

Issues of Meeting Information Needs of G.C.E. (A/L) Students in Rural and Suburban Schools: a case study of Ambalantota Educational Division

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Abstract

Education in rural areas in Sri Lanka is a continuing field of research. Education system in rural areas is running and G.C.E. (A/L) results are not satisfactory in these areas due to lack of access to updated information that students need. Based on this problem, the main objective of this research is to examine the information needs of students and identify their problems related to fulfillment of information needs. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research designs to provide in-depth and detailed examination of the topic. The study was conducted in three selected schools in the Ambalantota Educational Division. A survey study with structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 30 GCE (A/L) students. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean and standard deviation. As the main findings, the percentage of students passing G.C.E. (A/L) in main three subjects has been reduced to a minimum and the students have also shown a downturn in the learning process. Based on this study, the sample observed showed that 40% of students had passed either one or two subjects in any field of subject. 55% of students have obtained at least “S” pass for main three.

The implementation of new educational reform with effect from 1998 has resulted in the change of education course in Sri Lanka. The teacher was the only information and education-centered factor in the teacher-centered education structure that was so far established. But the Educational Reformation of 1998 triggered a student-centered education as well as a resource-based teaching and learning method. Although according to aforesaid matter, it was possible to observe lack of information resources has affected the results on teaching and learning process or resource-based teaching and learning method which is introduced under the new Educational Reformation. Moreover, it was possible to conclude that the issues of information expedition and service-related information, as well as the issues of information literacy, have led to the causes of this fact. The information needs are different and diverse from person to person. Information exploration behavior varies from person to

person. Library service is important in teaching and learning as a concept. Therefore the time has come to pay special attention to this phenomenon.

Key Words: Information needs, Information literacy, School Education, Rural Education, G.C.E. (A/L)