Can Sri Lankan Public Schools Make Optimal Decisions by Deploying Their Teachers?

Many Sri Lankan public schools are functioning with an excess number of teachers. This paper makes an attempt to develop a general formula to determine the required number of teachers in a school and to find the avenues to minimize cost and maximize output by employing teachers. For the analysis, primary data with respect to 40 public schools were collected, and the currently adopted allocation method of teachers among classes was compared with two possible alternative methods. The study found that the determination of the optimal number of teachers in a school is very complex and difficult. However, in general, with trivial modifications whenever necessary in relation to the set of subjects offered in a school and the number of parallel classes, it can be stated that the requirement of teachers in a school in a given period is approximately equal to the sum of the number of primary classes (grades 1 through 5), number of subjects offered for grades 6 -11, and number of subjects taught in G.C.E (A.L) classes. The paper concludes that (a) the teacher requirement in a school can be decided in terms of the developed formula, and (b) by adopting one teacher-more (two) subjects-one school and one teacher-one subject-more schools methods, government authorities can further minimize the cost.