

student centered education but they are reluctant to apply it in the classroom. Therefore, the application part of the concept of the student centered education should be promoted in the classroom.

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## School Effectiveness of Senior Secondary Schools in Sri Lanka

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### Background of the Study

It is widely accepted that, in spite of the availability of a national policy, common educational objectives, curricular, text books, evaluation and examination systems to guide the general education process in Sri Lanka, there are clear inequalities within the system in terms of quality and effectiveness. The main reason for this diversity is that there are various factors affecting school effectiveness. There is a need for a mission for each school and a systematic plan to achieve it. Both mission and the plan should be known to all the stakeholders concerned. Moreover, all stakeholders should work together with dedication to implement the plan. There should also be an instructional leader in the school with a vision and positive personality traits capable of directing the stakeholders towards that goal. It is difficult to provide a precise definition of, or statistical data, on school effectiveness based on the findings of studies done in different countries on the subject. Yet, it is possible to identify factors that determine effectiveness of schools in a particular country or area

## Methodology

The main objective of the present study has been to examine the factors that affect effectiveness of senior secondary schools in Sri Lanka. In order to achieve this objective, an exploratory research design involving sample surveys and case studies has been employed. While questionnaires, observations, interviews and documentary analysis have been used as techniques of data collection, statistical methods were used for data analysis. The study was conducted in two stages in order to facilitate the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data was collected in stage one, while, in stage two, case studies of six schools were undertaken in order to collect qualitative data. In the first stage of the study, 36 schools were drawn on the basis of a stratified random sample representing senior secondary schools in all educational divisions in the Colombo district. Then a sample of 500 stakeholders was drawn from these schools. The data collected from these respondents has been analyzed and interpreted in keeping with the objectives of the study.

## Outcomes of the Study

Firstly, the researcher, based on the conceptual framework developed on the basis of the literature survey, formulated a questionnaire covering twelve factors and 95 criteria suitable to measure school effectiveness. Based on observation and questionnaires administered among stakeholders, the extent of the presence of school effectiveness factors were estimated. It was found that principal's leadership, school mission and objectives, school culture and environment, curricular, student centeredness, and teachers' commitment were satisfactory in the sample schools. Yet, the situation with regard to school- community relations, student- teacher welfare, extent of extra-curricular activities and student expectations in them and physical resources was not satisfactory. The factors that contribute to school effectiveness in the country as identified by stakeholders in descending order of importance are; school mission and objectives, school culture, principal's leadership, teacher commitment, student expectations, student- centeredness of the curriculum, adequacy of resources and community relations.

A clear relationship was found between factors of school effectiveness and GCE Ordinary Level results. The weakest relationship was found between factors of school effectiveness and Grade Five scholarship examination results.

A school effectiveness index was developed and used to rank schools in terms of school effectiveness. Accordingly, schools were divided into three levels ranging from highest to the lowest level of effectiveness.

## Conclusions

The above classification helped explain disparities among schools in terms of zone, school category, type of administration, composition and location. Accordingly, greatest disparities were found in the Colombo division, while the least disparities were found in Homagama division. As regards the type of schools, 9 out of 10 highest ranking schools belonged to IAB category. In other words, IAB schools were more effective than IC schools. However, among IAB schools, national schools were higher in the rank than Provincial schools and private schools were higher in rank in comparison to both national and provincial schools. Accordingly, among government schools national schools ranked higher than provincial schools and private schools ranked higher than government schools. As for student composition, male schools ranked higher than mixed schools. Yet, female schools ranked higher than male schools. When mixed schools are taken together, there are still disparities between IAB and IC schools, the former ranking higher. As for the location, disparities were greater among schools in Municipal areas than elsewhere.

In- depth analysis carried out confirmed the earlier findings as regards the factors determining school effectiveness. Moreover, in-depth data also confirmed the validity of the school effectiveness index developed on the basis of quantitative survey. Accordingly, the conclusions derived from the study may well be generalized with respect to schools in other parts of Sri Lanka.

## Assessment on Teaching Quality of Faculty of Education, University of Colombo - based on the views of Student Teachers who followed the Course P.G.D.E (W.E) - in 2008/09

(Extended Abstract Based on an Ongoing Research)

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## Background of the study

The Faculty of Education conducted a course in Sinhala medium for the Post Graduate Diploma in Education in 2008/09 for 1400 graduate teachers. Most of them were Government School teachers. The students were divided into eight sub groups and the course was conducted in the university premises during the weekends and on government holidays. The course consisted of seven core subjects including some optional components, teaching practice and a compulsory essay. Each subject was covered by 16 -