



**AN INVESTIGATION OF DIFFERENT LEVELS OF STUDENT
PARTICIPATION IN THE LEARNING TEACHING PROCESS
OF GENERAL ENGLISH**

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of introducing General English to the Advanced level curriculum was to enhance employability of school leavers by providing them with the much needed language and communication skills for the world of work. Even though six periods per week are allocated for General English (GE), it is claimed that students do not attend classes regularly.

This research study has identified that teaching learning process of GE is highly ineffective. For the learning process to be successful, the students should participate in their GE lessons. Yet, the researcher found that students differ remarkably in their participation levels. Hence, the researcher initiated this study to investigate reasons for different levels of student participation in the learning teaching process of GE. In this study 'student participation' is defined as the physical presence of the students in the GE lessons.

The sample of this study comprised of 100 students and 35 teachers selected from three 1AB schools in the Colombo district. The socio cultural environment of these schools was a decisive factor in identifying different student participation levels GE lessons. A questionnaire survey, classroom observations and interviews were conducted with the students and teachers in order to gather data for the study.

This research study has identified that the instructional process of GE do not cater to student needs. Students are of the view that the learning materials do not create any challenges for them. Even the teachers are not aware of the objectives of GE. Teachers seem to be very lethargic in handling GE lessons. Out dated teaching methods and the lack of enthusiasm on the part of GE teachers can be considered as the main causes for different levels of student participation in GE lessons.

Another significant factor revealed in this study is the negative approach shown by the school management towards this subject GE. They did not consider GE as an important subject in the curriculum. Hence they make use of GE periods for other activities such as extra curricular activities and other academic subjects.

The most important suggestion the researcher made in order to improve student participation in GE lessons, is that school management should make GE a compulsory subject in their evaluation schemes. Furthermore, opportunities should be given for teachers for further training. In order to achieve the objective of preparing school leavers for the 'world of work' the government has to take immediate steps to improve the quality of teaching GE in schools. Hence, investigating the reasons as to why students do not actively take part in GE lessons is a necessity.