



A REVIEW OF POVERTY AND EDUCATION OF ADOLESCENCE IN THE URBAN AREA OF COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

Solangaarachchi T. G. K¹, Gamage H. G. C. L², Adikari A. A. R. E. L³

Aquinas College of Higher Studies, Borella, Colombo – 08, Sri Lanka

ABSTRACT

The main intention of this article is to analyze the Poverty and Education of Adolescence in the Urban Area of Sri Lanka. This study has used literature review method and relevant literature have been analyzed based on descriptive analysis according to the purposes of the study. The purposive sampling method was used to select relevant literature. This study has been analyzed under some major parts namely Poverty and Education in Sri Lanka. This study shows the complete structure of the Poverty in Sri Lanka and its behavior.

KEY WORDS: Education, Poverty, Adolescence, Urban, Area.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education fosters personal development and self-fulfillment. It encourages the individual to develop his mental, physical, emotional and spiritual talents to the full. Understandably, the word Education derives from the Latin word e-ducere, which means to lead out. In advanced industrial societies education is provided by the state as a matter of right for all its citizens. Formal institutions, schools, colleges and universities are organized for this purpose. (M. Haralambos with R. M. Heald, 2011, P.172). The technical understanding in other words is to transmit the stored knowledge, values and skill from one generation to another. The Global publication of human rights and the act of child rights state that the education is a universal human need. This is also a very powerful human right including freedom and democracy. They are staffed by fulltime professional practitioners, teachers and lecturers. Attendance at schools is compulsory; it is upheld by legal sanctions. Education is provided free of charge, though ultimately it is paid for by the taxpayer. Although free compulsory state education is largely taken for granted today and regarded as a perfectly normal and natural state of affairs, it is important to remember that it is a very recent development in the history of man. In Britain it began in 1870 with the foster Education and in 1880 school attendance up to the age of ten was made compulsory. Not until 1918 was secondary education clearly defined as the state's responsibility. The Fisher Education Act of 1918 made school attendance compulsory up to the age of fourteen. In 1947, the minimum school leaving age was raised to fifteen, and today it stands at sixteen (Ibid). Sustainable human development is a must which can do major changes in the society. Therefore, every country and the international community get together in order to provide their younger generation for a qualitative and quantitative education.

These developments were accompanied by a steady expansion of higher education. Education is one of the major growth industries of the last hundred years. In small scale, non-literate societies, such as hunting and gathering bands, formal education, as outlined above, was unknown. Young people learned their lessons for life largely by joining in the daily round of the social group. Knowledge and skills were usually learned informally by imitating examples provided by adults. Though adults some time instructed the young, they did so as part of their everyday routines. Thus, boys accompanied their fathers on hunting trips, girls assisted their mothers to cook and sew. In more complex pre-industrial societies such as those of medieval Europe, specialized educational institutions slowly developed, along with the specialized role of teacher. However, they provided formal education only for small minority of the population such as future members of the clergy and the sons of the wealthy. Formal education for the masses was only provided after industrialization was well underway (Ibid).

The word education has a complex meaning in a broader sense. Further, Education is always on the development process with new adoptions in any country. (Reddy, 1979). Education for human beings and animals has a different meaning. That means, the human beings could be educated always while animals are being trained. French sociologist Emile Durkheim saw the major function of Education as the transmission of society's norms and values. He maintained that "Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands". Durkheim argues that in complex industrial societies, the school serves a function which cannot be provided either by the family or peer groups. Further he says that Education teaches the individual



specific skills necessary for his future occupation. (M. Haralambos with R. M. Heald, 2011, P.175).

According to the “sustainable development” introduced in Brunt Land Report -1972 of United Nations and Millennium development goals suggested to start in 2000 up to the end of 2015 and its annexure, the younger generation should be provided with a meritocratic education because many issues faced by the present society can be solved through it. Researches done by many of the recognized international organizations including UNESCO, state that most of the children who are in the schooling age, have not received their primary education. Education is the basic foundation of a person’s life. Therefore, not providing proper education causes to bring bad results to children as well as to the whole society where they live. American sociologist Talcott Parsons argues that after primary socialization within the family, the school takes over as the focal socialization agency. School acts as a bridge between the family and society as a whole, preparing the child for his adult role. Parsons sees the educational system as an important mechanism for the selection of individuals for their future role in society. Thus schools, by testing and evaluating students, match their talents, skills and capacities to the jobs for which they are best suited. The school is therefore, seen as the major mechanism for role allocation (Ibid, P.176). Among them, the families in the third world countries who get low income are clearly visible. The children of families who live under the line of poverty such as the families who receive low income and live in urban areas are countered. According to the UNESCO report in 2016, 52% of the world population is urban population (8 billion). One billion of the world population belongs to the urban community who receive low income according to the same report and they live in slums. This slum population has a very low economy and their poverty has become their culture. Therefore, this community is the source of many social issues that are directly affected to the co-existence and the development of the human society. Socialists state that many deviant and delinquent behaviors such as prostitution, suicides, drug addiction, begging as a profession, under world criminality, family problems, child abuse etc. have been created by its community.

Use of Alcohol and other drugs among school children is a current global problem giving rise to many health hazards, psychosocial problems and reduced school performances, both in academic work and in sports. These problems are also seen in Sri Lanka and very few studies have been done to estimate their prevalence. Furthermore, no noteworthy actions have been taken to improve this situation. (National Dangerous drugs control Board, RESEARCH MONOGRAPH, 2006, P.146)

Therefore, the importance of the condition of urbanized slum communities has become a disturbance for the future development of a country’s society. This urbanized slum community who receives low income must be provided with permanent houses and fixed ways of finding income. But, most of those infrastructure facilities are short term projects. Hence, according to the researches the sustainable development of their

living conditions should be done by providing with their proper education.

At this stage, need to realize that various development steps have been taken towards sustainable education. In the first place, need to discuss the vast amount of resources provided on education. The highlighted fact is that in Sri Lanka, it is free education and not only that even government provides free provision of textbooks, uniforms and mid-day meals. It records that the literacy rate of Sri Lanka stands as 92% for adults and 97% for youths (Perera, 2012). This is a major drawback in schools located specially in the urban areas of Colombo. Thus, the literal meaning of school dropouts can be noted as “**A student who leaves the school before completing the education for any reason other than death or without transferring to another school**” (Perera, 2012).

II. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is to discover socio-economic factors that cause Adolescent belonging to low-income families to drop out of school in the urban areas of Sri Lanka and possible strategies towards Continuous Education.

This research work has three other particular specific objectives which directly involve in identifying the relevance of the main objective of this research work. The objective can be further classified into specific objectives. First to **identify the factors and the agencies that creates the reasons for school dropouts in the Urban area of Colombo**. This objective would lead the researcher to widen his thinking little more to observe whether any agencies such as personals and institutions have given wrong directions to children to terminate their schooling. **Second to explore the impact of the school dropouts to their families and to the society**. This objective would express the impacts and the weight of these children on the family and nation. These children may certainly not be exemplary to the family and to the nation. Their expected family life and service to the nation may not be satisfactory. **Third to identify the attitudes about the Continuous Education**. This objective would explain the different opinions about Education. The attitude about Education could vary from Parents, children and Teachers. The school dropouts would certainly talk positives and negatives of their school education.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is based on data from secondary sources; the data were collected using the qualitative research method. The qualitative research method was used to gain a better understanding of and provide reliable and descriptive analysis related to the research objectives. The literature review method was used for collecting data from relevant journal articles, research reports, textbooks and other academic works. The data that were collected represent valid details from valid documents. The data were critically analyzed according to the selected main themes in the study.



IV. POVERTY AND EDUCATION OF ADOLESCENCE

4.1 Poverty conditions in Sri Lanka.

Understandably, the status of the poverty in any country do determine by comparing the monthly per capita expenditure of the official poverty line of that particular country. If the monthly real expenditure which means the per capita is less than the value of official poverty line, then any individual of that country could be considered as he or she is in poverty. As per

the records headcount of the poverty index for 2016 stood as 4.1 and it has decreased from 6.7 in 2012/13. Thus, overall long-term poverty index from 2002 to 2016 has shown a downward trend. Therefore, it records that in the population in 2016; approximately 843,913 individuals were in poverty. The survey done in 2012/13, records that it was 1.3 million were in poverty. This highlights 0.5 million declines compared to the year 2012/13 to 2016. In the year 2016 the total poor households were 3.1 percent and that was approximately 169,392 from the total households.

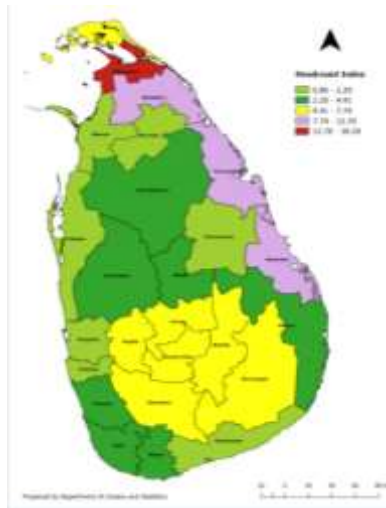


Figure 01: Distribution of Poverty Headcount index.

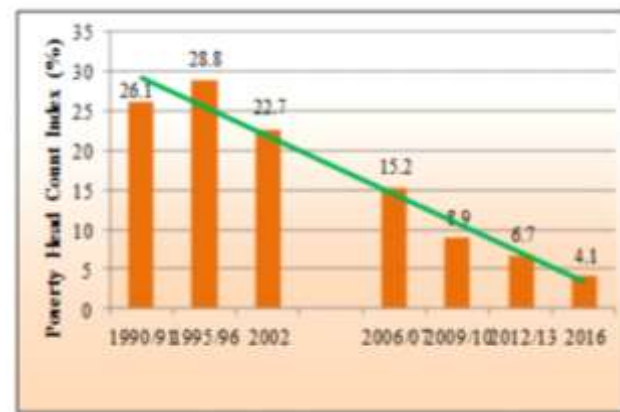


Figure 02: Poverty headcount index by survey period.

4.2 Poverty Disparities.

Table 11: Poverty head count index 2016

Sector/ Province/ District	Poverty head count index	Number of poor population	Contribution to total poverty
Urban	1.9	67,649	8
Rural	4.3	693,956	82.2
Estate	8.8	82,308	9.8
Western	1.7	101,342	12
Central	5.4	142,044	16.8
Southern	3	74,769	8.9
Northern	7.7	83,834	9.9
Eastern	7.3	118,061	14
North Western	2.7	64,638	7.7
North Central	3.3	42,191	5
Uva	6.5	83,885	9.9
Sabaragamuwa	6.7	133,149	15.8
Colombo	0.9	19,796	2.3
Gampaha	2	45,827	5.4
Kalutara	2.9	35,719	4.2

Source: Poverty Gap Index (PGI), Monthly Shortfall and Contribution to total shortfall and Square Poverty Gap Index (SPGI) by sector, Province and District, 2016



The poverty disparities still exist in provinces and districts even though poverty has declined to a certain limit in the last few decades. The table 11 would prove these details. Thus, it shows that poverty in the estate sector is generally higher than those of urban and rural sectors. The highest percentage of 7.7 which represents 83,834 poor people in Northern Province and at provincial level the lowest poverty headcount percentage stands as 1.7 which represents 101,342 poor people in the Western province. When it comes to district level, the lowest poverty headcount is reported in Colombo while the highest reported from Kilinochchi district.

The highest number of indices according to the report, considering the geographical areas do not show large number of poor people. The table 01 shows for an example, Gampaha HCI as 2.0 and Kandy HCI as 5.5 and they indicate low poverty rate but number of poor people are high in these areas. Mullaitive shows high poverty rate (12.7%) and only 1.4% as nationwide due to their small population.

4.3 Poverty Shortfall in Sri Lanka

Understandably, the common tool used to measure poverty is the headcount index. Yet, the real depth and the severity of poverty among the poor is not taken into consideration. It is an important fact to think about the depth and inequality among the poor for better reducing of the poverty. Keeping more weight to the poorer needy that comes below the poverty line the Squared Poverty Gap Index (SPGI) is used to measure poverty considering the degree of inequality among the poor people. Thus, a greater weight to the poorest individuals will be given since their poverty gap is larger than others and this is done when calculating SPGI by squaring the poverty Gap. It is a fact that in any country the percentage of the poor should be uplifted and thus, poverty shortfall is the amount of expenditure required for those are poor. Their expenditure should be upgraded to the value of poverty line to overcome this state. This criterion explains the depth of poverty and its core elements. Therefore, it is an important fact to reduce the existing poverty percentage. According to this survey, the average shortfall stands as Rs. 620 per month for a poor person and by and large Rs. 523.3 million per month is required 843,913 poor people to bring them out of poverty. The central province highlights the highest contribution to the total shortfall and Kandy is the highest among the districts while Manner District records lowest contribution to total shortfall.

4.4 Simulation of Poverty in Sri Lanka

The consumption growth of individuals according to the **Figure 6** explains that it facilitates to cross the poverty line from 2016, 2012/13 and moreover 2009.110 explain by moving the distribution toward to the right by reducing the height of the peak of the graph. It also records that the survey data of 2016, the poor population in Sri Lanka was 843,913 (4.1%) as estimated. The **Figure 6** further explains that there is a high concentration of non-poor population beyond the poverty lines

and this particular group stays in a highly vulnerable situation. Even though if there is a small negative impact on their consumption, this can affect many of them to fall back in poverty and this may increase the poverty incidence. As an example, the poverty headcount index increases up to 6.1% if the value of poverty line is increased by 10% (from Rs. 4,166 to Rs. 4,582.6). This means understandably, number of people who are in poverty increases from 843,913 to 1,255,702. Supposedly, the poverty headcount index will be increased up to 4.5% (933,087 individuals) if real per capita monthly expenditure is decreased by Rs. 100.

4.5 Impact of Social Protection Programs on Poverty.

In the year 2016, Household and Expenditure Survey done, explains that under the social assistance and social insurance, 13 social protection programmes were launched by the government. This explains the areas of social protection covered by Household Income and Expenditure Survey done in 2016. It shows that the simulation points of the poverty if social protection transfers were eliminated. This fact further indicates the total social protection transfer (sum of total social insurance and social assistance transfers) and this would reduce the poverty from 6.7% to 4.1%. It explains that 2.6% poor people above the poverty line according to the social protection transfer lifted. The pension scheme has been the most significant contributory factor for this change. When it comes to pension and its absence, poverty gap index would be increased to 1.6% and poverty headcount index would increase to 5.7%. Similarly, Poverty Severity index might be increased to 1.0. This result clearly manifest that the social protection programmes in Sri Lanka are progressing and this would be rigorously focused to reduce poverty in the country.

4.6 Urban Poverty

This section of the study would present an overview of urban poverty in Sri Lanka with special reference to Colombo city. This particular study will express the key features of the urban poverty, and discuss the forces that affect the poverty situation in Colombo. It further explains the institutional issues which affect the addressing of the problem. This brief would discover issues and problem of urban poverty from a national context. The total focus will be on Colombo because it is the area where urban poverty is most prevalent. Understandably, one of the important factors to keep in mind when studying about urban poverty is that it has not been studied since independence. The poverty of rural estate sector had been studied in many occasions but poverty in the urban sector has been relatively neglected. Supposedly, the existing knowledge and policy on poverty are biased very much towards the rural and estate sectors. It is much considerable that only over the last two decades that urban poverty was taken into focus.



4. 7 The Urban Sector in Sri Lanka.

When compared to many developing countries specially in south Asia, Sri Lanka is graded as low rates of urbanization. The urban growth rate of major cities, including Colombo in the early 1980s, was below 1%. It is recorded that since the mid-1980s, Colombo has experienced a speedy growth of suburban areas with the Colombo district. It experiences population growth of 31% between 1981 and 2002 and urban population stands over 60%. This is higher than other districts which had a growth rate of below 15%.

4. 7. 1 Poverty in the Urban Sector.

The urban poverty from a national point of view realizes that it provides a very pleasant picture. By conceding 7.9%, the urban sector has the lowest rates of poverty in Sri Lanka. The national rate stands as 7.9% which is significantly lower. The National definition of poverty that explains its measurement, expenditure on food and non-food items is considered as the critical variables. Understandably, the Department of Census and statistics calculate the per month expenditure on food for the nation which includes sector that rural, urban and estate. The existing data shows the average per month expenditure in the urban household stand as Rs. 22,196.5. This is recognized as equal to the second highest expenditure of the country. In all these circumstances it highlights that money is the primary variable in all aspects of livelihood. These details show that in developing countries households were considered as above the poverty line but live in very poor-quality housing, and in crowded, unsanitary and insecure conditions with a severe lack of infrastructure and access to basic services. Therefore, it is understandable that, the special feature of urban poverty is while low income is the core of the study, the households with significant incomes not have access even to basic services and to secure living conditions. These urban poor many a times live in slum and shanty settlements and they are explained Under Served Settlements (USS). Thus, there are approximately 1614 such settlements within the geographical area of Colombo Municipal Council (CMC) in which it is recorded about 50% households. The residential units built on state or private lands and they are not owned by residents and these areas are USS comprises areas within the city of Colombo. Most of the time these residential areas have the common features while having a very high population density and it stands as approximately 820 persons four times the average of the city of Colombo. This is a congested housing with each block averaging 1.5 perches.

4. 7. 2 Dimensions and Dynamics of Urban Poverty.

The poverty at the community level and household level could be summarized as follows; in terms of livelihood patterns, foreign employment, self-employment and enterprise are dominant forms of livelihoods while labour is the most common form of livelihood among poor households.

The foreign employment could be considered as one of the dominant forms of income generation to uplift the economic condition of households. The stable low paying and less stable

but higher earning income forms, such as enterprise, is a strategy used by households which maintain higher income levels. At the same time lack of stable income will affect supply of semi-skilled labour and low level of health and substance constrain the poor from moving out of poverty.

A different feature of well-established households has the tendency for women to stay at home while women of poor households engage in more labour forms of livelihood such as domestic work and unskilled manual labour.

The settlement of poor is a key feature and they should be well placed to access a wide range of services facilities like medical, education and transport facilities. Moreover, they should be given the access to wage labour and other sources of employment facilities such as self-self-employment. In giving out houses to these people who are in the poverty line, the following have to be considered very much. The size of housing units, lack of public space and they are some of the outthought of USS. It is much visible that these people face enormous problems when it come to the community life due to lack of space they have been unable to do funerals and weddings. This has limited the privacy of these people.

The defining variable for USS is the weakness in the availability of services and infrastructure. Understandably, economic dimension forms the core of poverty but access to services and infrastructure does not correspond to income levels of the households. In providing specific services the available facilities have to be considered much. By and large, domestic water sources, drainage of waste and surface water, toilets, electricity and roads can be identified as important needs. Evidently, among poor settlements it visible that dependence on public services is often higher but bit problematic since they live in illegal constructions. Thus, this is very much seen in the constructions of private toilets.

By and large this creates many problems since it leads to Pip blockages and sewerage overflows. This can lead to health-related problems. The drainage problems can rise many a times since these cottages are placed on marginal lands like marshes and canal reservations that are prone to flooding. Not only the drainage system even the roads to leading to settlements are often in poor condition.

It is observed that poor health conditions within the settlements are attributed to the proximity to stagnant canals, breeding ground for mosquitoes which would certainly bring diseases. This congestion, high population density, and proximity of the housing structures observe that they will facilitate and accelerate the spread of the disease.

Anyhow, the easy access to good quality health facilities lead sound life style and this is enjoyed by all residents of USS. Uses of drugs, alcohol is noticed as factors that upset the conditions of the urban poor. At this stage it is necessary to realize that addiction is often studies as a main cause of low wellbeing for individuals and households.

Any researcher would understand that housing and land rights are important needs of urban poverty. The key milestones



in upbringing the wellbeing are improvement in housing conditions and an expansion of living space. The living conditions of these people have to be improved in order to increase the social status in terms of prestige and dignity. Evidently, it has increased the ability of residents to gather services, such as electrification and provide opportunities for income generation as usual by renting out rooms or for home-based activities.

V. CONCLUSION

In this review of study, it focusses to analyze the Poverty and Education of Adolescence in the Urban Area of Colombo, Sri Lanka. I have given more emphacies to the following themes; Poverty conditions in Sri Lanka, Poverty Disparities, Poverty Shortfall in Sri Lanka, Simulation of Poverty in Sri Lanka, Impact of Social Protection Programs on Poverty, Urban Poverty, The Urban Sector in Sri Lanka, Poverty in the Urban Sector, Dimensions and Dynamics of Urban Poverty. The contribution of the Government towards Education is much highlighted but still the mechanism has to be upgraded. When it comes to the Education performances of Students, it provides many differences when it compares with regions. Literacy rate in Sri Lanka in a way satisfactory but still it can be evaluated in different strategies. Existing problems in Education has been a topic for many years in Sri Lanka. Dropout conditions varies place to place and this critical in the Urban areas of Sri Lanka. The history of the dropout problem has been studied in number of occasions but the pathetic side of this issue is that the findings are not applied in the way possible due to various reasons. The dropouts' trends in Sri Lanka have been a much-debated theme for many years. Reasons for dropouts are visible but the mechanism to reduce this trend is delayed time to time. Therefore, the impact of this problem is vast.

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