

Problems and Prospects of Access to English Language Education in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Education is a basic right which occupies a central place in the sphere of human rights. Because of its importance, States make attempts to guarantee this right. Sri Lanka too has taken steps to uphold the right to education. This study examines, to what extent, the right to education is guaranteed in Sri Lanka. In this endeavour, the present education system is critiqued by examining the education system from junior secondary level to the university level with a special focus on the English language teaching-learning process. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the paradox of the status that English language holds in this country: without a formally stipulated status as an official language or a National language, English, considered as the Link language in Constitutional terms has become essential in the job market. Furthermore, this study examined the attempts taken by the State to promote English through several initiatives. Though there are many successful attempts taken by the State, the quality of the product of our education system, still, has disparities according to the area category and the school type in which the students receive their secondary education. Thus, this study critiqued the gap between policy and practice pertinent to English language education.