

A Review on Education and Performance of Education in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT: The main intention of this article is to analyze the Education and Performance of Education in Sri Lanka. This study has used literature review method and relevant literature have been analyzed based on descriptive analysis according to the purposes of the study. The purposive sampling method was used to select relevant literature. This study has been analyzed under some major parts namely Education, structure, Government contribution and its performance in Sri Lanka. This study shows the complete structure of the Education in Sri Lanka and its behavior.

Key words: Education, Performance, Study, Structure, Contribution.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is well understood that Education fosters personal development and self-fulfillment. It encourages the individual to develop his mental, physical, emotional and spiritual talents to the full. Understandably, the word Education derives from the Latin word e-ducere, which means to lead out. In advanced industrial societies education is provided by the state as a matter of right for all its citizens. Formal institutions, schools, colleges and universities are organized for this purpose. (M. Haralambos with R. M. Heald, 2011, P.172). The technical understanding in other words is to transmit the stored knowledge, values and skill from one generation to another. The Global publication of human rights and the act of child rights state that the education is a universal human need. This is also a very powerful human right including freedom and democracy. They are staffed by fulltime professional practitioners, teachers and lecturers. Attendance at schools is compulsory; it is upheld by legal sanctions. Education is provided free of charge, though ultimately it is paid for by the taxpayer. Although free compulsory state education is largely taken for granted today and regarded as a perfectly normal and natural state of affairs, it is important to remember that it is a very recent development in the history of man. In Britain it began in 1870 with the foster Education and in 1880 school attendance up to the age of ten was made compulsory. Not until 1918 was secondary education clearly defined as the state's responsibility. The Fisher Education Act of 1918 made school attendance compulsory up to the age of fourteen. In 1947, the minimum school leaving age was raised to fifteen, and today it stands at sixteen (Ibid). Sustainable human development is a must which can do major changes in the society. Therefore, every country and the international community get together in order to provide their younger generation for a qualitative and quantitative education.

These developments were accompanied by a steady expansion of higher education. Education is one of the major growth industries of the last hundred years. In small scale, non-literate societies, such as hunting and gathering bands, formal education, as outlined above, was unknown. Young people learned their lessons for life largely by joining in the daily round of the social group. Knowledge and skills were usually learned informally by imitating examples provided by adults. Though adults some time instructed the young, they did so as part of their everyday routines. Thus, boys accompanied their fathers on hunting trips, girls assisted their mothers to cook and sew. In more complex pre-industrial societies such as those of medieval Europe, specialized educational institutions slowly developed, along with the specialized role of

teacher. However, they provided formal education only for small minority of the population such as future members of the clergy and the sons of the wealthy. Formal education for the masses was only provided after industrialization was well underway (Ibid).

The word education has a complex meaning in a broader sense. Further, Education is always on the development process with new adoptions in any country. (Reddy, 1979). Education for human beings and animals has a different meaning. That means, the human beings could be educated always while animals are being trained. French sociologist Emile Durkheim saw the major function of Education as the transmission of society's norms and values. He maintained that "Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands". Durkheim argues that in complex industrial societies, the school serves a function which cannot be provided either by the family or peer groups. Further he says that Education teaches the individual specific skills necessary for his future occupation. (M. Haralambos with R. M. Heald, 2011, P.175).

According to the "sustainable development" introduced in Brunt Land Report -1972 of United Nations and Millennium development goals suggested to start in 2000 up to the end of 2015 and its annexure, the younger generation should be provided with a meritocratic education because many issues faced by the present society can be solved through it. Researches done by many of the recognized international organizations including UNESCO, state that most of the children who are in the schooling age, have not received their primary education. Education is the basic foundation of a person's life. Therefore, not providing proper education causes to bring bad results to children as well as to the whole society where they live. American sociologist Talcott Parsons argues that after primary socialization within the family, the school takes over as the focal socialization agency. School acts as a bridge between the family and society as a whole, preparing the child for his adult role. Parsons sees the educational system as an important mechanism for the selection of individuals for their future role in society. Thus schools, by testing and evaluating students, match their talents, skills and capacities to the jobs for which they are best suited. The school is therefore, seen as the major mechanism for role allocation (Ibid, P.176). Among them, the families in the third world countries who get low income are clearly visible. The children of families who live under the line of poverty such as the families who receive low income and live in urban areas are countered. According to the UNESCO report in 2016, 52% of the world population is urban population (8 billion). One billion of the world population belongs to the urban community who receive low income according to the same report and they live in slums. This slum population has a very low economy and their poverty has become their culture. Therefore, this community is the source of many social issues that are directly affected to the co-existence and the development of the human society. Socialists state that many deviant and delinquent behaviors such as prostitution, suicides, drug addiction, begging as a profession, under world criminality, family problems, child abuse etc. have been created by its community.

Use of Alcohol and other drugs among school children is a current global problem giving rise to many health hazards, psychosocial problems and reduced school performances, both in academic work and in sports. These problems are also seen in Sri Lanka and very few studies have been done to estimate their prevalence. Furthermore, no noteworthy actions have been taken to improve this situation. (National Dangerous drugs control Board, RESEARCH MONOGRAPH, 2006, P.146)

Therefore, the importance of the condition of urbanized slum communities has become a disturbance for the future development of a country's society. This urbanized slum community who receives low income must be provided with permanent houses and fixed ways of finding income. But, most of those infrastructure facilities are short term projects. Hence, according to the researches the sustainable development of their living conditions should be done by providing with their proper education.

At this stage, need to realize that various development steps have been taken towards sustainable education. In the first place, need to discuss the vast amount of resources provided on education. The highlighted fact is that in Sri Lanka, it is free education and not only that even government provides free provision of textbooks, uniforms and mid-day meals. It records that the literacy rate of Sri Lanka stands as 92% for adults and 97% for youths (Perera, 2012). This is a major drawback in schools located specially in the urban areas of Colombo. Thus, the literal meaning of school dropouts can be noted as **"A student who leaves the school before completing the education for any reason other than death or without transferring to another school"** (Perera, 2012).

II. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is to discover socio-economic factors that cause Adolescent belonging to low-income families to drop out of school in the urban areas of Sri Lanka and possible strategies towards Continuous Education.

This research work has three other particular specific objectives which directly involve in identifying the relevance of the main objective of this research work. The objective can be further classified into specific objectives. **First to identify the factors and the agencies that creates the reasons for school dropouts in the Urban area of Colombo.** This objective would lead the researcher to widen his thinking little more to observe whether any agencies such as personals and institutions have given wrong directions to children to terminate their schooling. **Second to explore the impact of the school dropouts to their families and to the society.** This objective would express the impacts and the weight of these children on the family and nation. These children may certainly not be exemplary to the family and to the nation. Their expected family life and service to the nation may not be satisfactory. **Third to identify the attitudes about the Continuous Education.** This objective would explain the different opinions about Education. The attitude about Education could vary from Parents, children and Teachers. The school dropouts would certainly talk positives and negatives of their school education.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is based on data from secondary sources; the data were collected using the qualitative research method. The qualitative research method was used to gain a better understanding of and provide reliable and descriptive analysis related to the research objectives. The literature review method was used for collecting data from relevant journal articles, research reports, textbooks and other academic works. The data that were collected represent valid details from valid documents. The data were critically analyzed according to the selected main themes in the study.

IV. PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA

4.1 Structure of the Education in Sri Lanka.

In Sri Lanka the education is provided categorically taking the age of the children into consideration. The early childhood care and education is given from birth to 5 years. It is important to note that those complete the compulsory time period of study, will have an opportunity to enter into vocational training while others have the opportunity to enter Universities completing their secondary education (Education First, MOE 2013)

01. Early Childhood Care and Education
02. General Education (School Education)
03. Tertiary and University Education.
04. Vocational and Technical Education.

The situation of the education in Sri Lanka would highlight how much emphasis and importance given to this particular area. The Government (Govt) of Sri Lanka provides free education from the primary education until University Education. Therefore, covering almost all the villages, the government has established schools and has provided access to schooling. The upgrading and providing of necessary resources to these schools have been supplied annually and occasionally. The well trained and qualified teachers for these schools were selected and appointed by the government. These teachers were too paid by the government. Understandably, the time duration of the education in Sri Lanka is 13 years which means age from 5 to 18 years. As it was rightly mentioned above, the education is a must for the age of 5 to 14 years. The specialty is, there exists a policy decision too and has increased the upper age limit to 16 years.

4.2 Government Contribution to the Education.

The children from poor families obtained the free access to English medium education by the act came out in 1945 (Liyanage, 2014). The adult literacy rate in the official languages of Sinhala and Tamil stand as 92% while the age from 5 to 9 participation in education stand as 96.5%. This shows that the government of Sri Lanka spends more on the education and it is highlighted that 4% GDP has spent on education.

Table 01: Government expenditure on Education in Rs. Bn

Item	2016	2017
Total Government Expenditure	238.3	257.4
I. Current	17.93	187.6
II. Capital	59.0	69.8

Source: Central Bank (CB) of Sri Lanka

At this stage, it is important to note that text books, school uniforms, midday meals, free health services, dental treatments, scholarships and subsidized transport are given freely from the government. All these above benefits are equally provided to the disable students too.

Currently, there are 10,763 schools in Sri Lanka and among them 9,931 public schools while 98 private schools. Also, 734 Pirivena mainly for Buddhist Monks. (Central Bank Sri Lanka, 2013). The curriculum for public schools is arranged by the ministry of education and private schools offer local or British syllabus. There are also English medium schools, approved and registered by the Board of Investment (BOI), Sri Lanka. There are about between 200-250 other schools that follow foreign curricula while preparing students for international examinations. (World Bank (WB), 2011).

It is also important to note that there are 4,186, 803 students, and among them 3,996,531 study in public schools, 125,669 study in private schools and in Pirivena 64,608 students' study. The estimated teachers in public schools stand as 6,144 while in Pirivenas number of teachers stand as 6,086, in Sri Lanka. In the year 2012, the new admissions to all the schools stood as 337,901. The latest estimated censuses explain that per one teacher 22.5 students are available but in 2000, it had been 1:18.5 (UNDP, 2012).

As it is mentioned above the schooling is compulsory for children from 5 to 14 years of age. Therefore, GCE O/L is a government secondary examination which would lead to GCE A/L which is the college education. There is a common syllabus for GCE O/L students, which includes both optional and compulsory subjects. The students have to study one's own language as a compulsory subject and English as the second language. Thus, Mathematics, Science, History and Religion stand as compulsory subjects while other subjects such as Civic Arts, Dancing, Commerce, Entrepreneurship, and Agriculture stand as optional subjects. However, the normal understanding is that for a student to be qualified for GCE A/L, a student will have to study 9 subjects and at least he or she should pass 6 subjects with minimum 3 C passes for stipulated compulsory subjects, while having mother tongue and science. When it comes to A/L classes the students can select one main stream from Art, Science and Commerce. The Art subjects stand as Economics, Geography, Logic, Political science, Psychology and these subjects are for the category of Social Sciences while Language, Culture, Drama, History, Classical Studies etc... come from the category of Humanities. Understandably, Bio-Science and Physical Science students take mathematics, Physics and Chemistry etc...

4. 3 Education Performances of Students in Sri Lanka.

Table 02: Performance of Candidates GCE O/L and GCE A/L 2013-2017

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
School Candidates sat for the GCE(O/L)	287,040	277,414	290,929	286,251	312,464
Percentage Qualifying for GCE(A/L)	64.21	66.55	67.15	69.94	71.03
All Candidates Sat for the GCE(O/L)	308,054	298,549	314,635	293,218	326,424
Percentage Qualifying for GCE(A/L)	62.42	64.51	64.81	69.68	70.11
School Candidates sat for the GCE(A/L)	209,906	207,304	210,340	211,865	206,630
All Candidates Applied for the GCE(A/L)	277,395	290,517	302,501	310,613	315,326
All Candidates Sat for the GCE(A/L)	241,629	247,376	255,191	258,193	253,330
School Candidates Qualifying to Enter University	122,913	126,971	131,137	134,238	136,421
All Candidates Qualifying to Enter University	140,993	149,489	155,447	160,520	163,104

Source: Department of Examinations (DOE)

4. 4 Literacy Rate in Sri Lanka.

In Sri Lanka, the literacy rate is very high and in 2012 the male literacy rate stood as 91.2%, female 92.6% and youth literacy rate stands as 97%. The overall literacy rate in Sri Lanka in the year 1946 was 57.8% and among them 70.1% male and 43.8% female. It was calculated that by 2006, the literacy rate of 15-24 years old was about 95.8%, the primary net enrollment ratio was almost 97.5% and the primary completion ratio had reached 99.6%. The literacy rate for 15-24-year-old female was 96.6% while that of male 94.8% in 2006. Supposedly, in 2012, it was 99% for female and 96% for male.

Table 03: Number of literate and literacy rate

Census year	Population (,000)			No. Literate (,000)			Percentage Literate		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1981	5768	5541	11,309	5257	4608	9866	91.1	83.2	87.2
2001	6937	7069	14,006	6423	6340	12763	92.6	89.7	91.1
2012	8046	8736	16,782	7807	8304	16111	96.8	94.6	95.6

Source: Department of Census and Statistics

4. 5 Existing Problems in Education.

Even though, Sri Lanka has a high literacy rate, there are some drawbacks in the education system. Supposedly, there are some drawbacks even having reached a higher literacy rate in the education system. Thus, as reasons, lack of food, clothing, need of the child's earning for the family, distance to school, inadequate transport, difficult terrain and frequent illness could be spoken of. Further records, few effective factors like, quality of education, availability of teachers and opportunity cost of schooling. (Athrupane, 1998, Arunathilake, 2005 and Gunawardane, 2009). According to the statistics provided by the Department of Education 2001, 6.19% of children of age group 5-14 have not attended institutions of education while the age 15-16 age group has a non-participatory rate of about 22.13%. A study done by Arunathilake, (2004) highlights that the data of the years 1990 and 2000 show that while 96% of children in 5-14 age group from rich families attended schools and 90% poor children attended schools. At the same time World Bank of 2005 suggests that about 18% of children have failed to complete their education up to the grade 9 and 18% of students who fail to complete Grade 9 are mostly from poor families, economically disadvantaged regions, rural areas, conflicted affected provinces and estate sector (World Bank, 2005). The government statistic chart shows, among school attainments from the total population, the highest percentages were those who passed grade 9-10 (21.6%) and grade 6-8 918.6%). Those who passed GCE O/L comprise 18.8% while that with GCE A/L was 9.4%. (statistics.gov.lk/education/schools_university.pdf).

4. 6 Dropout Definition.

We have to understand that even the statistics record that there is a good literacy rate in Sri Lanka, the existing education system cannot be named as well established and a refined education system since it evaluates some negative areas in the prevailing education system. It is a fact that even though, there existed a free education system in Sri Lanka, still there has been students who were unable to receive the full benefit of education due to various social factors and due to numerable social pressures. Even though, the education is free in Sri Lanka the rate of "School dropout" is simultaneously high and discriminations, role of families, social values, unemployment, poverty are some of the highlighted factors that had caused children to drop out of school (Peck and Mills, 1987). Therefore, it realizes that if a student, before completing his or her studies, leaves without moving to another school and without any tragic reason, could be considered as a school dropout (www.pde.stste.pa.us/k12statistics, 02.08.2020).

4. 7 History of the Dropout Problem.

The concept of the dropout problem was identified in the 1940s and expanded in the 1950s as part of the social disorder that existed during the post war period. However, the dropout problem did not begin until compulsory education laws came into effect in the early 1960s (Dorn, 1996). To restore the social disorder after World War II, most countries created a need for compulsory education to restore consistency in behavioral norms among students (Richardson, 1980). The extensive study on the dropout phenomenon had been developed in the early 1960s in response to substantial increase in student dropout in terms of a smaller number of students completing their studies at the high school education level. Moreover, the effects of student dropout create increasing family dependency and potential social problems to emerge such as criminal attitudes and behavior. Historically, there has been an increase in high school completion

rate, which provides opportunities for employment. This scenario was affirmed in the study of Tyack (1974), which indicated the number of students completing their studies in high school. This shows that the increase in the education level among adolescents were able to meet the employment opportunities. High school dropouts entail those who never complete their secondary education or obtain equivalent qualifications (Dorn, 1996). Student dropout is a major concern that affects the country both economically and socially. Ample evidence has been compiled to show that students who drop out of high school are far more likely to be unemployed. According to Christle et al. (2007), 56% of dropouts were unemployed as opposed to 16% of those who completed their secondary education. Numerous studies have shown that high school dropouts are a complex problem with no simple solutions in sight (Christle, 2007). These studies have made a significant contribution in raising the issue of student dropout and its wider societal implication. Children who do not complete high school have higher rates of unemployment, are over-represented in detention camps, more dependent on welfare and other government programs, and in general, obtain lower incomes than those with high school certificates. However, student drop out issues go beyond economic concerns of poverty and unemployment to include structural and social concerns such as inequality, community, social values, role of families, child abuse, and drug abuse.

4. 8 Dropout Trends in Sri Lanka.

Thus, it records that in the year 2010 the rate of school going population stood as 3,940,072 (www.moe.gov.lk/web/images/stories/statistic/sri_lanka_education_information_2010.pdf, accessed on 04.08.2020). At the same time UNICEF (2005) says that in Sri Lanka the dropout rate after the primary education is comparatively higher than the other age limits. In the year 2003, the percentage of the schooling has stood as 93% of the students between the ages 5-14. A study done by the International Labour organization (2005) stated that it was about 60,000 the rate of school dropout, in Sri Lanka. At the same time in the year 2008 the rate of school dropout is 46,173 and in the year 2009 it had been 46,854 who had been out of school reported by the Annual Report of the Auditor General, Sri Lanka. (www.lankanewspapers.com/news/2011/12/73117.htm). Few researchers have identified that this aspect of school dropout is common in the areas of Sabaragamuwa, coastal areas of the country (Dharmawardena et al (1998) and very much exists in the plantation sector of the country (Gunawardena, as in http://pcf4.dec.uwi.edu/view_papper.php?id=194&print=1, accessed on 10.08.2020). This above draw back in the plantation sector in Sri Lanka stood as 20% per year and this was revealed in the study done by the Transparency International (www.colombopage.com/archive_10B/Aug15_1281887751CH.php 10.08.2020).

OOSC (Out of School Children) could be discussed under three categories;

01. Early School Leavers.
02. Children who will enter school in the future.
03. Children who will never enter school.

Understandably, the early school leavers could be identified by a household data since these students have had some kind of contact with the school in which they had been attending but students supposed to enter school in the future and the students that will never enter school could not be recorded by a survey since these students are still out of school. Therefore, at this stage we need to understand that there is only a possibility of attending school by these children and this is not going to be an exact calculation to say that these students would join schools.

Table 04: Presents the findings for Sri Lanka, using data from the DHS 2006/07.

School Exposure	Dimension 2 (Primary-School-Age OOSC)			Dimension 3 (Primary-School-Age OOSC)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Dropped Out	40.9	56.9	48.4	83.1	82.5	82.8
Expected to enter in the future	37.3	26.3	33.1	0.4	0	0.4
Expected never to enter	21.7	16.8	18.4	16.5	17.5	16.8

Source: DHS 2006/07, using spreadsheet developed by UIS and methodology explained in the CMF.

According to the table from the DHS 2006/07 states that those not attending schools were early school leavers. Categorically, 48.4% is from the primary school age and 82.9% from lower secondary school age. It is clearly manifesting that out of school children, 18.4% was from the primary school age and 16.8% was from the lower secondary school age was never thought of entering a school. Thus, it is measured that 33.1% OOSC was from the primary age and were determined to join schools in the future as late comers while about 0.4% was determined to join primary education having reached the expected age for the lower secondary level. The existing data highlights that high percentage of children will enter school as follows;

Table 05: Percentage of children out of school by school age and sex, 2006/07

School Age	Male	Female	Total
Primary	1.9	1.9	1.9
Lower Secondary	3.7	3	3.3

Source: DHS 2006/07

It is also very much noticeable that in the primary level out of school children there exists a gender difference. Therefore, girls at primary school age show a big possibility of dropout of school than boys and at the same time less interest to join school in the future. Thus, we also understand that there is a greater possibility to never join the school. When it comes to the secondary school age, the gender difference was not that considered because girls were too like boys tempted to drop out of lower secondary school and further tempted to never join school.

4. 9 Reasons for Dropouts.

Hence, we understand four main factors that would certainly lead students to drop out of school Wells and Bechard (as in Asche, 1993).

- a) Student related factors
- b) Family related factors
- c) School related factors
- d) Community related factors

Therefore, it is a fact that for a child to drop out of school, mainly school, family, economic and personal issues course a lot (<http://www.socialworkers.org>, 14.08.2020). Mainly, children were disturbed and there is lack of interest for schooling due to poverty such as poor family environment and minimum of supplies of necessary needs etc. (USAID, 2005). It is a benefit that education is free in Sri Lanka, if so the relevant authorities should pay much attention to fulfill the basic needs for students and this would certainly upgrade the physical and mental needs of a student. The other highlighted question is while attending schools with so much of physical difficulties, there is another area where these students find it difficult; that is money that these students have to spend on extracurricular activities (Perera, 2008).

4. 10 Impact on School Dropouts.

Additionally, this issue of school dropout creates economic and other social problems. The youth who do not attend school and those others without a proper occupation have led to isolation. These young people who spend their time without a proper education and training, could engage in gang activities, various crimes and addict to horrific acts and drug deals in the society (OERI report (1987), published in Washington. Considerable amount of young people at the end are parked at rehabilitation centers and jails for they have engaged in unethical acts other than studies. Apart from the above, the same report stated that school dropouts are regularly unemployed, have limited job opportunities, do not have sufficient income and thus they have become burden to the society.

Therefore, it clearly manifests that this issue of school dropout largely causes the structure and economy of any country. Even though the condition is such, the government of Sri Lanka has taken several steps by paying a lot of emphasis on the issue of school dropout. As a result of this, the Ministry of Policy Planning and Plan Implementation in 1991, introduced the three-year national plan under the theme "education for all". Likewise, the National Education Commission (NEC) in 1992 too, introduced different suggestions to upgrade the existing primary education system in the country as a result the following guidelines came into existence.

01. Implementation of compulsory education and formulation of strict regulations while encouraging students to remain in education.

02. Implementation of new creative activities for the students in Grade 1-5 to motivate students more for continuous education.
03. Implementation of activity-based assessment in order to create opportunities for group work and to increase co-operation among students.

(Gunawardena, asinhttp://pcf4.dec.uwi.edu/viewpaper.php?id = 194 & print =1, accessed on 26.08.2020)

V. CONCLUSION

In this review of study, it focusses to analyze the structure of Education in Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, its free education and the structure of Education is divided into four categories as explained in the top of the article. The contribution of the Government towards Education is much highlighted but still the mechanism has to be upgraded. When it comes to the Education performances of Students, it provides many differences when it compares to regions. Literacy rate in Sri Lanka in a way satisfactory but still it can be evaluated in different strategies. Existing problems in Education has been a topic for many years in Sri Lanka. Dropout conditions varies place to place and this critical in the Urban areas of Sri Lanka. The history of the dropout problem has been studied in number of occasions but the pathetic side of this issue is that the findings are not applied in the way possible due to various reasons. The dropouts' trends in Sri Lanka have been a much-debated theme for many years. Reasons for dropouts are visible but the mechanism to reduce this trend is delayed time to time. Therefore, the impact of this problem is vast.

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