

## SSEHV and Academic Results: Data collected in 2 x 1-year projects in Mainland China, 2007/8

**EHV Classes (N=70, combining 2007 and 2008, i.e. 70 classes, mixture of maths, Chinese and some English )**

	First 5 months			Latter 5 months		
	mean score	mean % achieving pass	mean % achieving distinction	mean score	mean % achieving pass	mean % achieving distinction
<b>mean</b>	<b>80.15</b>	<b>82.99</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>81.80</b>	<b>85.44</b>	<b>32.87</b>
<b>sd</b>	<b>9.35</b>	<b>17.02</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>8.12</b>	<b>16.33</b>	<b>25.46</b>

**Control Classes (N= 41) i.e. equivalent class doing same test**

	First 5 months			Latter 5 months		
	mean score	mean % achieving pass	mean % achieving distinction	mean score	mean % achieving pass	mean % achieving distinction
<b>mean</b>	<b>79.95</b>	<b>83.05</b>	<b>27.80</b>	<b>79.82</b>	<b>83.24</b>	<b>29.90</b>
<b>sd</b>	<b>11.15</b>	<b>19.35</b>	<b>23.89</b>	<b>9.72</b>	<b>18.45</b>	<b>23.91</b>

Teachers are often concerned about whether focusing on EHV in their teaching will have an adverse effect on academic results. In Mainland China, where the teachers' promotions and even their jobs depend on getting good academic results for their classes, many teachers are reluctant to try anything that may take time away from the "drill and practice" that they believe is necessary to get good results.

In contrast, there is a growing body of literature, worldwide, that is reporting significant positive effects of character education on academic achievement (see for example Ellenwood, S. (2006). Revisiting character education: From McGuffey to narratives. *Journal of Education*, 187, 3)

These data were collected from primary school teachers from 21 schools in a district in western China who had participated in a SSEHV project for one year. They were asked to submit records of their average class test scores for each month of the project (excluding the 2 months of summer holidays) as well as the average percentages for the month of students achieving pass and distinction on the tests.

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It may be argued that there are too many extraneous factors that can influence these test results, including that the levels of difficulty of the tests may have varied from month to month. Nevertheless, we considered it to be important for these teachers to have data about their own test results rather than to use some arbitrarily chosen standardized tests. Furthermore, since the data were collected from 70 classes in 21 schools we can feel reasonably confident that there would be some “averaging out” effect on variables of this kind – and as our data set increases over time, with future projects, we anticipate that the sample size will become large enough to minimize these effects.

In the larger schools there were parallel classes, i.e. classes of the same grade level, following the same curriculum and doing the same tests, but taught by teachers who were not participating in the SSEHV project. From these schools, data were collected from these parallel classes as a form of control. Valid data were returned for 70 EHV classes and 41 control classes – classes ranged in size from 20 to 60.

A series of t-tests indicated only one statistically significant difference in these data, so we cannot claim that the EHV had a significant impact on the academic scores, and other factors such as difficulty of the tests or curriculum content could have affected changes in the students’ academic scores. Nevertheless, there are some interesting patterns that suggest that it certainly did not have any detrimental effect and that, compared to the non-EHV classes; the increases in academic scores were slightly higher:

- **Between first and last five months of the project.** For the EHV classes there was a slight increase in mean score while the mean score remained the same for the control classes. While in both groups the average percentages of students achieving passes on the monthly tests remained more or less the same, for both there was an increase in the average percentages of the classes achieving distinction. However, it can be seen that the increase was statistically significant for the EHV group ( $t=1.67, p<0.05$ ) but not for the control group. For the EHV group there was a slight increase in the mean percentages of students achieving pass while for the control group this remained the same.
- **Between EHV and control groups.** The gaps between the EHV and control groups became larger in the second five-month period than in the first. Of particular interest are the mean percentages of students achieving distinctions: for the first five months the mean for the control group was slightly higher, whereas for the last five months the EHV group had the higher mean.

The next table shows the numbers of classes on which the means went either up or down (by one point or more) between the first and second five months.

**Numbers of classes on which scores increased**

	Mean score	% pass rate	% distinction rate
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EHV classes (N=70)	33 (47.1%)	32 (45.7%)	37 (52.9%)
Control classes (N=41)	15 (36.6%)	14 (34.1%)	21 (51.2%)

**Numbers of classes on which scores decreased**

	<b>Mean score</b>	<b>% pass rate</b>	<b>% distinction rate</b>
EHV classes (N=70)	14 (20%)	16 (22.9%)	23 (32.9%)
Control classes (N=41)	18 (43.9%)	11 (26.8%)	11 (26.8%)

It can be seen from this table that almost half of the EHV classes had increased mean scores and increased average percentage pass rate in the second half of the year, while less than one-third decreased on these two variables. At the same time the percentages of control classes with increased mean scores and pass rates was lower than those of the EHV classes and the percentages decreasing were lower. An interesting observation occurs with the percentages of students achieving distinctions. The percentages that increased were approximately the same (EHV group slightly higher) but there was actually a higher percentage, around one-third of the EHV classes on which these percentages decreased, compared to 26.8% of the control classes. Nevertheless, when taking into account the significant differences in means on these two variables, it appears that the decreases in the EHV classes were much smaller (average of 3.28) compared to those in the control classes (average 6.24).

