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# Mediated learning experience as an alternative approach to assessment

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# Mediated Learning Experience

# As an Alternative Approach to Assessment

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**A Research Report Submitted to the Discipline of Psychology,**

**The School of Human and Community Development,**

**University of the Witwatersrand,**

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements**

**For the Degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology)**

**February 2007**

# DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

Joseph Mahlakane Seabi

_____

February, 2007

# DEDICATION

In loving memory to my granny, Hellen Lekganyane,

Who never ceased to believe in me,

Whose interest, inspiration, and support made it possible.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the following people for their assistance and I wish to express my sincere thanks to them for their contributions to this project:

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We should spend less time ranking children and more time helping them to identify their natural competencies and gifts and cultivate these. There are hundreds and hundreds of ways to succeed and many, many different abilities that will help you get there.

**-Howard Gardner**

# ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of Feuerstein's mediated intervention programme on a sample of the Grade Five population, in a remedial school. The participants (n=20) were systematically sampled and they constituted two groups, namely, Individual Mediation (n=10) and Group Mediation (n=10). It was hypothesised that participants exposed to this programme would yield significant improvement in cognitive functioning as measured by the (Raven's Coloured Progressive Matrices (RCPM). As a result of the intensity and the duration of the mediation that was provided to the participants within the Individual Mediation, it was hypothesised that they would perform significantly better than those within the Group Mediation. Set Variations B-8 to B-12 from Feuerstein's Learning Potential Assessment Device served as vehicle for mediating cognitive deficiencies. Following the intervention, a significant improvement on the RCPM was only obtained within the Individual Mediation. Although there was significant improvement, no significant difference was found between the Individual Mediation and the Group Mediation. The pre-post-test results of the Individual Mediation corroborate existing literature that provision of adequate and appropriate mediated learning experience is effective in improving cognitive functioning. However, non-significant results between the two groups suggest that a pre-post significant finding within the Individual Mediation was as an effect of pre-test differences. These findings are therefore inconclusive. It might be helpful to further replicate this investigation in order to determine whether support is found for the previous or for the present findings.

Key words:
Dynamic Assessment, Mediated Learning Experience, Learning Potential Assessment Device, cognitive functions.

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

***Mediated Learning Experience*** is defined as the "interactional processes between the developing human organism and an experienced, intentioned adult who, by interposing himself between the child and external sources of stimulation, mediates the world to the child by framing, selecting, focusing and feeding back environmental experiences in such a way as to produce in him appropriate learning sets and habits" (Feuerstein, 1979).

***Dynamic assessment*** is an interactive approach to psycho-educational assessment that follows a test-intervene-retest format, which focuses on learning assessment and intervention.

***Cognitive functioning*** is defined as the capacity of an individual to use previous experience in his/her adaptation to new situations, and the ability to plan and structure behaviour effectively for goal attainment.