subject of a long, ongoing debate. These authors examined the semester grade point average (GPA) outcomes between students whose grades are averaged into their cumulative GPA with those who take courses that use a pass/fail only basis. They found that students in the former category achieved an increase of 11.4% above the average in the mean semester GPA (Laska, 1992) <sup>[7]</sup>.

“Grading is the process of a teacher’s arriving at and recording a summarizing, Symbolic remark on the academic performance of his or her students. Grading should express neither approval nor disapproval of students as persons. ...the purpose of a grading system is to give the teacher a regular way to transmit to students, and to other persons who may be concerned with the intellectual development of students, value judgments made by the teacher (Krop, Meyer, & Patel).” This description clearly states that grades are just as much for students as they are for anyone with a vested interest in the “intellectual development” of the student (Hill, 2006) <sup>[4]</sup>.

Grades are the “hook” that gets students and parents to participate in this communication. Students want and deserve to know how well or how poorly they are doing in school. Their parents want to know also. Giving them this “window” into the school workings not only helps students achieve more but also draws them and their parents into the school environment (Cameron, 2011) <sup>[2]</sup>.

Grading systems differ in philosophy and practice from one country to another and the fair interpretation of foreign grades into national ones is a major issue, both for students returning after a study period abroad and for university staff required to assess the credentials of foreign applicants.

Reddan & Rauchle ((2012) <sup>[11]</sup> wrote the course had incorporated a non-graded pass/fail system of assessment since it was first offered but changed to a typical university grading process in 2011. At the completion of the course a two page questionnaire was administered to all students to determine their opinions of changing from a non-graded to a graded form of assessment. Additionally, seven students volunteered for a 20 minute individual interview to examine how the grading of the course affected a number of factors related to their learning

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in the course. The results of the study indicated that students supported the change from a non-graded to a graded system of assessment. Minimal negative concerns were reported by students. The findings suggest that students prefer the use of a graded system of assessment in a work-integrated learning course in exercise science. They perceived that grading of the course increased their motivation to submit high quality responses for all assessment items and provided them with an opportunity to improve their grade point average (GPA), for entry into post-graduate programs, as well as rewarding them for their efforts towards academic excellence and preparing them for their future careers (Reddan & Rauchle, Student perceptions of the value of career development learning to a work-integrated learning course in exercise science, 2012) [12].

Merva (2003) [8] writes grading is a powerful part of the motivational structure of university courses. Educators can use this to their advantage by employing grades as “academic carrots”. Research has demonstrated that students achieve more academically when they are graded under a traditional rather than a pass-fail system (Merva, 2003) [8].

Burke (2006) [1] suggests that students’ work should be graded with percentage or letter grades to ensure students realize the benefits that can be derived from a thoughtful and well-constructed grading scheme.

Hager, Athanasou, and Gonczi (1994) considered that it is possible to both support and oppose graded assessment, depending on the circumstances, and inferred that the

decision to grade or not to grade is ultimately a policy decision, which should be based on the benefits to be gained and whether grading is the most appropriate strategy to achieve the desired benefits.

Quirk (1995) [10] adopted a similar approach, noting that the benefits and purposes must be clearly identified when making a decision to grade or not to grade (Quirk, 1995) [10].

**2. Objective**

The aim of this research was

- To examine the academic performance of school students with reference to grade levels.

**3. Methodology**

Research Design and Sampling techniques: This study is centered on Trilok secondary school students in Kathmandu, Nepal. The data were obtained using the multistage stratified sampling. Trilok School is private type owned. Total 418 samples are taken, among them 192 were girls. From the sampling missing data were removed and true data taken from 418 girls and boys. Receive data coding, recoding and analysis in through computer. The method to be used in analysing the data is descriptive statistics (tabulation of percentages) and independent t-test using SPSS data statistical package.

**4. Findings**

**Table 1:** Academic performance with reference of Grade levels.

		Total							Total	
		A+ (90-100%)	A (80-89.99%)	B+ (70-79.99%)	B (60-69.99%)	c+ (50-59.99%)	C (40-49.99%)	D+ (30-39.99)		
Grade	1	Count	30	7	0	7	0	0	0	44
		% within Grade	68.2%	15.9%	0.0%	15.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	18.8%	6.7%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%
		% of Total	7.2%	1.7%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%
	2	Count	16	12	0	9	0	0	0	37
		% within Grade	43.2%	32.4%	0.0%	24.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	10.0%	11.5%	0.0%	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.9%
		% of Total	3.8%	2.9%	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.9%
	3	Count	12	9	1	5	0	0	0	27
		% within Grade	44.4%	33.3%	3.7%	18.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	7.5%	8.7%	7.7%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%
		% of Total	2.9%	2.2%	0.2%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%
	4	Count	8	20	0	9	0	1	0	38
		% within Grade	21.1%	52.6%	0.0%	23.7%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	5.0%	19.2%	0.0%	8.7%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	9.1%
		% of Total	1.9%	4.8%	0.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	9.1%
	5	Count	10	15	0	15	0	1	0	41
		% within Grade	24.4%	36.6%	0.0%	36.6%	0.0%	2.4%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	6.2%	14.4%	0.0%	14.4%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	9.8%
		% of Total	2.4%	3.6%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	9.8%
	6	Count	6	10	1	20	0	0	0	37
		% within Grade	16.2%	27.0%	2.7%	54.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	3.8%	9.6%	7.7%	19.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.9%
		% of Total	1.4%	2.4%	0.2%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.9%
	7	Count	5	12	0	15	0	0	0	32
		% within Grade	15.6%	37.5%	0.0%	46.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	3.1%	11.5%	0.0%	14.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%
		% of Total	1.2%	2.9%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%
	8	Count	2	2	4	4	6	0	0	18
		% within Grade	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	1.2%	1.9%	30.8%	3.8%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%
		% of Total	0.5%	0.5%	1.0%	1.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%
	9	Count	0	1	3	14	7	8	1	34

		% within Grade	0.0%	2.9%	8.8%	41.2%	20.6%	23.5%	2.9%	100.0%
		% within Total	0.0%	1.0%	23.1%	13.5%	35.0%	53.3%	50.0%	8.1%
		% of Total	0.0%	0.2%	0.7%	3.3%	1.7%	1.9%	0.2%	8.1%
	10	Count	0	3	4	5	7	5	1	25
		% within Grade	0.0%	12.0%	16.0%	20.0%	28.0%	20.0%	4.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	0.0%	2.9%	30.8%	4.8%	35.0%	33.3%	50.0%	6.0%
		% of Total	0.0%	0.7%	1.0%	1.2%	1.7%	1.2%	0.2%	6.0%
		Count	18	6	0	0	0	0	0	24
		% within Grade	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Nursery	% within Total	11.2%	5.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%
		% of Total	4.3%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%
		Count	26	1	0	0	0	0	0	27
	LKG	% within Grade	96.3%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	16.2%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%
		% of Total	6.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%
	UKG	Count	27	6	0	1	0	0	0	34
		% within Grade	79.4%	17.6%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Total	16.9%	5.8%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.1%
	Total	% of Total	6.5%	1.4%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.1%
		Count	160	104	13	104	20	15	2	418
		% within Grade	38.3%	24.9%	3.1%	24.9%	4.8%	3.6%	0.5%	100.0%
	% within Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	38.3%	24.9%	3.1%	24.9%	4.8%	3.6%	0.5%	100.0%	

(Source: Field survey 2017)

The above table shows that there were 44 respondents from Grade one, 30 (68.2%) secured A+, 7(15.9%) secured A, 7(15.9%) secured B. There were 37 respondents from Grade two, 16 (43.2%) secured A+, 12 (32.4%) secured A and 9 (24.3%) secured B. There were 27 respondents in Grade three, among them 12 (44.4%) secured A+, 9 (33.3%) secured an A, 1 (3.7%) secured B+ and 5 (18.5%) B. There were 38 respondents from Grade four, among them 8(21.1%) secured A+, 20 (52.6%) secured an A, 9 (23.7%) secured B and 1 (2.6%) C. There were 41 respondents from Grade 5, among them 10 (24.4%) secured A+, 15 secured A, 15 secured B and one secured C. There were 37 respondents from Grade 6, among them 6 (16.2%) secured A+, 10 (27.0%) secured A, 1 (2.7%) secured B+ and 20 (54.1%) secured B. There were 32 respondents from Grade seven, among them 5 (15.6%) A+, 12 (37.5%) secured an A and 15 (46.9%) secured B. There were 18 respondents from Grade 8, among them 2 (11.1%) secured A+, 2 (11.1%) secured A, 4 (22.2%) secured B+, 4 (22.2%) secured B and 6 (33.3%) secured C+. There were 34 respondents from Grade 9, among them 1 (2.9%) secured A, 3 (8.8%) secured B+, 14 (41.2%) secured B, 7 (20.26%) secured C+, 8 (23.5%) secured C and 1 (2.9%) secured D+. There were 25 respondents from Grade 10, among them 3 (12.0%) secured A, 4 (16.0%) secured B+, 5 (20.0%) secured B, 7 (28.0%) secured C+, 5 (20%) secured C and 1 (4.0%) secured D+. There were 24 respondents from Grade Nursery, among them 18 (75.5%) A+ and 6 (25%) an A. There were 27 respondents from Grade LKG, among them 26 (96.3%) A+ and 1 (3.7%) secured A. Out of 415 6.2% A+ and 0.2% A respectively. There were 34 respondents from Grade UKG, among them 27 (79.4%) secured A+, 6 (17.6%) A and 1 (2.9%) B respectively. There were 418 respondents from Grade 1- to LKG, among them 160 (38.3%) A+, 104 (24.9%) A, 13 (3.1%) B+, 104 (24.9%) B, 20 (4.8%) C+, 2 (0.5%) D+ respectively.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study focused on grade level performance from pre-primary to grade ten of Trilok Academy, Kathmandu, Nepal. The respondents were 418, among them 160 (38.3%)

A+, 104 (24.9%) A, 13 (3.1%) B+, 104 (24.9%) B, 20 (4.8%) C+, 15 (3.6%) C and 2 (0.5%) D+. The findings show that junior grade students have better academic performance than senior ones. The study recommends to study same issue in other districts and provinces as well as community and private schools.

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