



CAYEMBE TELEGRAPH

YUPUKARI EDUCATION SURVEY

A village reading survey was recently concluded.

This survey took about a month to administer and the researcher is happy about the kind cooperation for respondents taking some time to fill up the questionnaires and also the time given for interviews.

The survey was done to learn what are the reasons for more passes in the Secondary School Entrance Examination this year and also to find out why many children are still not passing their exams with better grades in the classes. This survey was also done to hear ideas on how the village can help their children improve in reading.

Thirty six young adults and parents from around the hill of Yupukari, Morucca and Quatata were interviewed . 52% of these respondents are males and 47.2% are females.

Fourteen students were successful at the Secondary School Entrance Examination [SSEE] this year, the highest number and percentage of passes ever, and the respondents were asked what they think are the reasons for the children's success this year . The responses from the highest to the lowest are as follows:

91.4% of the respondents said the Yupukari Public Library [YPL]

75% said, the Peace Corps Volunteer

72.2% said the Hot Meal Programme

69.4% said the books in the school

61.1% said the librarians

50% said the teachers

33.3% said the supplies in school such as paper, crayons, globes etc.

It was noted that many children are still not learning to read well enough to pass their exams in their classes. Respondents were asked their thoughts on this question and here are the answers:

97.2% of the respondents said children spend too much time playing 91.7% said the children need more/better teaching

72.2% said parents don't think education is important,

72.2% said the YPL should be doing more

58.3% said that the children do not like school

41.7% said that the children spend too much time helping with family work.

100% of the respondents said that parents can help their children learn to read. Respondents were also asked what they need in order to do this.

Most said they need to spend more time reading with their children and encourage them more and let them know how important it is to read and write. Some respondents said they lack commitment, some of them said there are so many resources now that we can take advantage of but, we are not taking the time to go to the library to borrow books or even seek help from

persons who can help them get access to the internet.

Respondents were asked what can be done as an entire community to encourage children learn to read more and some suggestions are:

- Parents should attend the Parents Teachers and Friends Association [PTFA] meetings more often.

- Parents should visit the school to check how his/her children are doing.

- Parents should find an hour or more every day to read with their child or children.

- Mini workshops can be held with parents and teachers to make teaching aids to encourage the children.

- Some of the school day should be given to reading rather than always playing during free time in school.

- Older children should help the younger ones to read and this would encourage them to persist through difficulties.

- Parents need to get more involved in school activities.

Through the PTFA the village can organize literacy activities for both parents and pupils, for example, essay writing and poetry competition, poster designing etc.

In order to do this, a well organized fundraiser can be done in order to meet the cost of sponsorship and the PTFA has to be vibrant and active. Prizes can be given to winners, in this way encourage persons to want to take part.

Overall it appears from the survey interviews that many parents are willing to help their children learn to read but they do not know how to go about this.

Some persons were asked, “What do you think about the current school situation?” and here is what they shared.

BRYAN DUNCAN Coordinator of the Yupukari Kitchen Garden Project

“Parents, I think, are not encouraging their children to take their education more seriously and also show them how it is important in life. We as parents should work together with the teachers and make learning fun for the children, so as to get our children to read and understand and can be better leaders of tomorrow. Lack of reading and understanding is one of the reasons why I think our leaders fail to be good leaders. I think there is too much play time for the students. Maybe we can take away some of the playtime and do some other meaningful studies.

I was very interested in educating myself bet-

ter but, I did not get the opportunity and the finance. I tell my children that all these books that they are getting in the libraries and also the opportunity to use the internet are great and to take advantage of learning more and be better persons than I am.

Sometimes when I am passing by, by the school, I am very surprised with students not being mannerly. Manners are the first thing that parents are supposed to teach their children.

As a villager I try to attend all the meetings and most of all we parents should make

every effort to attend the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association [PTFA] since these meetings are concerning our children’s education. Many times parents are rarely attending these meetings and this makes you wonder if parents are interested in their children’s education or why they are sending them.

There many children who are very rude and do not listen to anyone. This I think can change if parents can find some time to sit and talk to them, sometimes this all they need”.

FELIX HOLDEN Former teacher at Yupukari Primary School

“Parents got a lot to do with the children’s education and not just the teachers the teachers are already doing their part. Parents needs to visit the school to check on how their children are doing. This is something I think many parents do not know.

The students should take advantage of using the library. Many times I see children just chatting and playing com-

puter games which is great yes but they should be doing more meaningful stuff such as research.

Parent are also to be blamed on some children’s performance because some parents goes to parties and during the next day have the children look after the younger ones while they are still drinking. And when these children goes to school after a few day they

cannot cope with the work. There are many times where children leave home for school but they never reach to school and this is a serious concern for parents.

Teenage pregnancy is one of the reasons why many females drop out of school and this is something that needs to be looked into”.

Editorial Opinion by Shamir Khan

I think the current school situation is not that great. Secondary School Entrance Examinations [SSEE] passes have been improved this year but the passes in classes was not great. There were some students who passed with good percentages but most did not make it to the pass mark which is 50 percent and they were still promoted. Things like this we should try to improve on.

The first graduation ceremony ever held at the Yupukari Primary was great

and students should be encouraged to complete school. This year there were two students who graduated completing the primary school secondary level. One of the graduating students, when asked how many started school with her said, there were about fifteen in the beginning.

I also think there is too much play time for the children. This is something parents should look into. When I attended this school I can recall there used to be cricket, volleyball and football competitions between the school

houses Eagle and Pheasant and then they would select the best players and then compete against different schools. Activities like this should be restarted to give the children a chance to excel at something at an early stage. Maybe there are kids that have great talents in sports. Not everyone is gifted at formal education.

EDITOR: Shamir Khan