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## Editorial

### Promoting Professional Practice in Education through Innovative Thinking

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the "*Journal of Innovative Practices in Education*" (JIPE), a new forum dedicated to sharing advancing research and discourse in innovative thinking and practices in education. Our aim is to promote teaching, research, and scholarship in professional practice of education and educators through insights gained from research related to innovative thinking in educational practices and the professional development of practitioners, at different levels and in a variety of contexts. In our first Issue, we are excited to share with you a selection of articles focusing on diverse perspectives and research findings comprising five research articles, two review articles, and a research communication. Reflecting our commitment to inclusivity as a trilingual journal, papers in English, Sinhala, and Tamil languages are presented. The transformative role of innovative thinking and practices in addressing the complex challenges within the education landscape are explored through the diverse articles in this issue.

Educational practices must be adaptable to prepare students for future challenges. Acknowledging the power of education to bring about significant changes, the Global Report from the International Commission on the Futures of Education (UNESCO, 2021) emphasizes the need to rethink the role of education and educators in reimagining innovative ways to face the challenges of an uncertain future. Innovative practice results from innovative thinking. Innovative thinking is a catalyst for innovative educational practices as it encourages the exploration of new ideas and methods that can transform teaching and learning. Fostering innovative thinking in educational practices involves adopting novel pedagogies that

emphasize creativity, critical thinking, and student engagement (OECD, 2017). When educators think critically and creatively about the challenges they face, they are more likely to implement practices that go beyond traditional models and adapt to the diverse needs of students functioning as ‘agents of change’ (Fullan, 2016). Encouraging educators to explore creative strategies to enhance adaptability in teaching and learning to meet diverse student needs will transform traditional classrooms into dynamic learning environments that foster a deeper understanding and application of knowledge to face real life challenges.

Undoubtedly, innovative thinking and practices are essential in addressing various challenges across all educational levels and contexts. This Issue of *JIPE* brings together a diverse collection of research and perspectives that address some of the key issues in contemporary educational landscape—from higher education context to secondary education, early childhood education, teacher education, and inclusive education. We invite you to explore the diverse viewpoints presented in this issue and join us in reflecting on the transformative potential of innovative thinking in our shared intellectual journey.

While innovative thinking is essential for driving change, it must be supported by a conducive environment and appropriate professional development. For instance, the well-being of educators significantly affects their professional development and performance, which is the focus of the article "*Socioeconomic and Academic Dynamics that are Shaping Bachelor of Education Students' Well-being*", by Rana, Pervais, and Gupta. Their investigation of the complex interplay between socioeconomic factors and levels of well-being of prospective educators across six teacher education colleges in Jammu Division, India that examined well-being along multiple dimensions: physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual, provides a

holistic perspective, suggesting the need to address various factors that influence the well-being of B.Ed. students and their future teaching practices as educators. As highlighted in this article, establishing holistic support systems responsive to these diverse factors within higher educational institutions is important, which calls for innovative strategies to create conducive and nurturing professional development environments for future educators.

Innovative thinking in relation to professional practices is required at all levels of education starting from early childhood education. In the current digital age, where children are exposed to technology from a very young age, teachers must think innovatively about the careful integration of digital technologies to support their learning, preventing any negative effects. As highlighted in the article *"Impact of Electronic Media on Socio-emotional Development in Pre-school Children: Parents' Perception"* by Seneviratne, pre-school teachers have a key role to play in addressing parental concerns on the negative impacts of excessive media consumption by their children, particularly on social interaction and emotional regulation. The study calls for developing clear guidelines and innovative strategies for balanced media usage to support healthy socio-emotional growth of young children reflecting the need for well-designed interventions by teachers engaging with parents, taking a participatory approach.

Fostering creativity and adaptability in students is vital for preparing them for the future. The article (written in Sinhala), titled *"Developing Creativity and Adaptability Skills in Junior Secondary School Students"* by Irugalbandara discusses innovative pedagogical strategies and curricular innovations that can enhance these skills essential for students to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup>



century, which requires innovative thinking of teachers. While innovative thinking is essential for driving change, it is the practical application of this thinking, supported by an appropriate learning environment, that leads to successful educational practices, as reflected in this study. The drama-based intervention reveals that innovative process drama techniques such as hot-seat, storytelling, and improvisation as effective means of developing skills such as creativity, collaboration, and problem solving among students. Integrating teaching strategies and techniques into classroom learning in unconventional, proactive, and creative ways can be recognized as innovative pedagogies. By providing such learning opportunities and valuing creative processes, educators can cultivate an environment that promotes adaptability and creative thinking, essential for students' future success.

Similarly, employing innovative educational practices to foster creativity among senior-secondary school students is equally important. In her article "*Life of Pi as an Advanced Level Text: Teachers' Perceptions on Overcoming Challenges of Teaching Magic Realism*", Jayakody discusses innovative teaching methods used by teachers against the challenges they faced when teaching the text *Life of Pi* to G.C.E. A/L students, which is heavily influenced by 'Magic Realism', a novel genre that most students and teachers were unfamiliar with. Diverse strategies adopted by the participant teachers such as the integration of movies, role playing, mind mapping, thematic approaches, and debates to overcome various challenges they encountered reflect their commitment to fostering creativity and critical thinking among students. Nevertheless, adequate pedagogical training is essential for teachers to effectively implement innovative practices. Providing teachers with innovative professional development opportunities will enable them confidently navigating the challenges of teaching unfamiliar genres and fostering creative learning environments for their students.

Innovative thinking is a key driving force behind transformative practices in education, and the significant role played by teachers in this process should not be undermined. Often there is hidden, untapped potential within teachers which calls for strategies that will allow them to fully realize and develop their inherent teaching qualities. The review article "*The Latent Teacher*" explores the balance between innate and acquired skills, suggesting that unlocking this latent potential is essential for addressing prevalent educational challenges. The concept of 'latent potential' within teachers is intriguing and underscores the idea that every individual has inherent teaching qualities that can be developed. The need to 'awaken' the latent teachers, as argued by the author, highlights the necessity for continuous evolution in teaching strategies to address the dynamic and complex issues in the education system. By focusing on innovative strategies in teacher education initiatives and educational reforms, the educational system can unlock, develop, and sharpen the inherent teaching qualities of educators. This approach well-aligns with the broader goals of improving teaching effectiveness and fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in educational practices.

Integrating innovative strategies and techniques into various methods of teaching such as collaborative learning and problem-based learning will foster vital qualities among students in any educational setting. Exploring the impact of collaborative learning and problem-based learning on character development in open and distance education, Dissanayake presents a review, specifically focusing on the development of learners' cognitive, metacognitive, social,

emotional, motivational, decision making and problem-solving skills, and their character. As suggested in the review, such pedagogical approaches provide ample opportunities for students in open and distance education contexts to develop essential character traits such as teamwork, critical thinking, empathy, responsibility, and ethical decision-making that will help them to optimize positive outcomes in their social, professional and work environments. Application of innovative pedagogical approaches by educators in open and distance education institutions will kindle innovative behaviour among adult learners through which new ideas are generated, developed, and promoted, thus enabling them to become effective professionals demonstrating innovative work behaviour involving application of novel methodologies to find creative solutions to persisting issues.

Innovative thinking and practices in education also promote inclusivity. Two articles in this edition focus on promoting inclusive practices in education. Firstly, the research article titled "*Changes in Stakeholders' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education Practices*" (written in Tamil) by Ketheeswaran, investigates the evolving attitudes of teachers, parents, and administrators towards inclusive education (IE), in the Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka. The reveal of mixed attitudes among the stakeholders including positive attitudes on the key practices of information provision for IE and student interactions in IE, and negative attitudes regarding the development of individual educational programmes for students with special educational needs, and the IE policy implies the need for awareness raising and capacity development on adopting appropriate IE practices.

Secondly, the concise research communication on *Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Inclusive Education in Plantation Sector Schools of Sri Lanka* by Dawson

highlights unique challenges and opportunities associated with implementing IE in Tamil medium schools of plantation sector in the Hatton educational zone. While providing context-specific insights into the challenges of implementing IE, it proposes an IE framework for plantation sector schools. Both these articles underscore the necessity to foster a more inclusive, and diverse classroom culture within the school system. Critical innovative thinking in educational practice is essential to move away from the traditional, one-size-fits-all teaching methods towards more flexible, responsive methods to accommodate diverse learner needs. This shift requires reimagining and adopting novel teaching approaches to ensure that student needs are met through individualized and adaptive teaching methods. Such practices are in line with current trends to foster greater inclusivity, personalization, and cultural responsiveness in education.

Collectively, the articles presented in this edition of *JIPE* reflect the vital need for innovative thinking and practices in education at different levels and contexts. The role of educators is becoming increasingly complex and challenging in the rapidly evolving educational landscape. As educational change agents, all educators must be innovative in their thinking and practices. Innovativeness implies the ability to think beyond boundaries and create novel approaches and strategies. Thus, educators need to be prepared to perform their expected roles effectively, which implies the crucial need for meaningful changes in educational policies and practices through innovative educational reforms and continuing professional development initiatives.

We hope that this inaugural issue of *JIFE* provides you with some thought-provoking perspectives via a broad spectrum of ideas that challenge traditional practices, encourage forward-thinking solutions, and inspire future innovative research. Enjoy reading!

### **Shironica P. Karunanayaka**

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## Socioeconomic and Academic Dynamics that are Shaping Bachelor of Education Students' Well-being

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### Abstract

This study examines the dynamic interplay of socioeconomic and academic factors shaping the well-being of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) students. Utilising a descriptive research methodology through a survey design, data were collected from 250 second-semester B.Ed. students across six teacher education colleges in Jammu Division using simple random sampling. The study's objectives were to examine the levels of well-being across various dimensions, investigate the relationship between socioeconomic status and well-being, analyse differences in well-being among students from different family structures, and assess the impact of the academic stream on well-being. Well-being was assessed through the Well-Being Scale (WBS-RK, Kaur, 2014) which explores multiple dimensions. Statistical tools such as t-tests were employed to analyse the data. Findings reveal that economic status significantly influences spiritual well-being with higher-income students exhibiting better outcomes. Family structure also impacts spiritual well-being where students from joint families scored higher. Furthermore, the academic stream significantly affects emotional and overall well-being with Science students demonstrating superior levels to Arts students. These results highlight the multifaceted influences on student well-being and underscore the necessity for educational policies and support systems responsive to these diverse factors. The study contributes to our understanding of the intricate dynamics shaping future educators' well-being, offering implications for enhancing teacher training programmes and fostering holistic development in educational settings.

**Keywords:** Well-being, B.Ed. students, socioeconomic dynamics, academic stream, family structure, teacher education

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## **Introduction**

Well-being is a multifaceted concept best understood as a profile of indicators across various domains rather than a single factor. This perspective is supported by extensive research and theoretical frameworks (Huppert, 2014; Seligman, 2011). Recent studies have further emphasised the complexity of well-being, highlighting its dynamic nature and the interplay between different dimensions (Martela & Sheldon, 2019).

From a theoretical standpoint, well-being encompasses two critical dimensions: hedonic well-being, which involves feeling good and experiencing happiness, and eudaemonic well-being, which centres on functioning effectively and finding purpose (Huppert, 2014). This dichotomy has been further explored in recent literature, with researchers proposing integrated models that combine both perspectives (Disabato et al., 2020).

Various models, such as Seligman's PERMA model and Ryff's six-factor model, offer different well-being domains, highlighting their complexity. The PERMA model, for instance, proposes five core elements of psychological well-being and happiness: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (Seligman, 2011). Recent research has validated this model across diverse cultural contexts, underscoring its robustness (Butler & Kern, 2016; Goodman et al., 2018).

The conceptualisation of well-being in educational contexts has evolved significantly in recent years. Building upon these established models, researchers have developed more nuanced

frameworks specifically tailored to educational settings. For instance, the PERMA-H model (Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment, and Health) proposed by Kern et al. (2014) offers a comprehensive approach to understanding and fostering student well-being in educational contexts.

A multidimensional approach to well-being provides the advantage of recognising that individual domains may have varying impacts on different outcomes. For instance, optimism reliably predicts a lower risk of cardiovascular disease and mortality but the relationship between other aspects of well-being and cardiovascular health is less clear (Boehm & Kubzansky, 2012). Recent studies have further explored these relationships revealing complex interactions between different aspects of well-being and various health outcomes (Steptoe, 2019).

Well-being extends beyond individual concerns to group-level well-being encompassing physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual dimensions. It involves feeling good and functioning well, nurturing positive relationships and fostering personal growth (Keyes & Annas, 2009). This holistic view has gained traction in recent years, with researchers emphasising the importance of considering well-being at multiple levels, from individual to societal (Prilleltensky, 2020; VanderWeele, 2017).

The concept of well-being has garnered significant attention in educational settings. Recent studies have highlighted the crucial role of student well-being in academic performance, personal development, and future success (Bücker et al., 2018; Waters et al., 2019). The well-being of students in teacher training programmes, such as Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), is



vital as it not only affects their personal and academic lives but also influences their future roles as educators (Collie et al., 2020; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

The importance of well-being in teacher education extends beyond individual benefits. Bardach et al. (2022) showed that teachers with higher levels of well-being were more likely to create positive classroom environments, which in turn enhanced student engagement and academic performance. This highlights the potential ripple effect of focusing on well-being in teacher education programmes.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought renewed attention to the well-being of educators and students alike. Kim et al. (2022) found that teacher well-being was a significant predictor of their ability to adapt to remote teaching and support student learning during the pandemic. This underscores the need for a robust understanding of the factors influencing well-being among future educators, particularly in the face of unprecedented challenges.

Research has shown that various factors, including economic status, family background, and academic stream, can significantly impact student well-being (Brännlund et al., 2017; Crede et al., 2015). Recent studies have further explored these relationships in the context of teacher education revealing complex interactions between these factors and different aspects of well-being (Collie et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2019).

This study aims to examine the well-being of B.Ed. students, considering their economic status, family background, and academic stream. By investigating these factors, we seek to provide insights that can inform educational policies and support systems, ultimately

contributing to the enhancement of teacher training programmes and the well-being of future educators. This research builds upon recent studies in the field (e.g., Collie et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2019) and aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on student well-being in teacher education programmes.

## **Review of Related Literature**

The existing literature on student well-being, particularly in the context of teacher education, offers valuable insights into various factors affecting students' overall welfare. This review synthesises recent findings, highlighting key themes relevant to our study.

Meshko et al. (2021) conducted a comprehensive examination of emotional well-being among students in modern schools. Their study underscored the pivotal role of emotions in the learning process and the significant impact of emotional well-being on students' health and academic success. The researchers found that students in modern schools generally exhibited low levels of emotional well-being. They identified several contributing factors to emotional discomfort, including academic stress, classroom environment, and peer interactions. Notably, the study emphasised the importance of enhancing emotional well-being to improve learning outcomes and maintain the students' overall health. The authors proposed practical strategies for improving emotional well-being in schools, such as fostering positive teacher-student relationships and creating a supportive classroom atmosphere.

Recent research has further emphasized the importance of emotional well-being in educational settings, particularly for pre-service teachers. Hascher and Waber (2021) conducted a longitudinal study of pre-service teachers, finding that emotional well-being was a significant predictor of teaching enthusiasm and job satisfaction. Their study highlights the need for teacher education programmes to actively support the emotional well-being of trainee teachers. The authors suggest that interventions focusing on emotional regulation and stress management could be particularly beneficial in preparing future educators for the emotional demands of their profession.

Kaur and Singh (2022) explored the relationship between psychological well-being, social competence, and programme commitment among university students. Their study, which involved 261 undergraduate students from the Science Faculty of Panjab University, Chandigarh, employed a descriptive survey approach. Using statistical analyses, including correlation and regression, they investigated the interplay between well-being, programme commitment, and social competence. Their findings revealed significant associations between psychological well-being, programme commitment, and social competence. Interestingly, the study found no notable gender differences in these factors.

Building on this, Benevene et al. (2019) explored the relationship between psychological capital, work engagement, and well-being among teachers. Their findings suggest that psychological capital (consisting of hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism) positively influences both work engagement and well-being underscoring the importance of cultivating these psychological resources in teacher education. The study emphasizes the potential long-

term benefits of integrating psychological capital development into teacher training programmes, potentially leading to more resilient and satisfied educators.

Noer (2023) investigated the impact of spiritual well-being and mental health on students in Indonesia. This extensive study, involving 572 students, utilised structural equation modelling (SEM) to demonstrate the positive effects of spiritual well-being on students. The research found that spiritual well-being partially mediates the relationship between spirituality and mental health. Significant and positive effects of spiritual well-being were observed on students' attitudes, subjective norms, and behaviour, indicating a strong influence on their mental health. The study's findings suggest the potential benefits of incorporating religiosity principles into the curriculum to support students' mental health.

In a related vein, Kutsyuruba et al. (2023) examined the role of spirituality in promoting resilience and well-being among early career teachers. Their study revealed that spiritual well-being contributed significantly to teachers' ability to navigate challenges and maintain a sense of purpose in their profession, suggesting the value of holistic approaches to well-being in teacher preparation programmes. The authors argue that nurturing spiritual well-being could be a crucial factor in reducing teacher burnout and attrition, particularly in the challenging early years of the profession.

Cajurao et al. (2023) examined the relationship between social well-being and academic engagement among 155 students at Aleosan National High School. Using a self-formulated instrument to assess social well-being and academic engagement, along with statistical methods including mean, Pearson R and multiple linear regression, the study found a

significant correlation between social well-being and academic engagement. These findings highlight the crucial role of social well-being in students' academic success.

These studies collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of student well-being and its profound impact on various aspects of academic life. They emphasise the interconnectedness of emotional, psychological, spiritual, and social dimensions of well-being and their collective influence on academic engagement and success. Moreover, these studies provide actionable insights for improving student well-being such as fostering positive relationships within educational settings and creating supportive learning environments.

The literature also highlights the essential role of educators in identifying and supporting students' mental health needs. It points to available resources, such as the Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) and MentalHealth.gov, which can aid in establishing comprehensive social-emotional and behavioural support systems in educational settings. These findings not only inform our current study but also underscore the importance of a holistic approach to student well-being in teacher education programmes.

Furthermore, recent research emphasises the need for a more integrated approach to well-being in teacher education. By addressing various dimensions of well-being – emotional, psychological, spiritual, and social – teacher preparation programmes can potentially produce more resilient, satisfied, and effective educators. This holistic approach aligns with the growing recognition of teaching as a profession that demands not just cognitive skills but also strong emotional and social competencies.

In conclusion, the literature review reveals a complex and multifaceted understanding of well-being in educational contexts, particularly for pre-service teachers. While significant strides have been made in understanding the various dimensions of well-being and their impacts on academic and professional outcomes, there remains a need for more focused research on B.Ed. students, especially in diverse cultural contexts. Our study aims to address this gap by examining the well-being of B.Ed. students in relation to their economic status, family background, and academic stream, thereby contributing to the growing body of knowledge in this crucial area of educational research.

### **Significance of the Study**

Well-being plays a vital role in the progress of any nation, mainly depending on the well-being of its citizens. All intellectual, creative, educational, social, and cultural advancements are possible if individuals possess well-being. For B.Ed. students, well-being is particularly crucial as it significantly impacts their performance and serves as a prerequisite for achievements in life. Well-being enhances intrinsic motivation, decreases disciplinary problems, increases academic achievement, improves satisfaction with educational experiences and leads to the flourishing of individuals, communities, and nations. It affects an individual's behaviour across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, which are essential for effective teaching and learning. The study of B.Ed. students' well-being is significant as these future educators will shape the next generation. Their well-being has a multiplier effect, influencing not only their personal and academic development but also their future teaching practices. While considerable research has been conducted on students' well-being, there is a paucity of studies specifically focusing on B.Ed. students in Jammu Division. This research aims to fill this

gap by examining the well-being of B.Ed. students in relation to their economic status, family background, and academic stream. The findings will inform decision-making in teacher training programmes, improving the quality of education at both B.Ed. and school levels. As Diener et al. (2013) note, well-being is crucial for life satisfaction and overall quality of life. This study's implications extend to various stakeholders, including teacher educators, administrators, policymakers, and parents, contributing to developing more holistic and practical approaches to teacher education and, consequently, to the overall enhancement of the education system.

## **Objectives**

The study has the following objectives:

1. To examine the levels of well-being among B.Ed. students across five dimensions (physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being) and overall well-being, as measured by the Well-Being Scale
2. To investigate the relationship between economic status, the five dimensions of well-being, and overall well-being among B.Ed. students
3. To analyse the differences in well-being across the five dimensions and overall well-being among B.Ed. students from different family types
4. To assess the impact of the academic stream on the five dimensions of well-being and overall well-being among B.Ed. students

## **Hypotheses**

Three hypotheses were formulated in this study:

1. There are no statistically significant differences in the five dimensions of well-being (physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual) or overall well-being scores among B.Ed. students from different economic backgrounds, as measured by the Well-Being Scale.
2. There are no statistically significant differences in the five dimensions of well-being (physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual) or overall well-being scores among B.Ed. students from different family types (nuclear and joint), as measured by the Well-Being Scale.
3. There are no statistically significant differences in the five dimensions of well-being (physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual) or overall well-being scores among B.Ed. students from different academic streams (Arts and Science), as measured by the Well-Being Scale.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The present study employed a descriptive research approach through a survey design to examine the well-being of B.Ed. students in relation to their economic status, family background, and academic stream. This approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of well-being among B.Ed. students and to explore potential relationships between well-being and the selected variables. A descriptive design is particularly appropriate for this study as it allows for a detailed characterization of the



phenomenon of well-being within a specific population without manipulating variables, thus capturing the naturalistic state of well-being among B.Ed. students.

### **Population and Sample**

The population for this study comprised all students pursuing a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree from various B.Ed. colleges in the Jammu Division in India. Specifically, the target population consisted of 2,706 B.Ed. students enrolled in the second semester during the 2021-2023 academic session. The Jammu Division hosts several recognised B.Ed. colleges, offering a diverse pool of students from various socio-economic backgrounds and academic streams, making it an ideal setting for this study.

A simple random sampling technique was employed to select a representative cross-section of 250 B.Ed. students from six distinct colleges of education in the Jammu Division. The sample composition included 120 students from lower-income and 130 from higher-income backgrounds, 121 from nuclear families and 129 from joint families and 134 students pursuing Arts and 116 in Science streams. This diversity in the sample allows for a comprehensive analysis of well-being across various economic statuses, family types, and academic streams within the B.Ed. student population, providing robust insights into the factors influencing educational outcomes.

### **Data Collection Tool**

For the present study, the investigator employed the Well-Being Scale (WBS-RK) developed by Kaur (2014) to examine the well-being of B.Ed. students. This standardised instrument comprises 35 items divided across five dimensions: Physical, Mental, Social, Emotional, and

Spiritual well-being. Each item is rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The scale demonstrates good internal consistency, with a Split-Half Reliability coefficient of 0.771 for B.Ed. students. The WBS-RK was selected for its comprehensive approach to measuring well-being, aligning well with the study's objectives of assessing well-being across various aspects of students' lives.

## **Limitations of the Study**

While this study may provide valuable insights, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. The cross-sectional nature of the research limits our ability to infer causal relationships between the variables studied. Additionally, the focus on B.Ed. students in the Jammu Division may limit the generalisability of findings to other geographical or cultural contexts. The self-report nature of the Well-Being Scale (WBS-RK) also introduces the possibility of response bias, although the scale's established reliability mitigates this concern to some extent.

## **Results and Discussion**

**Objective 1: To examine the levels of well-being among B.Ed. students across five dimensions (physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual well-being) and overall well-being, as measured by the Well-Being Scale**

To address this objective, the distribution of B.Ed. students across different levels of well-being were analysed. Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage of students falling into each category of well-being based on their z-scores on the Well-Being Scale.

**Table 1**

*Distribution of B.Ed. students across levels of well-being*

No.	Range of z-scores	Level of well-being	Frequency of students (N)	Percentage of students (%)
1	+2.01 and above	Extremely high	6	2.4
2	+1.26 to +2.00	High	26	10.4
3	+0.51 to +1.25	Above average	38	15.2
4	-0.50 to +0.50	Average	36	14.4
5	-0.51 to -1.25	Below average	119	47.6
6	-1.26 to -2.00	Low	22	8.8
7	-2.01 and below	Extremely low	3	1.2
Total			250	100

The results indicate a diverse distribution of well-being levels among B.Ed. students:

- A small proportion of students (2.4%) demonstrated extremely high levels of well-being.
- A notable percentage (25.6%) exhibited above-average to high levels of well-being.
- A moderate proportion (14.4%) showed average levels of well-being.
- The largest group (47.6%) fell into the below-average category.
- A small but significant group (10%) displayed low to extremely low levels of well-being.

These findings suggest that while a quarter of the students report good to excellent well-being, nearly half of the B.Ed. students in the sample experience below-average levels of well-being. This distribution highlights the need for targeted interventions to support students with

lower well-being scores and to understand the factors contributing to the varied levels of well-being among B.Ed. students.

**Objective 2: To investigate the relationship between economic status and the five dimensions of well-being, and overall well-being among B.Ed. students**

To address this objective, we examined the relationship between economic status and well-being dimensions using independent samples t-tests. This analysis allows us to infer the nature of the relationship based on the differences between the two economic groups. Table 2 presents the results of these analyses.

**Table 2**

*Relationship between economic status and well-being dimensions*

Dimensions	Economic status	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>M</sub>	df	T	Level of significance
Physical well-being	Low	120	25.68	3.63	0.33	248	1.11	NS
	High	130	25.19	3.37	0.29			
Mental well-being	Low	120	25.36	3.32	0.30	248	0.38	NS
	High	130	25.19	3.50	0.31			
Social well-being	Low	120	24.05	3.38	0.31	248	0.34	NS
	High	130	24.20	3.50	0.31			
Emotional well-being	Low	120	25.06	3.87	0.35	248	0.61	NS
	High	130	24.76	3.84	0.34			
Spiritual well-being	Low	120	24.95	2.76	0.25	248	2.12	0.05
	High	130	25.71	2.94	0.26			
Overall scores	Low	120	125.10	11.69	1.07	248	0.03	NS
	High	130	125.06	11.99	1.05			

NS-Not Significant: 0.05 Level of Significance

The analysis reveals the following key findings regarding the relationship between economic status and well-being:

- Physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being: No significant relationship was found between economic status and these dimensions ( $t = 1.11, 0.38, 0.34, 0.61$  respectively,  $p > 0.05$ ). This suggests that economic background does not significantly influence these aspects of well-being among B.Ed. students.
- Spiritual well-being: A significant relationship was observed between the economic status and spiritual well-being ( $t = 2.12, p < 0.05$ ). Students from higher economic backgrounds ( $M = 25.71, SD = 2.94$ ) reported higher levels of spiritual well-being compared to those from lower economic backgrounds ( $M = 24.95, SD = 2.76$ ). This indicates a positive relationship between the economic status and spiritual well-being.
- Overall well-being: No significant relationship was found between the economic status and overall well-being scores ( $t = 0.03, p > 0.05$ ), suggesting that economic background may not be a determining factor in the general well-being of B.Ed. students.

These results indicate that the relationship between the economic status and well-being among B.Ed. students are complex. While economic background appears to have a limited relationship with most dimensions of well-being, it shows a positive relationship with spiritual well-being. This finding warrants further investigation into the factors that might contribute to this specific relationship.

Based on these findings, Hypothesis 1 is partially rejected. Specifically, it is dismissed for the dimension of spiritual well-being, where a significant difference was found between students

from different economic backgrounds. However, the hypothesis is retained for all other dimensions (physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being) and overall well-being scores where no significant differences were observed between students from different economic backgrounds. We can conclude that the economic status has a selective relationship with well-being dimensions, primarily influencing spiritual well-being while showing no significant relationship with other dimensions or overall well-being.

**Objective 3: To analyse the differences in well-being across the five dimensions and overall well-being among B.Ed. students from different family types**

To address this objective, independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the well-being scores of students from nuclear and joint families across the five dimensions of well-being and overall scores. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 3.

The analysis reveals the following key findings:

- Physical well-being ( $t = 1.04, p > 0.05$ ), mental well-being ( $t = 0.70, p > 0.05$ ), social well-being ( $t = 0.68, p > 0.05$ ), and emotional well-being ( $t = 1.16, p > 0.05$ ) showed no significant differences between students from nuclear and joint families.
- Spiritual well-being was significantly different ( $t = 2.13, p < 0.05$ ) between students from nuclear and joint families. Joint families ( $M = 25.72, SD = 2.70$ ) demonstrated higher spiritual well-being levels than nuclear families ( $M = 24.95, SD = 3.01$ ).
- Overall well-being scores ( $t = 1.61, p > 0.05$ ) between the two-family types were not significantly different.

**Table 3**

*Comparison of well-being scores based on family type*

Dimensions	Type of family	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>M</sub>	df	t	Level of significance
Physical well-being	Nuclear	121	25.19	3.61	0.33	248	1.04	NS
	Joint	129	25.65	3.38	0.30		0.30	
Mental well-being	Nuclear	121	25.11	3.48	0.32	248	0.70	NS
	Joint	129	25.42	3.34	0.29		0.29	
Social well-being	Nuclear	121	23.97	3.37	0.31	248	0.68	NS
	Joint	129	24.27	3.51	0.31		0.31	
Emotional well-being	Nuclear	121	24.61	3.83	0.35	248	1.16	NS
	Joint	129	25.18	3.85	0.34		0.34	
Spiritual well-being	Nuclear	121	24.95	3.01	0.27	248	2.13	0.05
	Joint	129	25.72	2.70	0.24		0.24	
Total	Nuclear	121	123.84	12.02	1.09	248	1.61	NS
	Joint	129	126.24	11.56	1.02		1.02	

NS-Not Significant: 0.05 Level of Significance

These results suggest that family type has a limited impact on most dimensions of well-being among B.Ed. students. However, the significant difference in spiritual well-being is noteworthy and warrants further investigation. Students from joint families appear to have higher spiritual well-being, which could be attributed to factors such as shared family values, traditions, or collective religious practices often associated with joint family systems.

The lack of significant differences in overall well-being scores indicates that family type may not be a determining factor in the general well-being of B.Ed. students. However, the trend

towards higher mean scores in joint families across all dimensions, though not statistically significant except for spiritual well-being, might suggest a subtle positive influence of joint family systems on student well-being.

Based on these findings, Hypothesis 2 is partially rejected. Specifically, it is dismissed for the dimension of spiritual well-being, where a significant difference was found between students from nuclear and joint families. However, the hypothesis is retained for all other dimensions (physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being) and overall well-being scores where no significant differences were observed between students from nuclear and joint families.

**Objective 4: To assess the impact of the academic stream on the five dimensions of well-being and overall well-being among B.Ed. students**

To address this objective, independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the well-being scores of students from the Arts and Science streams across the five dimensions of well-being and overall scores. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4.

The analysis reveals the following key findings:

- Physical well-being ( $t = 1.91$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), mental well-being ( $t = 0.13$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), social well-being ( $t = 1.25$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), and spiritual well-being ( $t = 0.63$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) showed no significant differences between students from the Science and Arts streams.
- A significant difference was observed in emotional well-being ( $t = 2.63$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) between students from the Science and Arts streams. Students from the Science stream ( $M = 25.49$ ,  $SD = 3.52$ ) demonstrated higher levels of emotional well-being compared to those from the Arts stream ( $M = 24.22$ ,  $SD = 4.11$ ).



- A significant difference was also found in overall well-being scores ( $t = 1.98, p = 0.05$ ) between the two academic streams. Science stream students ( $M = 126.45, SD = 12.02$ ) showed higher overall well-being compared to Arts stream students ( $M = 123.50, SD = 11.44$ ).

**Table 4**

*Comparison of well-being scores based on academic stream*

Dimensions	Stream	N	Mean	SD	SE <sub>M</sub>	df	t	Level of significance
Physical well-being	Science	134	25.82	3.51	0.30	248	1.91	NS
	Arts	116	24.97	3.44	0.32			
Mental well-being	Science	134	25.30	3.26	0.28	248	0.13	NS
	Arts	116	25.24	3.59	0.33			
Social well-being	Science	134	24.38	3.73	0.32	248	1.25	NS
	Arts	116	23.83	3.07	0.28			
Emotional well-being	Science	134	25.49	3.52	0.30	248	2.63	0.01
	Arts	116	24.22	4.11	0.38			
Spiritual well-being	Science	134	25.45	2.91	0.25	248	0.63	NS
	Arts	116	25.22	2.83	0.26			
Total	Science	134	126.45	12.02	1.04	248	1.98	0.05
	Arts	116	123.50	11.44	1.06			

NS-Not Significant: 0.05 Level of Significance

These results suggest that the academic stream significantly impacts emotional well-being and overall well-being among B.Ed. students, with Science stream students reporting higher

levels in both cases. The lack of significant differences in other dimensions indicates that the academic stream may not be a determining factor for physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being.

Based on these findings, Hypothesis 3 is partially rejected. Specifically:

- The hypothesis is rejected for emotional well-being, where a significant difference was found between students from the Science and Arts streams.
- The hypothesis for overall well-being scores was also rejected, which showed a significant difference between the two streams.
- The hypothesis is retained for physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being dimensions, where no significant differences were observed between students from the Science and Arts streams.

These results highlight the complex relationship between academic stream and student well-being. The higher emotional and overall well-being scores among Science stream students warrant further investigation into the factors that might contribute to these differences, such as curriculum structure, learning environments, or career prospects associated with different academic streams.

## **Discussion of findings**

The present study examined the well-being of B.Ed. students with their economic status, family background, and academic stream. The findings reveal a complex interplay of these factors with various dimensions of well-being, providing valuable insights into the

psychological landscape of future educators. These findings illuminate the multifaceted nature of influences on B.Ed. students' well-being, highlighting the need for nuanced approaches in educational policies and support systems. The observed differences across economic backgrounds, family types, and academic streams underscore the complexity of factors shaping the well-being of future educators.

Some of the key findings of the study are:

- Overall well-being levels: A significant proportion of B.Ed. students (70%) demonstrated average to high levels of well-being across all dimensions of the WBS. This aligns with Dubey's (2015) findings, suggesting a generally positive psychological environment in teacher education programmes. However, the presence of a substantial minority with below-average well-being levels indicates a need for targeted support mechanisms within these programmes.
- Economic status and well-being: The study revealed that B.Ed. students from higher economic backgrounds exhibited higher levels of spiritual well-being compared to their peers from lower economic backgrounds. This finding corroborates the results of Yunus et al. (2011) and Bhat (2021), highlighting the potential influence of economic factors on spiritual aspects of well-being. However, it contrasts with Wantur et al. (2020), underscoring the complex and potentially context-dependent nature of this relationship. The lack of significant differences in other well-being dimensions suggests that economic status may have a selective rather than pervasive impact on student well-being.
- Family background and well-being: B.Ed. students from joint families demonstrated higher levels of spiritual well-being than those from nuclear families. This finding

diverges from Ghaffari et al. (2013) who found no significant differences based on family structure. The higher spiritual well-being in joint families could be attributed to the collective religious practices and shared values often associated with such family systems. This insight suggests the potential role of family dynamics in shaping certain aspects of student well-being.

- Academic stream and well-being: Students from the Science stream exhibited notably higher levels of emotional well-being and overall well-being compared to their peers in the Arts stream. This finding extends the work of Kaya and Erdem (2021) by highlighting the role of the academic stream in emotional well-being. However, it contradicts studies by Khan and Kauser (2014), Xuan et al. (2019), and Mubarak and Pierewan (2020), which found negative or no differences in emotional well-being across academic streams. This discrepancy underscores the need for further research to understand the factors underlying these stream-based differences in well-being.

The findings of this study have significant implications for the design and implementation of B.Ed. programmes. The observed relationship between spiritual well-being and economic status suggests a need for teacher education institutions to consider socioeconomic factors when developing support systems for students. Programmes could be designed to foster spiritual well-being across all economic groups; perhaps, through mindfulness practices or discussions on finding meaning and purpose in the teaching profession.

Moreover, the higher levels of emotional and overall well-being observed in Science stream students highlight the importance of tailoring support services to different academic backgrounds. B.Ed. programmes might consider incorporating elements of scientific inquiry

and problem-solving across all specialisations to potentially enhance overall student well-being.

## **Recommendations**

These findings have several recommendations for educational policy and practice:

- **Holistic well-being initiatives:** The prevalence of average to high well-being levels among most students supports implementing holistic well-being programmes in teacher education. However, targeted interventions are needed for students experiencing below-average well-being.
- **Economic support:** While economic status primarily influences spiritual well-being, institutions should consider providing comprehensive support structures for economically disadvantaged students to ensure equitable opportunities for overall well-being.
- **Family-aware approaches:** Recognizing the potential influence of family structure on spiritual well-being, educational programmes could incorporate family-aware approaches that acknowledge and leverage diverse family backgrounds.
- **Stream-specific support:** The emotional and overall well-being differences between Science and Arts students suggest a need for stream-specific support systems. Curricula and support services should be tailored to address students' unique challenges and requirements within various academic streams.

## **Conclusions**

This research significantly contributes to our understanding of the complex dynamics shaping the well-being of future educators. By examining the interplay of economic status, family background, and academic stream with various dimensions of well-being, our study offers valuable insights that can inform the development of more effective and tailored approaches in teacher education programmes.

The findings highlight the multifaceted nature of well-being and the complex interplay of personal, familial, and academic factors in shaping the psychological health of future educators. As the teaching profession faces increasing challenges globally, including high stress levels and burnout rates, understanding and promoting well-being among future teachers becomes crucial. Our results suggest that a holistic approach to well-being, considering various dimensions, including spiritual and emotional aspects, may be key to developing resilient and effective educators.

Furthermore, the observed differences in well-being across economic backgrounds and academic streams underscore the need for personalised approaches in teacher education. As the field moves towards more inclusive and diverse classrooms, preparing teachers who are academically competent and emotionally and spiritually well-equipped teachers becomes paramount. These insights can inform the development of more nuanced and practical approaches to fostering well-being in teacher education, ultimately contributing to preparing psychologically healthy and resilient educators.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on student well-being in teacher education programmes. The implications of our findings extend to various stakeholders, including teacher educators, administrators, policymakers, and parents. By addressing the diverse needs and backgrounds of B.Ed. students, we can work towards developing more holistic and practical approaches to teacher education, consequently enhancing the overall quality of the education system. As we strive to improve the well-being of future educators, we ultimately invest in the quality of education and the well-being of future generations of students.

To build upon this study, future research could explore several avenues:

- Longitudinal studies tracking well-being from the beginning of B.Ed. programmes through the early years of teaching could provide insights into developing and maintaining well-being over time.
- Comparative studies across different regions of India or internationally could help identify cultural or systemic factors influencing teacher trainee well-being.
- Intervention studies designed to enhance specific dimensions of well-being among B.Ed. students could offer practical strategies for improving teacher education programmes.
- Qualitative research exploring the lived experiences of B.Ed. students could provide deeper insights into the factors influencing their well-being, complementing the quantitative findings of this study.

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## Impact of Electronic Media on Socio-Emotional Development of Preschool Children: Parents' Perceptions

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### Abstract

This study investigated the parental perceptions of the effects of electronic media on the socio-emotional development of preschool children in the Kalutara District, Sri Lanka. It explores the positive and negative impacts of electronic media exposure, considering factors such as accessibility, type of programme/activity and duration of use. 377 parents were randomly selected from preschool children attending preschools in the Kalutara District. The sample was stratified to include urban and rural settings to ensure representation across different socio-economic backgrounds. A survey method was chosen, and data were collected from a piloted and validated structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale, which included information on types of electronic media accessed by children, duration of use and programme preference. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and graphic presentations were used to summarize media usage patterns and socio-emotional development indicators. The impact of electronic media on socio-emotional development indicated both positive and negative relationships. The study found that while most parents hold a positive attitude toward electronic media, a majority were aware that electronic media lead to aggressive behaviour, prevent children from forming healthy relationships with adults and peers, promote unhealthy competition among children, become addicted to electronic media and negatively affects the socio-emotional development of children. Based on the findings, guidelines were developed to help parents model healthy media habits, while recommendations were made for policymakers to offer training and resources to support parents in managing screen time, selecting appropriate content and engaging in co-viewing.

**Keywords:** Parent's perceptions, impact of electronic media, socio-emotional development, preschool children

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## **Introduction**

In recent years, the pervasive influence of electronic media has transformed various aspects of people's daily lives, including the developmental experiences of preschool children. In Sri Lanka, where traditional practices and modern technologies intersect, parents' understanding of the impact of electronic media on preschool children's socio-emotional development has become increasingly pertinent. As smartphones, computers, and televisions have become increasingly common, it is essential to examine how these digital interactions impact the development, particularly the socio-emotional growth, of preschool children. The socio-emotional domain encompasses critical developmental milestones such as emotional regulation, social skills, and self-concept. It includes children's experiences, expressions, management, and ability to form positive relationships with those around them (Shaikh, 2021). According to Shala (2013), it is about an individual's relationship with others, one's level of self-control, motivation, and persistence in an activity.

For preschool children in Sri Lanka, these skills have traditionally been fostered through family interactions, community activities, and educational settings. However, the integration of electronic media into daily routines has introduced new factors that may either support or hinder these developmental processes. Electronic media can offer significant educational benefits, including exposure to diverse content and interactive learning opportunities. The use of educational apps and programmes can create opportunities for children to learn early literacy, math, and problem-solving skills, potentially providing them with a foundation for future academic success (Meyer et al., 2021). Moreover, electronic media can be a valuable tool for parents and educators, offering resources supporting early learning and development.



Conversely, there are concerns about the potential negative impacts of excessive screen time. Research from various contexts suggests that overuse of electronic media may impair face-to-face social interactions, hinder emotional regulation, and contribute to behavioural issues (Coyne et al., 2021). In the Sri Lankan context, these concerns are compounded by the influence of global media, which may affect traditional cultural norms and values. The integration of electronic media into daily life has become increasingly prevalent across the globe, including in Sri Lanka. As the accessibility of electronic media such as smartphones, computers, and televisions grow, so does their influence on the developmental experiences of preschool children (Antar, 2019). While electronic media offers potential benefits such as educational content and interactive learning opportunities, it also poses challenges that could impact the socio-emotional development of young children. The socio-emotional domain, which encompasses essential developmental aspects like emotional regulation, social skills, and self-concept, is particularly vulnerable to the effects of media exposure (Niiranen et al., 2021). Given the unique socio-cultural and economic contexts, it is critical to understand how these electronic media interactions affect preschool children in Sri Lanka. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by investigating the parental perceived effects of electronic media on the socio-emotional development of preschool children in Sri Lanka.

## **Aim and Objectives**

The main aim of the study was to explore the impact of electronic media on the socio-emotional development of preschool children in Sri Lanka.

The specific objectives were to:

1. Identify parents' perceptions of the impact of preschool children's exposure to electronic media on their social and emotional development.
2. Examine parents' views on the effects of excessive electronic media use by preschool children on their social and emotional development.
3. Identify the types of programmes parents perceive as beneficial or detrimental to children's social and emotional development.
4. Analyse whether parents' perceptions differ significantly based on their demographic characteristics.

## **Review of Literature**

Media include technologies of sensation, feelings, taste, relationship and influence (De Vries & Weber, 2001; Hoover, 2006; Stolow, 2013) and differ from the older definition of media and are channels that target recipients with the conveying of messages in shaping opinions or achieving specific effects. Electronic media refers to a broad range of electrically controlled technologies, including digital recordings, video and audio, slideshows, CD-ROMs, online content, as well as television, radio, telephones, and computer-based media. (Chandler & Munday, 2011). These technologies have transformed the world by reshaping the learning environment for children. Consequently, the development and learning of young children today have changed from what psychologists have studied before. The critical role of media in regulating the environment has prompted researchers to study its impact on child development. Many technological changes in the education industry enable various electronic media to be available as supporting materials or technology support for preschool activities.

According to Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages of development, early childhood is characterized by the development of autonomy and initiative which are crucial for later emotional and social competence (Bishop, 2013). Media influence theories such as the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) and the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz et al., 1973) provide frameworks for understanding how media content affects behaviour and emotional responses. Social Learning Theory suggests children learn behaviours and emotional responses by observing and imitating media content. At the same time, the Uses and Gratifications Theory emphasises how individuals actively select media that satisfy their needs and influence their development.

Researchers have sought to determine whether the overuse of communication tools leads to socio-emotional problems in children. A study conducted in Korea by Seo et al. (2011) found that high levels of computer use are associated with lower scores in socio-emotional development. Similarly, they noted that children who spend excessive time watching television tend to perform poorly on socio-emotional assessments. Teychenne et al. (2012) suggest that there may be an association between childhood physical activity and electronic media use, both of which can influence psychosocial health. When communication tools disrupt psychosocial development, children may experience difficulties in essential communication skills, such as reading facial expressions and building relationships (Akyar & Sapsaglam, 2019). Moreover, young children's exposure to electronic media poses risks, including dangerous encounters with strangers and potential exposure to inappropriate content, such as pornography. Conversely, digital communication tools are also reshaping children's consumption behaviours (Akyar & Sapsaglam, 2019). Keinonen et al. (2014) assert

that media serve as a critical source of information, influencing individuals' knowledge and behaviours that, in turn, shape children's consumption habits and impact family spending (Lindstrom & Seybold, 2003).

Excessive screen time can significantly reduce opportunities for face-to-face social interactions, which are crucial for developing social skills. Studies indicate that children who engage in more screen time may experience delays in social and emotional development, including difficulties in understanding non-verbal cues and interacting with peers (Christakis et al., 2009; Gou & Perceval, 2023). Furthermore, excessive media exposure, particularly to violent or overstimulating content, can lead to challenges in emotional regulation and increased aggression. Children with high screen time may exhibit impulsive behaviours and struggle to manage frustration and anxiety (Zoromba et al., 2023).

In the context of Sri Lanka, media usage patterns among preschool children are shaped by both global and local content. While there are educational programmes available in Sinhala and Tamil languages, access to high-quality and culturally relevant media content remains limited, especially in rural areas (Silva, 2024). This disparity can significantly affect the developmental experiences of preschool children.

On a more positive note, electronic media that feature positive social interactions and emotional narratives can aid children in understanding and managing their emotions. Programmes that model empathy, cooperation, and problem-solving can contribute to the development of social skills and emotional intelligence (Kirkorian et al., 2008). Additionally, co-viewing and interactive media experiences can enhance parental involvement in children's

learning processes. Research suggests that when parents engage in educational media alongside their children, it fosters discussions about content, reinforces learning, and strengthens the parent-child bond (Scott, 2022; Zaman et al., 2016).

The existing literature indicates that electronic media has the potential to influence the socio-emotional development of preschool children in both positive and negative ways. While the benefits associated with educational content and parental involvement are evident, significant concerns remain regarding social interaction, emotional regulation, and cultural adaptation. In the Sri Lankan context, these effects may be further influenced by unique socio-cultural dynamics and disparities in access to media resources.

Despite the increasing presence of electronic media, empirical research specifically examining its impact on the socio-emotional development of Sri Lankan preschool children is limited. Nonetheless, studies have highlighted the risks associated with excessive screen use, along with potential interventions (Rohanachandra, 2023). There remains a critical gap in understanding how electronic media affects children's emotional management, social interactions, and a sense of self within the cultural framework of Sri Lanka. This issue is further complicated by disparities in access to high-quality media content which can vary significantly between urban and rural areas and across socio-economic groups. Such disparities may exacerbate educational and developmental inequalities, particularly affecting the socio-emotional well-being of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## **Methodology**

The present study employed a survey design to gather data on parents' perceptions regarding the impact of electronic media on their children's socio-emotional development. These perceptions are valuable for understanding parents' awareness, attitudes, and beliefs about electronic media. Moreover, parental perceptions can significantly influence child-rearing practices which in turn may affect preschool children's exposure to media.

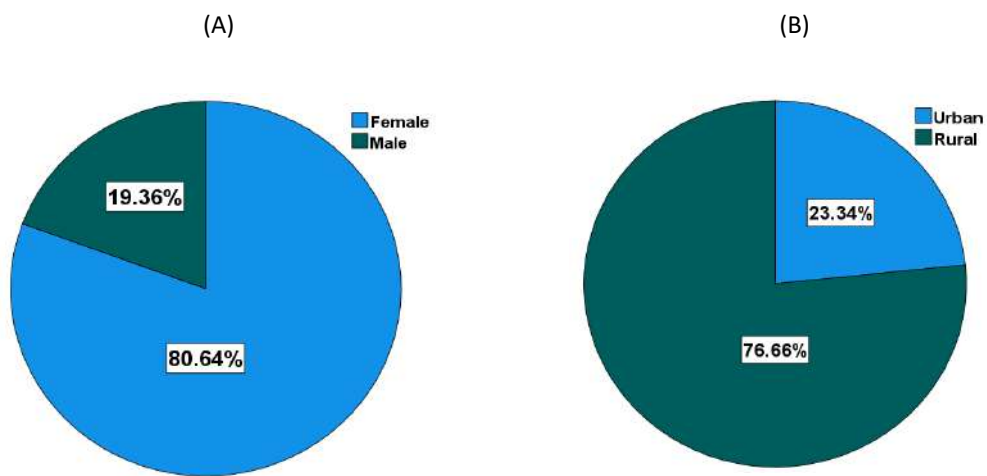
The sample participated in the study was parents of young children attending preschool in the Kalutara District of the Western Province. In the Kalutara District, there are 1,045 preschools with a total of 27,041 children between the ages of 3 and 5. Of these, only 763 preschools were officially registered with the Provincial Council responsible for preschool education. Thomas (1996) emphasizes the importance of clearly defining the target population and ensuring that the chosen sample is representative of it. The size of the parental sample was determined as 377 parents who were selected at random (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

The sample comprised 80.64% females and 19.36% males (Figure 1A). The higher female participation can be attributed to the fact that, in the Sri Lankan context, mothers are predominantly responsible for the early education of young children. The sample covers both rural (76.66) and urban (23.34%) sectors in Sri Lanka (Figure 1 B). In Sri Lanka, the urban-rural classification delineates geographic area, with urban areas governed by Municipal Councils and Urban Councils, while rural areas fall under the authority of Pradeshiya Sabhas

(Department of Census and Statistics, 2012). The urban and rural distributions of parents in a sample population reflect the country's general trend in population distribution (Ritchie & Roser, 2018).

**Figure 1**

*Distribution of Respondents by Gender (A) and Sector (B)*

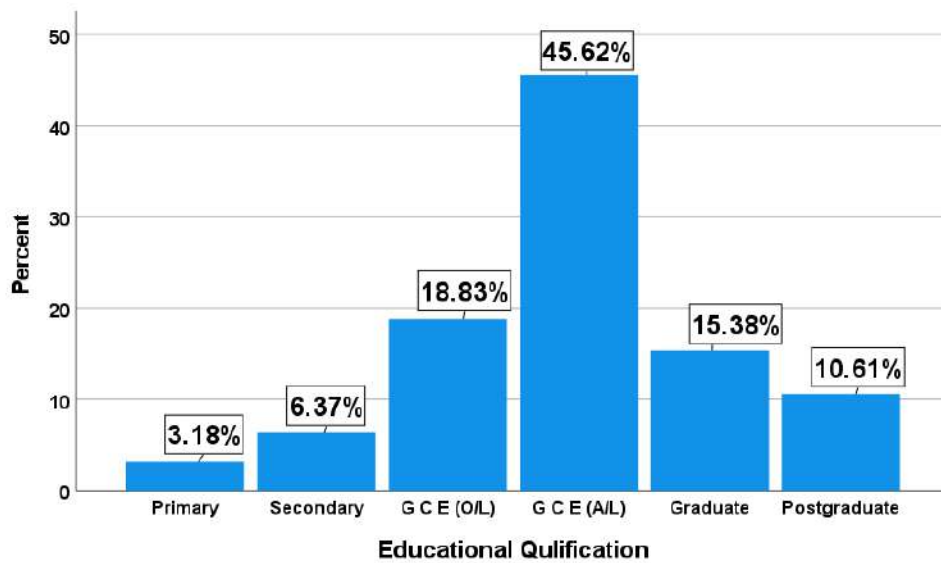


The participants' educational qualifications were summarized and presented in Table 1 indicating that most respondents possessed G C E (A/L) qualification (45.62%), and lower percentages were observed for the G C E (O/L), secondary level of education and primary education by 18.83%, 6.37% and 3.18% respectively (Figure 2). Further, the participants with graduate and postgraduate degrees represented 15.38% and 10.61%. In addition, the distribution of professions among the sample population is illustrated in Table 1. According to the table, it is apparent that the participants are heterogeneous concerning their profession. However, it is worth noting that unemployed participants represent 25.7% of the sample. Meanwhile, professionals (15.4%) and clerical support workers (14.1 %) represent a considerable faction of the parent sample.

In the same way, the educational qualifications of the participants mirror the overall educational patterns of the country (UNESCO- Institute for Statistics, 2023). Most rural women in Sri Lanka are not a part of the workforce, leading to a significant proportion of unemployed parents in the survey (Samarakoon & Mayadunne, 2018). Generally, most men tend to be less involved in child-rearing, especially with younger children, leaving women with the primary responsibility (Boserup et al., 2013). This could be attributed to the fact that most men were employed and thus had limited availability to participate in activities related to preschool-aged children.

**Figure 2**

*Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualifications*





**Table 1**

*Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Profession*

Profession	Frequency	Percent
Manager	24	6.4
Professional	58	15.4
Technicians and associated professionals	22	5.8
Clerical support workers	53	14.1
Service and sales workers	29	7.7
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	12	3.2
Craft-related trades workers	26	6.9
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	29	7.7
Elementary occupations	17	4.5
Armed forces	10	2.7
Unemployed	97	25.7
Total	377	100

The data collection instrument was a pretested and validated parent questionnaire comprising eight (8) indicators rated on a 5-point Likert scale and an open-ended question. Along with this, the questionnaire collected demographic details of the parents. A total of 55 randomly chosen participants completed the pilot survey. The responses were then cross-checked for

correlation between the indicators, revealing a statistically significant correlation ( $p < 0.05$ ) among the indicators in the socio-emotional domain. The internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha test for pilot data, showing an overall Alpha value of 0.831, surpassing the accepted value of 0.7 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). After translation, the questionnaire was converted into Google Forms and distributed among the selected parents of the study. The descriptions and codes (D: Demographic, SEM: Social and Emotional) used in analysing data are presented in Table 2. The participants provided informed consent, and the information received from the participants was confidential. To ensure participant confidentiality, all data were anonymized and stored securely. Efforts were made to include a diverse sample, but regional and socio-economic representation limitations may still exist. Further, data from surveys may be subject to self-reporting bias.

Data were preprocessed and missing and neutral responses were removed from the data set. Subsequently, 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses were merged as 'agree', while 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' responses were combined and represented as 'disagree'. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and graphic presentations were used to summarize media usage patterns and socio-emotional development indicators. Statistical tests examined relationships between parents' perceived media usage by preschoolers and socio-emotional status. Differences between urban and rural settings and gender were analyzed using the  $\chi^2$  test. The relationship between the parents' responses and their educational qualifications and profession was assessed through the Kruskal-Wallis test.

**Table 2**

*Indicators by description*

Item	Description
Demographics	
D1	Sector
D2	Gender of the respondent
D3	Educational qualifications
D4	Profession
Activities	
TV	Programmes the child likes to watch
Computer	Purpose of using these devices (activities using the devices)
Smartphone	Purpose of using the smartphone (activities using the smartphone)
Aspect of socio-emotional (SEM) behaviour promoted through electronic media	
SEM1	Prosocial behaviour (helping others, shouldering responsibilities, etc.)
SEM2	Aggressive/violent behaviours
SEM3	Good manners
Perceptions	
SEM4	Undesirable behaviours (temper tantrums) Excessive use of electronic media (TV, computer or smartphone) prevents children from forming healthy relationships with adults and peers
SEM5	Electronic media, especially games, promote unhealthy competition among children
SEM6	Electronic media functions as entertainment for most children since parents do not have time to play with them or take them out
SEM7	Electronic media functions as entertainment for most children since parents do not have time to play with them or take them out
SEM8	Children become addicted to electronic media
Screen time	
TV	Screen time on TV
Computer	Screen time on the computer
Smartphone	Screen time on the smartphone
OE – Open ended	Additional comments

## Results and Discussion

Data presented in Table 3 reveal that parents have expressed mixed views on the impact of electronic media on preschool children’s social and emotional development.

**Table 3**

*Summary of the Parents’ Responses to Items and their Impact on the Child's Socio-emotional Development*

Item	Response	Frequency	Per cent	Impact
SEM1	Disagree	52	25.2	Negative
	Agree	154	74.8	Positive
SEM2	Disagree	44	17.5	Positive
	Agree	208	82.5	Negative
SEM3	Disagree	50	25.9	Negative
	Agree	143	74.1	Positive
SEM4	Disagree	58	25.2	Negative
	Agree	172	74.8	Positive
SEM5	Disagree	46	16.1	Positive
	Agree	239	83.9	Negative
SEM6	Disagree	67	26.5	Positive
	Agree	186	73.5	Negative
SEM7	Disagree	56	20.0	Negative
	Agree	224	80.0	Positive
SEM8	Disagree	39	11.9	Positive
	Agree	290	88.1	Negative

Parents' ratings of the statement that children learn prosocial behaviours (e.g., helping others, shouldering responsibilities) through electronic media indicated that 40.9% agree or strongly agree, while 13.8% disagree. Conversely, 55.2% of parents agree or strongly agree that children learn aggressive or violent behaviours from electronic media (SEM 2). A significant body of research highlights the negative impact of electronic media on children's behaviour (Huesmann, 2007; Iqbal, 2020; Khan et al., 2022), though several other studies emphasize its positive effects (Erreygers et al., 2017; Ventouris, 2021). These conflicting research findings reflect the mixed perceptions held by Sri Lankan's parents.

Similarly, contradictory views emerged regarding whether children learn good manners from electronic media and whether media consumption encourages temper tantrums. Notably, 38.0% of parents agree or strongly agree that children learn good manners from media, while 40.7% believe media facilitates temper tantrums. Although home remains the primary environment for children to learn manners, parents acknowledge that TV programmes such as "Sesame Street" and the Sri Lankan programme "Sellam Midula" can support positive behaviour development.

Conversely, electronic media, especially mobile phones, can contribute to problematic behaviour. Research by Radesky et al. (2016) suggests that parents often use mobile technology to manage their children's difficult emotions. For instance, parents may give their child a phone to calm them during a temper tantrum (Coyne et al., 2021). Thus, while electronic media can foster positive behaviours, this study identifies a considerable proportion of parents who recognize its potential for misuse, underscoring the importance of promoting wise media use.

This study also found that a majority of parents (63.4%) believe excessive use of electronic media (e.g., TV, computers, smartphones) hinders children's ability to form healthy relationships with adults and peers. Additionally, 49.3% of parents agree that electronic media, particularly games, foster unhealthy competition among children. According to Bikham and Rich (2006), exposure to violent (but not nonviolent) programmes is negatively associated with time spent socializing with friends in children aged 6-8, illustrating the potential impact of media on social relationships. While research on competitive electronic games has focused primarily on their influence on aggression, there is a scarcity of studies examining how excessive engagement in these games promotes competition among children. Given the significant parental agreement on this issue, further research is warranted to explore its effects.

Most parents (59.4%) agree or strongly agree that electronic media serve as entertainment for children, especially since many parents lack the time to engage in play or outdoor activities with them. This study revealed that 22.3% of Sri Lankan preschool children use electronic media for entertainment, while a significant majority (76.9%) also agree or strongly agree that children become addicted to electronic media. The findings suggest that parents are aware of the risks associated with excessive screen time, echoing research that links prolonged internet use to internet addiction.

Further to their responses to the Likert type questions, parents expressed various views on the influence of electronic media on their children's socio-emotional development, such as:

- Children's behaviours and activities change based on the programmes they watch; parents must select appropriate content.

- Proper training in the use of electronic media is necessary.
- Parental presence during media use is essential.
- Children must be taught to distinguish between good and bad content.
- Media can have both positive and negative effects as children adopt both good and bad habits.
- Electronic media use requires structured guidelines.
- Under parental supervision, media can be beneficial.
- Parental supervision can prevent negative influences and addiction.
- Children lacking parental attention are more likely to become addicted to TV.
- Children learn by imitating characters they see on TV.

These views indicate that most parents are aware of both the beneficial and adverse effects of electronic media. Supportive measures, including government regulations, are needed to help parents manage their children's media consumption effectively.

Table 4 compares parents' responses across items in the socio-emotional domain regarding preschool children's screen time on television, computers, and smartphones.

**Table 4**

*Comparison of the Socio-emotional Domain Items by Parents' Reported Screen Time (High and Low Exposure) on TV, Computer and Smartphones ( $\chi^2$  test)*

Item	Television	Sig.	Computers	Sig.	Smartphone	Sig.
SEM1	4383.5	0.126	4222.5	0.695	3287.0	0.001
SEM2	6019.5	0.076	5196.0	0.005	6114.0	0.674
SEM3	3983.0	0.220	3681.0	0.167	3559.0	0.463
SEM4	5085.0	0.019	4370.0	0.061	5062.5	0.380
SEM5	7927.5	0.030	5979.0	0.003	7229.0	0.137
SEM6	6564.0	0.389	4586.0	0.007	5599.0	0.143
SEM7	7972.0	0.275	6732.0	0.237	6424.0	0.010
SEM8	11344.5	0.511	7094.5	0.000	9587.5	0.197

According to Table 4, parents' responses to the items on the screen time indicated significant differences in the parents' reported screen time on television for the items SEM4 ( $\chi^2 = 5085.0$ ,  $p = 0.019$ ) and SEM5 ( $\chi^2 = 7927.5$ ,  $p = 0.030$ ). Meanwhile, the responses to SEM2 ( $\chi^2 = 5196.0$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ), SEM5 ( $\chi^2 = 5979.0$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), SEM6 ( $\chi^2 = 4586.0$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ), SEM8 ( $\chi^2 = 7094.5$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Of the items related to the screen time of the Smartphone, two items, SEM1 ( $\chi^2 = 3287.0$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), SEMO7 ( $\chi^2 = 6424.0$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ), were significantly varied across the types of media. This discrepancy could be attributed to the respondents' demographics under consideration. Parents utilize mobile technology to manage challenging emotions (Radesky et al., 2016). For instance, when a child is irritable, parents often give them a phone to calm him down (Coyne et al., 2021). The present study reveals that a significant portion of parents are aware of this, which could enable them to make more informed decisions about the use of electronic media.



The types of electronic media parents perceive as beneficial or detrimental to children's social and emotional development were identified by comparing parents' reported ratings on the screen time spent on each type (Table 5).

**Table 5**

*Comparison of the Socio-emotional Domain Items Reported by Parents (High and Low Exposure) on Programmes on TV and Activities on Computers and Smartphones ( $\chi^2$  test)*

Item	TV programs	Sig.	Activities on computer	Sig.	Activities on smartphone activity	Sig.
SEM1	29.8	0.000	4.3	0.502	20.9	0.001
SEM2	61.8	0.000	19.8	0.001	10.6	0.060
SEM3	32.7	0.000	1.8	0.878	11.0	0.050
SEM4	23.5	0.005	7.5	0.187	13.5	0.019
SEM5	36.1	0.000	8.4	0.136	26.9	0.000
SEM6	26.5	0.002	8.4	0.135	10.1	0.074
SEM7	39.3	0.000	27.5	0.000	8.5	0.131
SEM8	51.6	0.000	22.9	0.000	35.6	0.000

The comparison of the parents' reported ratings illustrated in Table 5 indicates that almost all the items considered under the socio-emotional domain varied significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ). Further, the parents' rating of the items related to computer activities, such as SEM2 (19.8,  $p = 0.001$ ), SEM7 (27.5,  $p = 0.000$ ), SEM8 (22.9,  $p = 0.000$ ) indicated a statistically significant difference. Activities on smartphone activity, according to the parents' ratings SEM1 (20.9,  $p = 0.001$ ), SEM3 (11.0,  $p = 0.050$ ), SEM4 (13.5,  $p = 0.019$ ), and SEM5 (26.9,  $p = 0.000$ ), varied

significantly. These findings reveal that most parents know that their kids spend time on TV programmes and it affects them adversely. According to Bikham and Rich (2006), spending time with friends while a youngster is between six and eight is inversely correlated with watching violent television (but not peaceful television). This research has shown how electronic media can impact social ties. Many parents' responses seem to support this remark, and further research is required to determine its impact.

Table 6 illustrates the results of the chi-square test conducted to identify whether there is a significant difference between parents' demographic characteristics (sector, gender, educational qualifications and profession) and their perceptions on the impact of electronic media on children's socio-emotional development.

**Table 6**

*Comparison of Parents' Responses by Sector and Gender and Educational Qualifications*

*( $\chi^2$  test)*

Item	Sector		Gender		Educational qualification		Professional qualification	
		Sig.		Sig.		Sig.		Sig.
SEM1	4365.0	0.959	3060.0	0.056	7.94	0.160	15.2	0.085
SEM2	4773.5	0.000	3734.0	0.001	12.22	0.032	10.9	0.286
SEM3	3306.0	0.047	3276.5	0.677	5.24	0.387	2.30	0.986
SEM4	4753.0	0.100	3082.5	0.002	7.02	0.219	10.2	0.331
SEM5	6279.0	0.006	5199.0	0.003	22.35	0.000	13.9	0.125
SEM6	4962.0	0.012	4265.0	0.096	4.97	0.419	19.4	0.022
SEM7	6831.5	0.268	4747.5	0.003	13.64	0.018	24.5	0.004
SEM8	8026.5	0.000	6937.0	0.002	8.30	0.140	14.3	0.112

Comparatively, SEM2, SEM3, SEM5, SEM6, and SEM8 differ significantly across the sector ( $p < 0.05$ ) while responses to the items SEM2, SEM4, SEM5, SEM7 and SEM8 indicated a significant difference between the genders ( $p < 0.05$ ). The parents' educational qualifications indicated negligible differences in their responses; however, responses to the items SEM2, SEM5, and SEM7 showed significant differences (Table 6). In summary, a comparison of the responses across the sector, gender and educational qualifications imply that the respondents' demographic backgrounds have a certain influence on the responses. There was an array of research on the adverse effects of electronic media on children's behaviours (Iqbal, 2020; Kahn et al., 2022) as well as research that highlights its positive effects (Erreygers et al., 2017; Ventouris, 2021;) and these researches support the conflicting views of Sri Lankan parents.

## **Conclusions**

This study found that parents are well aware of both the positive and negative impacts of electronic media on their children's socio-emotional development. Overall, most parents hold a positive attitude toward electronic media, believing that it helps foster prosocial behaviour, teaches good manners and aids in managing temper tantrums. Additionally, parents recognize that electronic media provides valuable entertainment for children, particularly when they are unable to spend time with them. It was also noted that a majority of parents are also aware that electronic media promotes negative behaviours such as aggressiveness.

The study also found that parents' perceptions of the impact of electronic media on their children's socio-emotional development vary according to sector, gender, educational qualification, and profession. In general, parents' perceptions of the effects of electronic

media on their preschool children's socio-emotional development reflect a nuanced understanding shaped by their diverse demographic backgrounds.

## **Recommendations**

The study underscores the importance of guiding parents to strike a balance between leveraging the benefits of electronic media and limiting its potential harm to ensure healthy socio-emotional development in their children.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance the socio-emotional development of preschool children while promoting healthy media habits among parents and educators:

1. Encourage balanced media usage:

It is essential to promote a balanced approach to media consumption among preschool children. This involves integrating high-quality educational content with opportunities for active play and social interactions. Such a balanced approach can support healthy socio-emotional development, enabling children to engage with media in a way that complements their growth and learning.

2. Provide resources and guidelines:

Equipping parents and educators with accessible resources and clear guidelines for effective media usage is crucial. These resources should aim to mitigate the negative impacts of

electronic media while enhancing its educational value. By offering practical strategies and best practices, parents and educators can make informed decisions that align with the developmental needs of preschool children.

3. Emphasize cultural relevance in media content:

This study underscores the significance of balancing media usage with other developmental activities. Additionally, it highlights the necessity for culturally relevant media content that resonates with the experiences and values of families in Sri Lanka. Developing media that reflects the cultural context can enhance children's understanding of their environment and foster a sense of belonging.

4. Offer awareness raising programmes for parents:

Providing awareness-raising programmes and resources for parents on managing screen time, selecting age-appropriate content and engaging in co-viewing activities can significantly benefit children's media experiences. Such programmes can empower parents to make informed decisions regarding media consumption and encourage them to reinforce positive experiences through shared viewing and discussions.

5. Foster healthy media habits:

Parents should be encouraged to foster healthy media habits themselves. Engaging in interactive activities that do not involve screens, such as reading together, playing board games, or participating in outdoor activities, can foster meaningful interactions and promote the development of social skills. By prioritizing non-screen activities, parents can create a balanced environment that supports their children's overall development.

These findings provide the baseline information on the impact of electronic media on the socio-emotional development of preschool children to teachers, professionals and policy-makers for preparation of guidelines in the future for fostering a holistic approach to media usage, ensuring that preschool children benefit from educational content while also engaging in enriching activities that support their socio-emotional growth.

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## ***Life of Pi* as an Advanced Level Text: Teachers' Perceptions on Overcoming Challenges of Teaching Magic Realism**

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### **Abstract**

Magic Realism has been spreading globally over the last three decades, attracting many authors and a wide audience. Despite a mixed response from certain students and readers, a large number of such texts are used as course material, including the current G.C.E. Advanced Level (A/L) English syllabus in Sri Lanka. However, the Sri Lankan English Literature curriculum has received little attention from a pedagogical perspective in contrast to the English Language curriculum. This issue is related to the larger problem of literature pedagogy being underdeveloped worldwide. Therefore, this study explored the innovative teaching methods used by teachers against the challenges faced when teaching Magic Realism (in this case, *Life of Pi*) to A/L students. A narrative inquiry was conducted following a qualitative research approach, utilizing a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews as research tools. The data were thematically analyzed using the six-phase framework proposed by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2012). Accordingly, five distinct themes were identified: 'The selection of *Life of Pi* as a conscious effort', 'Teaching *Life of Pi* as an Advanced Level text', 'Challenges faced while teaching *Life of Pi*', 'Overcoming challenges', and 'Opinions on the inclusion of Magic Realism and *Life of Pi* in the A/L syllabi'. Results indicated a lack of clear guidelines on teaching and agreed-upon interpretations. To overcome the challenges, various innovative strategies such as concept maps, thematic approaches, role play, debates, discussions on WhatsApp groups, and extracting examples from mythology, fables and Biblical stories had been utilized by teachers. Findings imply that teachers require adequate guidance and training when teaching a new genre. A broader study representing teachers from different districts would provide further insights.

**Keywords:** Teaching Magic Realism and *Life of Pi*, challenges of teaching a new genre, innovative teaching strategies, GCE A/L English syllabus, English Literature

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## **Introduction**

Literature, over centuries, has undergone many variations that have been accompanied by numerous styles of writing. They varied according to the then prevailing socio-political circumstances. Post-Realism, which essentially covers a range of non-realist narrative styles, including Magic Realism, has been a noteworthy tendency in fiction spreading globally over the last three decades, attracting a great number of authors and a wide audience.

Magic Realism is a genre which is a combination of Realism and Fantasy that operates on the 'natural' growth of magical elements out of a depicted reality (Faris, 2002). It unfolds a story; not a mere story but an elaborate one in which reality is blended with fantastic elements. However, there is a visible mixed response from certain students and readers towards this style. These responses vary from positive to negative; from confused to nonchalant. In spite of such responses, today, a rapid growth in fiction belonging to this genre is visible in the market. Further, a large number of such texts are used as course material in various academic programmes, including the current General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) Advanced Level (A/L) English syllabus in Sri Lanka.

### **Pedagogy of English literature: Global and local scenarios**

Unlike most other subjects worldwide, the pedagogy of English Literature has always been an underdeveloped area, which is a problematic situation. In contrast to teaching English Language, there is a dearth of globally accepted methods of teaching Literature, and writing and assessing answers, which is a significant shortcoming in Literature curricula. In addition, studies have made less contribution to the development of the field of Literature pedagogy,

and as a result, there are visibly vast differences among curricula, and have led to a lack of guidance for literature teachers worldwide. As Raees Calafato (2023) points out, literary competence has been least researched, and studies explicitly on teachers' literary competence are practically non-existent, which is a notable gap in our understanding of the professional competence of language teachers concerning the use of literature as a resource.

Similarly, English Literature in the Sri Lankan curriculum has received little attention from a specifically pedagogical perspective in contrast to Language, and this issue is related to the larger problem of Literature pedagogy being underdeveloped worldwide. The A/L English Literature syllabus and assessment as opposed to the Language syllabus, has been problematic because there is little explicit guidance on what specific skills or competencies have to be acquired by students, and how these are to be evaluated and assessed by teachers and examiners. In such a context, it seemed worthwhile exploring the teaching methods followed by the relevant teachers to overcome these challenges when teaching Magic Realism, a genre that most students and teachers are unfamiliar with.

### **Introduction of Magic Realism to the school syllabus**

The current G.C.E. A/L English syllabus in Sri Lanka, which was introduced in 2017, includes a fictional novel belonging to the genre of Magic Realism; *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel (2014). The introduction of Magic Realism to the syllabus was actually a good move in keeping with global trends. Further, Magic Realism is a Post Realist genre in which storytelling is the foremost feature. In this regard, storytelling is a key method of educating the listener on world experiences while providing entertainment evidencing its significance as a pedagogical tool (Coulter et al., 2007).

However, *Life of Pi* is the only Post Realist text among a list of Realist novels in the A/L syllabus and a first of its kind, which makes it a novel experience for the teacher as well as the student. Moreover, despite this introduction being a good move, the process has been inadequately scaffolded, particularly because Realism is the more popular literary genre and is the one that most students and teachers can easily relate to.

### **Current study**

Based on these circumstances, this study sought to investigate the innovative teaching methods used by the relevant teachers against the challenges they face when teaching Magic Realism (in this case, *Life of Pi*) to G.C.E. A/L students where Realism is the dominant literary genre. Further, this study intended to uncover answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the perception of teachers on teaching *Life of Pi* as an Advanced Level text?
2. What are the challenges of teaching *Life of Pi* and teaching Magic Realism?
3. What teaching methods are utilized to overcome these challenges?

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Magic Realism**

The term 'Magic Realism' was first coined in German as "Magischer Realismus" by the famous German painter Franz Roh in 1925 to refer to a particular artistic style (Widdifield, 2015). Since it was part of the movement Expressionism, this style exhibited a tendency towards referring to objects that are implausible and celestial while resorting to mundane occurrences of

everyday life (Roh, 1995). However, Roh's work soon faded in its country of origin due to political reasons but spread among certain other European lands through Surrealistic movements affecting the literary works of the latter (Widdifield, 2015). Soon, there sprung up numerous definitions and opinions on Magic Realism which were, more or less, similar. Angel Flores (1955) considered it an alteration of the mundane and the verisimilitude into the overwhelming and illusory, or even a mingling of 'realism and fantasy'. Luis Leal (1967) asserted that unlike the Realists who imitated reality, Magic Realists attempt to capture the ambiguity that lingers around it, while Zamora (1995) requested the reader to 'look beyond the parameters of the knowable' in Magic Realist texts.

In order to be more specific, it is vital to explore the difference between Magic Realism and other Post Realist genres, such as Fantasy and Surrealism, since they do have subtle differences while sharing certain common traits. Literature teachers need to be aware of these differences as well as similarities when teaching the genre to their students for better understanding and also to avoid confusion over genres. For instance, Fantasy is located in an author-created world that is fundamentally detached from our own, whereas Magic Realism exists in a recognizably real world (Widdifield, 2015). Yet, due to certain fantastic elements, such as dreams and fantasies, Fantasy shares certain similarities with Magic Realism.

On the other hand, Surrealism is a significant movement of Modernism in which 'dreamlike, irrational and sometimes supernatural elements are projected upon reality in order to distort it' (Widdifield, 2015). As a result, the line between these two genres could be a little blurred. However, Magic Realism per se has its own concerns that lay claim to certain features that keep fluctuating. Therefore, in certain instances, it becomes problematic to demarcate Magic



Realism from other Post Realist genres. This happens due to the variability of definitions, vague explanations and notions of barely discernible alterations in the historical development of Magic Realism (Guenther, 1995). As a result, the confusion that developed because of this problematic demarcation might be a challenge to teachers and students teaching and learning Magic Realist texts. In fact, over the years, critics have faced difficulties in defining the features of Magic Realism as it faintly overlays with other alike genres, such as Surrealism, Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Gothic (Aishwarya & Devimeenakshi, 2023). Accordingly, the manner in which teachers face such challenges and the methods they use in overcoming them were queries that led to the emergence of this study.

### **Implications of promoting the use of Magic Realism as a pedagogical tool**

The generations before ours were greatly influenced by storytelling due to the absence of printed and electronic media, and storytelling provided much entertainment and facilitated communication. However, over the years, factors such as the deterioration of extended family structures, disinterest, and the increased workload of parents as well as the unwillingness of schoolteachers to move beyond school syllabi have had a negative impact on the exposure of children to storytelling (Kumarasinghe, 2009). Despite such a situation, children still prefer to listen to a good story that would allow their imagination to run wild and will, presumably, carry this fondness for stories until they are adults (Violetta-Eirini, 2016). As such, the inclusion of a Magic Realist text – of which storytelling is a distinctive characteristic – in the English syllabus seems a step forward in generating enthusiasm among students towards their study materials. This step has been taken in including *Life of Pi* in the new G.C.E. A/L English syllabus.

There are some other plausible reasons as to why a Magic Realist text qualifies to be taught among a collection of Realist texts. The perspective of Magic Realism or how it has been utilized in a specific text may vary according to the culture and history of the country in which it is set (Jorgenson, 2007). For example, Magic Realist creations of Sri Lankan authors would invariably reflect the Jathaka Stories and folk tales which are an integral part of Sri Lankan culture. Similarly, a South American Magic Realist author would reflect the history of his culture in his works. Hence, students obtain an opportunity to view an unfamiliar depiction of Magic Realism by studying a Magic Realist author creation of another country.

Furthermore, Magic Realist texts contain numerous interesting areas to focus on when used as a pedagogical tool (Bell, 2015). For instance, such texts represent the identity of a particular group of people, times, and places, and thereby allow students studying them to develop their multicultural intelligence by mirroring the historical, cultural, hierarchical, and ideological perspectives on which they are based (Bell, 2015). As a result, students can develop empathy by becoming more meaningfully engaged in the text.

Fantasy – a sub-genre of Post Realism, as mentioned previously – too allows the reader to view the world in different ways by providing a fictional platform on which to relate to his/her own reality. It operates through metaphors opening the stories to different readings and explorations of complex social issues which are more challenging activities than merely viewing them in a realistic context. These metaphors allow young readers to locate meaningful relationships among seemingly dissimilar ideas (Flanagan, 2013).

Thus, many academic studies have proved that Magic Realist texts are as suitable as Realist texts to be utilized as pedagogical tools in a secondary school syllabus.

### **The current G.C.E. Advanced Level English syllabus in Sri Lanka**

The current English syllabus pertaining to the G.C.E. A/L Examination was introduced in 2017. As all previous A/L English syllabi, this also consists of two components: Language and Literature. While the structure in the examination paper of the former component has remained the same over the years, the latter has been compiled using many new texts (together with a few pre-existing texts) at every change of syllabus.

Compared to past syllabi the current syllabus includes a particular novel which is different from the usual Realist novels; this is *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel (2014), a text heavily influenced by Magic Realism. This is also the only Post Realist novel among four other novels: *Tess of d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy, a Realistic fictional novel; *July's People* by Nadine Gordimer, and *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro which are fictional novels with a historical background; and *Nectar in a Sieve* by Kamala Markandaya, which is a fictional autobiography. Among them, both *July's People* and *The Remains of the Day* are not traditional Realist novels but push the margins of Realism. However, they still fall under the category of Realist texts due to the relatability of characters and incidents to real life. That said, *Life of Pi* is a clear deviation from Realism and is also the only truly Post Realist/Magic Realist text in the syllabus, and it is an unfamiliar genre from a teacher's perspective because the English syllabus until 2017 has always contained fiction inclined towards Realism. Further, this introduction has not exactly been a gradual process though *July's People* and *The Remains of the Day* have slightly pushed the margins of Realism. The lack of scaffolding in introducing the genre makes the

teaching process even more challenging. In spite of these barriers, certain teachers have opted to teach *Life of Pi*, and the methods they have used in teaching this text would undoubtedly be rich data for a timely study in the field of secondary school literature pedagogy.

It was also important to learn what resources are available for teachers when an unfamiliar genre is introduced to the syllabus. The only source located by this search was the Teachers' Guide (Department of English, 2017) issued by the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences of the National Institute of Education (NIE), Sri Lanka.

The Teachers' Guide is a comprehensive booklet that clearly mentions the national goals, basic competencies and objectives that need to be achieved through the specific syllabus and the relevant texts that have been introduced in accomplishing them. It specifies the precise competency levels that need to be attained through each text. For example, according to the Teacher's Guide, *Life of Pi* must focus on 'developing a personal response to a text through critical thinking and analyzing' (Department of English, 2017, p. 26), which is the sixth competency mentioned out of thirteen competencies. Under this competency, as levels of sub competency, students must be taught to 'empathize with the text, characters, emotions, and attitudes; relate ideas, emotions, and attitudes generated by the text to their personal and world knowledge; scrutinize them in relation to their own reality and understanding of the world and improve their quality of thought and feeling through reading' (Department of English, 2017, p. 26).

However, what is problematic in this situation is that, along with *Life of Pi*, the poems *Among School Children* by W. B. Yeats, *The Cathedral Builders* by John Ormond, *Morning at the Window* by T. S. Eliot, and *Ode to a Nightingale* by John Keats and also the short story *The Thing Around Your Neck* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie are prescribed as texts for obtaining the sixth competency. Further, the detailed guidelines for the said competency are also presented for the above-mentioned texts which include the learning outcomes, development of questions that lead the students to think critically, instructions for assessment and evaluation and the possible clinical assessment tools (Department of English, 2017). Evidently, in spite of *Life of Pi* being the first of its genre to be introduced to the syllabus, no specific instructions are provided to guide the teachers who teach it. Therefore, this has become quite a challenging situation for many teachers. However, in spite of these challenges, certain teachers have opted to teach *Life of Pi*. Hence, discovering how these challenges were faced and overcome by these teachers was important.

### **The research gap**

The inclusion of a Magic Realist novel in the G.C.E. A/L English syllabus has occurred for the first time in Sri Lanka. As a result, the relevant teachers face the challenging task of introducing a relatively new literary genre to their students as well as training them to answer examination questions based on the prescribed text. However, teaching *Life of Pi* is optional, since a student must be conversant only in two out of the five prescribed novels, while no text is compulsory. Apparently, there are only a few teachers who have opted to teach *Life of Pi*. The reluctance of the other teachers suggests that there are many challenges in teaching the text.

There are numerous articles and studies carried out on teaching and understanding Magic Realism and certain Magic Realist texts. Reading for Magical Gaps: The Novice Reader's Aesthetic Response to Magical Realism (Ponzio, 2013) proposes techniques in responding to the Magic Realist elements found in *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel and *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende. Practical Magic: Magical Realism and the Possibilities of Representation in Twenty-First Century Fiction and Film (Mariboho, 2016) discusses how Magic Realism has been successfully utilized in presenting the 'contemporary anxieties in popular culture' by referring to the fictional works of Tea Obreht and Haruki Murakami and also movies such as *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Take Shelter* and *Melancholia*. Related to *Life of Pi*, there are studies focusing on certain Magic Realist aspects. For instance, while *Life of Pi: A Story of Suffering and Liberation from a Buddhist Interpretation* (Hsu, 2015) discusses how Magic Realism operates as a 'universal allegory' in explaining how one could be free of suffering from a Buddhist perspective, *Life of Pi: Emerging Magical Realism, Erasing World* (Septiana et al., 2015) explores how an erasure of the world through Magic Realism is utilized as a strategy in *Life of Pi*, a novel that represents Post Realist literature.

Since the inclusion of a Magic Realist text into the G.C.E A/L English Syllabus is novel and the introduction took place only a few years ago, there is a dearth of studies conducted on the experiences of teaching and learning related to it. Besides, as mentioned previously, the scarcity of teachers who opt to teach *Life of Pi* evidence that not many are willing to teach it. As a result, this study explores the challenges the relevant teachers have faced while teaching it and the methods they have used to overcome them. The findings and conclusions of this study may contribute to the development of literature pedagogy in the country and pave the way for more research studies in the field.

## **Methodology**

### **Research approach**

The purpose of this study was to investigate a currently existing scenario in the field of teaching at G.C.E. (A/L) and focusing on a specific text in English Literature. Narrative inquiry, which is a qualitative research approach, has been adopted in this study. A narrative inquiry typically focuses on a lived experience identifying stories situated within social, cultural, economic and institutional narratives (Clandinin & Caine, 2008). Such an inquiry is conducted by analyzing qualitative data, and the current study also took the same approach. Qualitative research methods play a vital role in gathering in-depth data which facilitate a deeper understanding of a certain condition. Their focus is mostly on a hypothesis related to human experience and suitable methods that would be developed in exploring its validity (Butler-Kisber, 2010). Accordingly, since only a few teachers have selected *Life of Pi* due to various reasons such as the genre being relatively new and its difference from other prescribed Realist texts, this research attempted to perform an in-depth study on the techniques followed by these teachers in overcoming the challenges faced by them and other possible but undiscovered teaching practices that might materialize during the interviews and discussions that may help in teaching this genre, so that more teachers would be encouraged to teach the genre and more students will be motivated to learn this text.

### **Participants of the study**

This study was conducted with the participation of purposively selected four (04) teachers who teach *Life of Pi* to their students. They are named Tilak (Teacher 1 - Male), Tania (Teacher 2 - Female), Thilan (Teacher 3 - Male) and Tracy (Teacher 4 - Female) in order to maintain their

anonymity. Among them, Tilak and Tania are employed as A/L English teachers in local schools. They also conduct private tuition classes in which they teach *Life of Pi*. Thilan lectures on English Linguistics and Literature to students in a private higher educational institute while conducting private classes for A/L students. Tracy is an Ordinary Level (O/L) and A/L English teacher in an international school; however, she too teaches the novel in the private classes she conducts for local A/L students. In addition to teaching *Life of Pi*, they all teach several other Realist novels prescribed in the A/L syllabus.

Apart from being a purposive sample, the participants are also a convenient sample since they were approached based on accessibility. For instance, all four teachers are either employed in schools or conduct private tuition classes in the Colombo District. Besides, when conducting a search for participants, it was apparent that there was a dearth of teachers who preferred teaching this novel to their students even within the suburbs of Colombo. In other districts, the numbers were quite insignificant. As a result, collection of data had to be limited to the Colombo District as well as to a small number of participants. In fact, even within the Colombo District, it was problematic to find teachers who taught *Life of Pi* during the time this study was conducted. Furthermore, this is part of a larger study on 'Teacher and Student Perceptions and Experiences regarding Teaching and Learning Magic Realist Texts in a Secondary School Context' and it included four students as well who studied *Life of Pi* for their A/L Examination which made a total of eight participants. However, the current study focuses only on the teachers' perceptions, and hence the participation of four teachers only. The dearth of teachers who opted to teach the text at the time of the study conducted compelled the researcher to rely on data available from a limited number of participants.



### **Collection and analysis of data**

There were two main tools that were used for data collection for this study: a questionnaire administered among the participant teachers and semi-structured interviews conducted with them.

The analysis of the data was done using a thematic analysis based on the six-phase approach framework proposed by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2012): 1) Familiarizing yourself with the data Phase 2) Generating initial codes 3) Searching for themes 4) Reviewing potential themes Phase 5) Defining and naming themes Phase and 6) Producing the report.

### **Ethical considerations**

The participants in the study provided sensitive information trusting that their anonymity will be maintained. Therefore, before extracting the relevant details, they were assured that their identities will not be disclosed. It was on these premises that all data were collected for this study and the data do not contain any names or places that will reveal the participants' identities.

### **Results and Discussion**

As mentioned before, an in-depth analysis of the data was done using a thematic analysis based on the six-phase approach framework (Braun & Clarke, 2012), and accordingly, five distinct themes were identified: 'The selection of *Life of Pi* as a conscious effort', 'Teaching *Life of Pi* as an Advanced Level text', 'Challenges faced while teaching *Life of Pi*', 'overcoming

challenges', and 'Opinions on the inclusion of Magic Realism and *Life of Pi* in the Advanced Level syllabus'.

The results and discussion of this study are presented under the three research questions while incorporating the above-mentioned themes.

### **What is the perception of teachers on teaching *Life of Pi* as an Advanced Level text?**

#### ***The selection of Life of Pi as a conscious effort***

In terms of selecting texts, Tania, Thilan, and Tracy, in their private tuition classes, had taken a liberal approach by accommodating the choice of their students' schoolteachers, they had willingly decided to teach *Life of Pi* since their tuition students were already studying it in school. Elaborating on this matter, Tania provided several reasons for her flexibility in selecting texts such as preventing students from being penalized by their schoolteachers for taking tuition and providing a wider selection of texts to the students.

*"Private students, whatever they are taught in school, I cater to that. If they feel uncomfortable or some of them struggle; they are struggling with Tess .... [Tess of the d'Urbervilles] So, I ask them "why don't we then do July's People, whichever is better. Or do you want to do Life of Pi?" I've asked them that. Then they say, "okay fine, we'll do July's People". So, I take them through that and overview and then they get into it."*

*– Tania*

On the other hand, Tilak was adamant about teaching only his two choices at school as well as in his private classes and was quite verbal about it.

*"I always say, "You can do this with me and then you can have a selection. Whatever*

*you feel like, you can select when you're answering questions." – Tilak*

Accordingly, Tilak had been somewhat rigid in his selection by opting out three of the five prescribed novels and leaving not much of a choice for his students. Therefore, *Life of Pi* had to be learnt by his students whether they preferred to study it or not.

### ***Teaching Life of Pi as an Advanced Level text***

Since teaching a Magic Realist text was a novel experience, it was imperative to discover how the teacher participants introduced it to their respective students. Accordingly, they were requested to explain how they had addressed this task.

Tilak gave no reason as to why he did not attempt to explain that *Life of Pi* was a Magic Realist text. His responses suggest that he was unaware of the differences between Magic Realism and Realism and therefore saw no need to provide a nuanced introduction to the genre.

*"I have introduced that word saying this story goes into this genre. Other than that, nothing. Briefly, if a question is to be attempted, I would have given them some brief points on Magic Realism and a few characteristics. Actually, I have never told this is different from the other novels, but once they grapple with that, they know it is different." – Tilak*

Perhaps this happened due to the lack of proper guidance provided by the NIE in terms of introducing this genre in the resource material.

Thilan too had consciously underplayed the introduction of Magic Realism based on his students' confusion over Fantasy and Magic Realism. So, when he introduced *Life of Pi*, he had only highlighted its 'twisted plots' and 'thickness' as a novel, as the main differences between the texts.

*"I prepared them because I told them this is actually a very thick novel and also it has lot of twisted plots in it, so you better be careful with it, kind of a thing." – Thilan*

On the other hand, Tania had introduced the genre to her students with its relevant characteristics. She had discussed it broadly and referred to it when she came across any features related to the genre while teaching the novel. She had also used examples of Fantasy fiction, such as *Peter Pan*, to highlight the differences between Fantasy and Magic Realism better. Tracy too had provided a breakdown of the genre at the beginning of the course so they could refer to the generic features while progressing with the novel.

*"I get them to make a note of it. I get them to write it down. They have a note book with them..... I always start up with it because I feel, like, while going on, if I come across Magic Realism, I break the flow, and then I go on to this note and come back. They lose the plot line. So, what I do is I introduce every single thing at the onset. So, when it is Magic Realism and the whole argument and this whole conflict and all the, Pi's interest in spirituality and God, I start up with the thematic concerns and then the literary techniques, the use of language, narrators; to observe, like, just look out. So, then when they read, they get, "Oh! This is what Miss was talking about". So, they take the note down." – Tracy*

Accordingly, the introduction of the novel and the respective literary genre had varied according to each individual's preference and knowledge.

***Opinions on the inclusion of Magic Realism and Life of Pi in the Advanced Level syllabus***

Despite being faced with many challenges, the participants have been bold enough to continue with it instead of abandoning the book like many others have done with no proper guidance from the relevant authorities on how to teach it or on how it will be assessed. As Tania states,

*“Magic Realism is a theme mentioned in the Teachers’ Guide but not clearly or explicitly defined.” – Tania*

It could be argued that this is why the introduction of Magic Realism to their students had varied among the respondent teachers. Yet, she insisted,

*“...since a child is exposed to fantasy and magic from his/her childhood, the authorities must include it as a main theme in the guidelines and make it more explicit.” – Tania*

However, Thilan confessed that unless his students insisted on studying it, he would not consider teaching *Life of Pi* in the near future evidencing his reluctance to continue teaching it to his future batches of students.

*“I wouldn’t (teach it). I would recommend some other text to them. Because, I personally feel they can’t relate to the depth of the novel. Because ... and the other thing is since it has multiple interpretations, you do not know what they are expecting from you.” – Thilan*

## **What are the challenges of teaching *Life of Pi* and teaching Magic Realism?**

### ***Challenges faced while teaching Life of Pi***

It was imperative to find out how much these teachers had relied on common teaching resources to teach a novel written in a 'different' literary style, since all students would eventually face a common and highly competitive public examination. Accordingly, they were asked to comment on the Teachers' Guide (Department of English, 2017) issued by the NIE, related to the new A/L English syllabus.

Among the four teachers, only Thilan was completely in favour of the Teachers' Guide, and he found it quite comprehensive and helpful.

*"Yes, definitely it has. It has been helpful. It has specifically given what you have to cover and what you need to teach." - Thilan*

The rest of the participants had very few positive comments about its contribution to their teaching. For instance, Tilak complained that he never received a copy of the Teachers' Guide; nor had he attempted to obtain one as he considered its content quite generic and provided insufficient guidance.

*"The content of the Teachers' Guide is very general. Some guidance is there. So, whether have it or not, doesn't matter." - Tilak*

Tracy too was of a similar view. She added that unlike the assessment objectives set down in the London A/L syllabus, the competency levels stated in the Teachers' Guide issued by the NIE are often disregarded in the marking scheme. According to her, the marking scheme of the Local A/L English Syllabus keeps changing every year, and as a result, she preferred

focusing on making her students understand and appreciate the texts rather than confusing them with what is mentioned only vaguely in the Teachers' Guide.

Explicating the same idea, Tania mentioned that the Teacher's Guide does direct the teacher to a certain extent, but that in terms of discussing literary techniques, it is more up to the individual teacher.

*"Even though it has competency levels, it's not like assessment objectives that you would find in a London A/L paper where they actually follow it when they are marking the paper ..... So, I focus completely on making students understand and appreciate and may be just formulate answers, how to write answers. In that sense, I kind of prepare them for questions for the A/Ls. But other than that, I don't do anything special or follow the Teachers' Guide in anyway." – Tania*

Accordingly, there seemed to be a major weakness in the Teachers' Guide in terms of directing teachers on how to teach the prescribed texts with a degree of uniformity; especially, regarding a novel like *Life of Pi* in which the literary style is different to that of other prescribed texts. It must also be noted that the guidelines of G.C.E. A/L were compared with the London A/L since that is the other A/L variant offered to Sri Lankan students.

Another possible means of receiving guidance are the seminars conducted for teachers as well as students. The few seminars held had been organized privately, mainly for students who could afford the fairly high course fee. Thilan mentioned that some of his students who had attended such a seminar had complained that the resource person had provided an entirely different interpretation of *Life of Pi* to what he and their schoolteacher had taught.

*“They attended a seminar; the resource person had a different view ... coming up with another interpretation.” – Thilan*

Tania stated that the NIE should organize such seminars, perhaps involving the exam setters as well. She further stressed that the course fee needs to be subsidized for A/L English teachers or employ sponsorships. These responses confirmed the readiness of teachers to attend such seminars if the opportunity is created under conditions that are economically favourable and also accessible for them.

*“I think they should offer their services or the NIE; the Government should pay them, and maybe, they should probably have a forum where they teach them, ask the teachers to come and sponsor it. Whoever else wants to come, can also come and you kind of educate them on it.” – Tania*

As for the perception on teaching *Life of Pi* as an A/L text, despite the above-mentioned shortcomings, the participants have been bold enough to continue with it instead of abandoning the book like many others have done, despite receiving no proper guidance from the relevant authorities on how to teach it or on how it will be assessed. As Tania states, Magic Realism is a theme mentioned in the Teachers' Guide (Department of English, 2017) but not clearly or explicitly defined. Tracy found the inclusion of the Magic Realist genre quite a 'modern move' and believed that secondary school Literature students should be exposed to as many different genres as possible. She further argued that since kids read various types of magical and fantastical stories, they should not find it a problem to study such stories pedagogically as well.



*“Today’s millennials, they have watched so many things; all these things on zombies and vampires, and they watch absolute rubbish but they try to make sense through that as well.” – Tracy*

Tilak shared the same viewpoint; having read/watched stories/ movies such as *Harry Potter* and other magical adventure stories, he believed that the present generation would not find such ‘fantastic’ themes alien.

The respondent teachers affirmed that *Life of Pi* was not a favourite among their students. According to them, *July’s People*, *The Remains of the Day* and *Nectar in a Sieve* topped the list, all of which are largely Realist narratives. However, even *July’s People* and *The Remains of the Day* were not very popular among teachers and students when they were initially introduced, largely due to the lack of secondary reading material on the same, and due to the general belief that they were ‘difficult’. The ‘safe’ choices seemed to be the time-tested Victorian novels for which it was relatively easier to find material. As such, *Life of Pi* may not have been selected by certain teachers not because it is a Magic Realist novel but because they feared the ‘unknown’.

However, further probing led to the revelation of several other issues related to teaching/learning *Life of Pi* as a Magic Realist text. For instance, Tania insisted that there were many among her private students who had initially commenced studying *Life of Pi* in school but had later abandoned it either because they could not relate to it or because the teacher had decided to discontinue teaching it.

*“They have done Life of Pi and they have said, “Miss, we are not connecting to this in school at all”. So, when that energy is there in school its somewhat brought into class as well. But I have continued with Life of Pi. But then in school, they have dropped it.”*

*– Tania*

Thilan was of the view that his students who disliked the text initially never changed their opinion even when they were about to face the A/L Examination. Tracy mentioned that the choice of a text depended on how comfortable the teacher was with it. She further added that since most teachers lacked the imagination to relate to *Life of Pi*, they preferred more straightforward texts. This seemed a plausible reason for the small number of teachers who had attempted the novel.

*“It’s like teaching Charlie and the Chocolate Factory vs teaching something like Black Beauty or Mill on the Floss or something like that. Something which is very straight forward, which doesn’t require much imagination.” – Tracy*

It seemed that most teachers preferred the comfort zone of Realist novels because previous syllabi were compiled of such texts. However, texts with qualities that departed from classic Victorian novelist fiction are ‘appropriated’ and ‘normalized’ after a while in the syllabus. In other words, with time, they began to be read like normal Realist texts. The dystopian and post-modern qualities of *July’s People* and the metafictional qualities of *The Remains of the Day* were downplayed, and they came to be read like ordinary Realist novels. In the case of *Life of Pi*, if this ‘normalization’ occurs in the future, it will be particularly problematic because this is a novel that clearly departs from the Realist mode.

Based on how much her students had loved the movie of the book, Tania believed that the issue lay more with the narrative style of the story than Magic Realism per se, since she felt that students were quite open to the concepts of the latter. The narrative technique, as she says, put them off at the inception and she insisted that some sort of intervention had to be made by the teacher to hold their interest.

Another major challenge is the multiple interpretations of the novel. Towards the end of the novel, Pi provides two different endings to the Japanese officials whom he meets in Mexico: 1) Pi surviving on a lifeboat at sea for 227 days with a tiger and several other animals 2) Pi's replacement of these animals with human beings to make the story more believable. Apparently, both endings have been taken as different interpretations by various teachers. This seems quite a confusing situation for students. This was created due to the lack of uniformity in teaching a novel belonging to a literary genre which was new to the syllabus. This also points to the larger problem of how literary competencies are assessed. Assessment now appears to be based on the notion of a fairly rigid 'correct' reading, whereas assessment needs to be based on the competency of a student to interpret a text within a reasonable range of interpretations, all demonstrating creative and intellectual skills in interpretation.

### **What teaching methods are utilized to overcome these challenges?**

#### ***Overcoming challenges***

Tania had followed several methods to combat the boredom her students had felt initially when they read through the narrative on their own. For instance, before commencing teaching, she had provided them with an overview of the text comprising the setting, literary genre, and related themes.

*“First, I give them a breakdown of everything and I get them to do a lot of semantic maps and through that, like I kind of introduce new concepts.” – Tania*

She had also asked them to watch the movie, if possible, and research on the novel and its background. She had noticed that the students who had failed to follow her instructions had been bored in class, making no contribution to the discussions that were generated among their peers. Having recommended the movie, she was also aware of its shortcomings as opposed to the novel. Admitting that the movie has not done justice to the book, she had taken advantage of this difference and generated discussions in class by comparing the two genres.

*“How would you improve the movie? What effects could you use?” And then, to test their knowledge, “what things were excluded?” Because there is quite a lot excluded.*

*“What parts are excluded in it?” – Tania*

Another common method utilized to overcome challenges was referring to other texts with similar characteristics. For example, Tilak had extracted examples from Russian folk tales, and his own students had made references to *Harry Potter* and also to Hindu mythology. Tania had referred to the Sinhala stage drama *Sinhabahu* by Prof. Ediriweera Sarachchandra and also to Chinese myths, fables, and Biblical stories. Her students too had made some contributions with a few examples such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* and the paranormal movies they watch quite often, since the impression these movies have made on them had helped them relate to the text better.

Tania had made a WhatsApp group comprising herself and her students. Sometimes, she asked them to play different characters from the novel on the group, and then react to a certain incident within the parameters of that particular role.

*“They have a WhatsApp group and I ask them to sort of assign characters to each other. Like, if there is a novel, even a drama, who do you think ..., because to create a bond even ...” - Tania*

This had helped them to critically analyze the characters as well as certain incidents in the story. Within the WhatsApp group, she had also paved the way for discussions by occasionally posting questions for which the students had to text back their views. Further, she had made them participate in debates in the classroom on topics related to the themes of the story. Getting them to write answers for essay-type and context questions quite frequently was another method she practiced, as she believed that merely talking would only generate ideas but not improve their writing skills, which are essential for the ultimate goal of succeeding in the A/L Examination.

*“Sometimes I type a question and I send it to them which they have to do or I just ask them text me back their ideas and some of them, they just text some ideas back to me on their opinions.” – Tania*

Thilan had made his students draw flow charts depicting the movement of the plot which had aided them in remembering the story sequence. Along with the flow charts, he had also made them create mind maps based on the themes, motives, symbols, important incidents, and special utterances. Yet, the most helpful of all methods – according to him – had been the thematic approach, where he had made them draw a table with eight columns for separate

themes that he had coined by locating parallels between the story and the notes he had searched online; some of these themes were 'Faith, Piety vs Confidence'; 'Individual Identity vs Ego'; and 'Friendship and Mutual Understanding'. Afterwards, they had been assigned to read the book word-to-word and trace quotes relevant to each theme and fill up the table. Subsequently, they were asked to memorize these quotes on the basis that all questions would revolve around these themes. Thilan found this technique very useful and had seen noticeable progress in his students' term end examination marks.

*"They were very successful because I saw a very high progress at their term test. Students who had got 30s and 40s in the first term test, after allocating thematic after rather implementing the thematic approach, they succeeded in getting marks." – Thilan*

However, his stance seemed risky since all potential questions being based on certain limited themes was not something stipulated by any authority but merely assumed by himself. Moreover, the absence of Magic Realism among these themes was quite apparent despite the novel belonging to this genre.

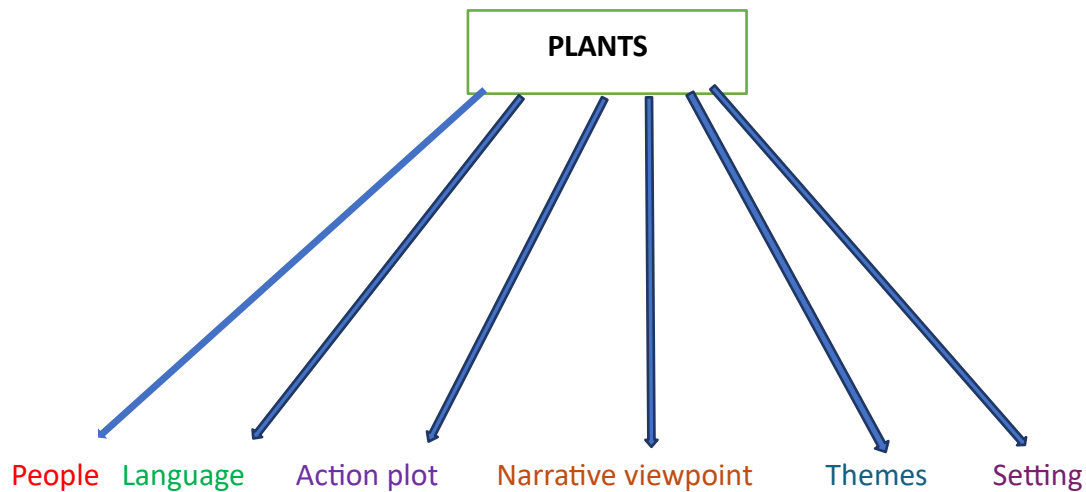
Tracy too had followed a similar method, but not one based on themes; hers was based instead on specific segments.

*"I teach them PLANTS. So, I write first PLANTS. So, plants mean people; then, L is language; A is action plot; N is narrative viewpoint; T is themes; S is setting and what waters and nourishes the plants with social background. So, I introduce that to them." – Tracy*

Figure 1 depicts this technique in a simplified illustration.

**Figure 1**

*Tracy's technique of teaching the main elements of a text*



Tracy had taught her students to interpret any question based on these categories. For example, if the question is about 'change', one must discuss the characters that undergo the change, and the language techniques that are used to highlight it, and the person through whose viewpoint the change is narrated; also, the themes that are highlighted, and the setting the question is based on. Furthermore, she had made them draw concept maps on drawing books, and also write down significant quotes.

On the whole, the four teachers have tried various innovative ways to overcome the challenges inherent in teaching the novel. Yet, noticeably, they had paid little attention to discovering novel ways of introducing the characteristics of Magic Realism to their students,

presumably because they have not been properly guided by the relevant authorities in viewing *Life of Pi* as a Magic Realist text.

## **Conclusions**

The current G.C.E. Advanced Level English syllabus was introduced in 2017 and includes a Magic Realist novel, *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, which was the first of its kind in the syllabus. This study attempted to explore challenges faced by teachers while teaching *Life of Pi*, and the teaching methods followed by them to overcome the challenges. The conclusions of the study are presented under the relevant research questions.

### **What is the perception of teachers on teaching *Life of Pi* as an Advanced Level text?**

The shortage of teachers who opted to teach *Life of Pi* proved that it was the least favoured among the rest of the prescribed novels. Probing into the cause behind the reluctance to teach the novel revealed that there is a dearth of widely and collectively accepted study notes and secondary literature on the relevant subject. As a direct result of the unpopularity of the novel as an A/L text, the number of participants in the sample had to be reduced to four individuals.

One of the most significant findings was how differently the four teachers viewed the teaching of the text. There was also a noticeable difference in how each teacher approached the text; and, depending on their approach, their intention to continue teaching the book to ensuing classes of students also varied. Specific and clearer guidelines need to be developed by the relevant authorities, such as the NIE, and make them available to teachers.



### **What are the challenges of teaching *Life of Pi* and teaching Magic Realism?**

There seems to be a lack of clear guiding principles stipulated by the relevant authorities, Furthermore, there are multiple interpretations made by various readers. The lack of an agreed-upon range of interpretations has led to confusion among teachers. The NIE is best positioned to remedy this issue. It is also important that the goal of assessment shifts from 'correct' interpretations to literary competencies where a range of acceptable interpretations can be accommodated.

The NIE could contribute to resolving the issue by revamping the Teachers' Guide by providing more specific guidelines for all texts, including notes on literary genres, themes, and literary techniques. They could also organize seminars for teachers in order to provide teacher training and insights into assessment and standardized testing, making the teaching process more fruitful and result-oriented.

### **What teaching methods are utilized to overcome these challenges?**

The study also revealed a few interesting and unique techniques utilized by the teachers to mitigate the challenges of teaching *Life of Pi*; some of these are the use of role play, mind maps, concept maps, thematic approaches, PLANTS' (People, Language, Action Plot, Narrative Viewpoint, Themes and Setting), and debates on Magic Realist characteristics, and also discussions and role playing on WhatsApp groups. Such techniques are useful not only in overcoming challenges but also in generating enthusiasm for and enjoyment of the text among students.

## **Limitations**

There are certain limitations that have narrowed the scope of this study. For instance, the sample of participants was restricted to four teachers from the Colombo District. However, since this study was initiated, the number of schools that offer *Life of Pi* as an A/L text has increased, thereby broadening the teacher population who are involved in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, a similar study could be conducted with a larger number of participants representing many more districts. Furthermore, having gained further experience in additional years, the participants of the current study may have newer information to contribute to a follow-up study.

## **Recommendations**

Despite the above limitations, this study provides insights to all teachers who are currently teaching *Life of Pi* and also to those who are considering teaching it in the future, especially on how vital it is to appreciate the novel as a Magic Realist text. Moreover, the NIE must take necessary steps to direct and guide English teachers so they can achieve the expected pedagogical outcomes, thus making teaching-learning of the only Magic Realist text in the English syllabus more fruitful.

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## Developing Creativity and Adaptability Skills in Junior Secondary School Students in Sri Lanka

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### Abstract

Creative arts subjects such as Drama and Theatre provide a productive context for developing 21st-century skills. However, in Sri Lanka, the teaching of aesthetic subjects is still based on a traditional lecture- and exam-oriented approach aimed at providing notes. This exploratory article presents the evaluation results of a drama-based intervention programme specifically designed to develop creative thinking and adaptive skills in junior secondary school students in the Sri Lankan context. The study involved 128 Grade 7 students aged 11–12 and 6 Drama and Theatre teachers. The study was conducted as a non-randomized control trial with an intervention group, a control group and an active control group, addressing the main research question: Does including process drama techniques in the teaching-learning programme in drama improve creative thinking and adaptability skills of junior secondary school students? The programme was implemented by Drama teachers trained in the process drama teaching approach for two hours per week for twelve consecutive weeks. The Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) and Martin's Adaptability Scale were used to assess the intervention through pre and post tests of the students. Classroom observations, teacher interviews and student discussions were conducted to ensure the fidelity, feasibility and acceptability of the intervention. The results showed that when an appropriate environment and opportunities for active engagement are provided, students engage energetically in creative experiences, processes and developments, and their creative thinking and adaptive skills improve significantly. This article suggests new dimensions in Sri Lankan drama teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** Adaptability, creative thinking, intervention, process drama techniques

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## ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ කනිෂ්ඨ ද්විතීයික පාසල් ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලිත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීම

### සංක්ෂිප්තය

නාට්‍ය හා රංගකලාව වැනි නිර්මාණශීලී කලා විෂයයන් 21 වැනි සියවසේ කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීම සඳහා ඵලදායී සන්දර්භයක් සපයන නමුත් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ සෞන්දර්ය විෂයයන් තවමත් ඉගැන්වීම සිදු කෙරෙනුයේ සාම්ප්‍රදායික දේශන සහ සටහන් දීම අරමුණු කරගත් විභාග කේන්ද්‍රීය වූ පදනම මත ය. ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය සන්දර්භය තුළ කනිෂ්ඨ ද්විතීයික පාසල් ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තන හැකියාව සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීම සඳහා විශේෂයෙන් නිර්මාණය කරන ලද නාට්‍ය පාදක මැදිහත්වීම් වැඩසටහනක ඇගයීම් ප්‍රතිඵල මෙම පර්යේෂණාත්මක ලිපියෙන් ඉදිරිපත් කෙරේ. මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සඳහා 7 වැනි ශ්‍රේණියේ අවුරුදු 11-12 අතර සිසුන් 128 දෙනෙක් සහ නාට්‍ය හා රංගකලාව ඉගැන්වීමෙහි නිරත ගුරුවරු 6 දෙනෙක් සහභාගී වූහ. මැදිහත්වීමේ කණ්ඩායමක්, පාලන කණ්ඩායමක් සහ ක්‍රියාකාරී පාලන කණ්ඩායමක් සමඟ සසම්භාවී නොවන පාලන අත්හදා බැලීමක් ඔස්සේ (Non-randomized Control Trial) “නාට්‍ය ඉගෙනුම්-ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රියාවලියේ දී ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම ඇතුළත් කිරීමෙන් කනිෂ්ඨ ද්විතීයික පාසල් සිසුන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා වැඩි දියුණු කරයි ද? යන ප්‍රධාන පර්යේෂණ ප්‍රශ්නය මුල්කරගෙන මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සිදු කරන ලදී. ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ඉගැන්වීමේ ප්‍රවේශය පිළිබඳව පුහුණුව ලැබූ නාට්‍ය ගුරුවරුන් විසින් සතිපතා පැය දෙක බැගින් අඛණ්ඩව සති දොළහක් පුරා මෙම වැඩසටහන ක්‍රියාත්මක විය. ශිෂ්‍යන්ගේ පෙර හා පසු-පරීක්ෂණ මගින් මැදිහත්වීම තක්සේරු කිරීමට නිර්මාණාත්මක චින්තනය සඳහා වන ටොරන්ස් පරීක්ෂණය (Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking – TTCT) සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතාව සඳහා අනුවර්තනය වීමේ පරිමාණය (Martin's Adaptability Scale) මේ සඳහා යොදා ගැනුණි. තව ද, මැදිහත්වීමේ විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය (fidelity), ශක්‍යතාව (feasibility) සහ පිළිගත හැකිබව (acceptability) සහතික කිරීම සඳහා පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණ, ගුරු සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා සහ ශිෂ්‍ය සාකච්ඡා පවත්වන ලදී. අවසාන පර්යේෂණ ප්‍රතිඵල මගින් අනාවරණ වූයේ සක්‍රීය නියැලීම සඳහා සුදුසු පරිසරයක් සහ හැකියාවන් සපයන විට සිසුන් නිර්මාණාත්මක අත්දැකීම්, ක්‍රියාවලීන් සහ සංවර්ධනයන්හි ජවසම්පන්න ලෙස නිරත වන බවත්, ඔවුන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා සැලකිය යුතු ලෙස වැඩි දියුණු වන බවත් ය. මෙම ලිපිය ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය නාට්‍ය ඉගැන්වීම සහ ඉගෙනීමේ නව මානයන් යෝජනා කරයි.

මුඛ්‍ය පද- අනුවර්තනය, නිර්මාණශීලිත්වය, පාසල් ශිෂ්‍යයන්, ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම



## හැඳින්වීම

විසි එක් වැනි සියවසේ දී පාසල් ශිෂ්‍යයන් තුළ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතාව සංවර්ධනය කිරීම අධ්‍යාපනයේ අත්‍යවශ්‍ය අංගයක් ලෙස හඳුනාගෙන ඇත (McKeown, 2012; Simonton, 2003). කෙසේ වෙතත් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ අධ්‍යාපනික ප්‍රවේශය ලෝකයේ අනෙකුත් බොහෝ රටවලට වඩා සෙමින් සිදු වන බවත් එහි සිසුන් නිර්මාණශීලී කිරීමට හෝ අනුවර්තනය වීමට දිරිගන්වන ප්‍රවේශය අවම බවත් පර්යේෂකයන්ගේ අදහස යි (Abayasekara & Arunatilake, 2018; Sedere, 2016; Senarath et al., 2017; Sedere et al., 2016; UNESCO, 2014; World Bank, 2017). මේ සඳහා බලපාන හේතු රාශියක් ඔවුන් විසින් හඳුනා ගනු ලැබ ඇත. ශ්‍රී ලංකාව මූලික අධ්‍යාපන කුසලතා ලබා දීමේ මට්ටමින් සාර්ථක වුව ද අධ්‍යාපනයේ අවසන් නිමැවුම ජාතික ආර්ථිකය ඉහළ නැංවීමට අදාළ මානව ප්‍රාග්ධනය සමඟ නොගැළපෙන බව Abayasekara සහ Arunatilake (2018), Aturupane (2013) සහ ලෝක බැංකුව (World Bank, 2017) දක්වයි. සේදර (Sedere, 2016) පෙන්වා දෙන්නේ පාසල්පාදක අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රමය තරඟකාරී ආර්ථිකයක් තුළ ඉහළ ඉල්ලුමක් ඇති විසි එක් වැනි සියවසේ අත්‍යවශ්‍ය කුසලතා සහිත සිසුන් බිහි කිරීමට අපොහොසත් වී ඇති බව යි. එසේ ම, ජාතික අධ්‍යාපන කොමිෂන් සභාව දක්වා ඇත්තේ පාසල් අධ්‍යාපන පද්ධතිය පරිකල්පනය හෝ නිර්මාණාත්මක කුසලතා දිරිමත් කිරීමට හෝ නිර්මාණශීලී වීමට හෝ ඔවුන්ගේ ම මූලපිරීමක් භාවිත කිරීමට සිසුන්ට දිරි ගන්වන්නේ නැති බව ය (Widanapathirana et al., 2016).

මෙම ගැටලුකාරී තත්ත්වයට ප්‍රධානතම හේතුව ලෙස පර්යේෂණ වාර්තා පෙන්වා දෙන්නේ සාමාන්‍ය අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රමය ඉතා ඒකාකෘතික සහ ප්‍රමිතිගත ව පැවතීම යි; ඉගෙනුම් - ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රියාවලිය පෙළපොත්, සම්මත විෂයයන්, පන්තිකාමර මත පදනම් වූ ප්‍රවේශයන් සහ ගුරු කේන්ද්‍රීය ඉගෙනුම් ප්‍රවේශයන් මඟින් පමණක් සිදු කෙරෙන බැවින් සමාජයේ සහ තාක්ෂණයේ ශීඝ්‍ර ගෝලීය වෙනස්කම් සමඟ ඉදිරියට යාමට අපොහොසත් වී ඇති බව යි (Aturupane, 2011; Sedere, 2016; Sedere et al., 2016; UNESCO, 2014; World Bank, 2011). වසර 2008 දී සාමාන්‍ය අධ්‍යාපනය සඳහා නව අධ්‍යාපන

පනතක් සැකසීමේ ජාතික කමිටුව විසින් ඉගෙනුම් - ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රියාවලිය සහ භාවිතයන්හි ඇතැම් දුර්වලතා දක්වා ඇති අතර ඒවායින් ඉගෙනීම සහ ඉගැන්වීම සඳහා අනුගමනය කරන යාන්ත්‍රික ඉගැන්වීමේ ක්‍රම පාසල් අධ්‍යාපනය නිරසා කරයි, ඉගැන්වීමේ ක්‍රම මතුපිටින් දිවෙයි, ඉගෙනුම් ක්‍රියාවලිය බහුතරයක් පාසල් සිසුන්ට ආතතියක් ගෙන දෙයි, ගුරුවරුන්ගෙන් සිසුන්ට ලැබෙන ඉගෙනුම් සහාය ප්‍රමාණවත් නොවේ, ගුරුවරුන්ට නිකුත් කර ඇති උපදෙස් සෑම විෂය ක්ෂේත්‍රයකට ම නොගැළපේ යන කරුණු මතු කර ඇත (National Committee for Formulating a New Education Act For General Education, 2008). ජනාධිපති කාර්ය සාධක බලකාය විසින් නිකුත් කරනු ලැබූ වාර්තාවේ (2020) සාමාන්‍ය අධ්‍යාපනයේ පවතින පොදු ගැටලු ලෙස දක්වා ඇති ඇතැම් ගැටලු අතර, 'ලිඛිත විභාග විෂයමාලාවේ ස්වභාවය සහ විභාගවල පවතින ඒකාකාරීභාවය, සාමාන්‍ය අධ්‍යාපනය සම්පූර්ණ කළ බහුතරයක් අතර වෘත්තීය සහ සමාජ කුසලතා නොමැතිකම, යහපත් පුරවැසි ගුණාංග නොමැතිකම, නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ නවෝත්පාදන හැකියාවන් නොමැතිකම දක්වා ඇත (Presidential Task Force Report, 2020). ශ්‍රී ලාංකික ගුරුවරුන් ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ විෂය දැනුම වර්ධනය කිරීම සඳහා උපරිමයෙන් කටයුතු කරමින් සිටිය ද අනාගත ශ්‍රම වෙළඳපොළේ ඉල්ලීම් සඳහා සිසුන් සුදානම් කිරීම කෙරෙහි ශ්‍රී ලාංකීය අධ්‍යාපනික ප්‍රවේශයේ දුර්වලතා ඉහතින් උපුටා දක්වන ලද කරුණු ඉස්මතු කරයි.

විසි එක් වැනි සියවසට ගැළපෙන අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රමයක් අප රටෙහි ගොඩනැංවීමට නම් පාසල් සිසුන්ට අවශ්‍ය කුසලතා හෝ නිපුණතා මොනවාදැයි හඳුනා ගැනීම ද අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ. ජනාධිපති කාර්ය සාධක බලකා වාර්තාව යෝජනා කරන්නේ සෑම ශ්‍රේණියක ම නිපුණතා සමඟ විෂය දැනුම සම්බන්ධ කිරීම සහ දරුවන් සුදුසු ක්‍රියාකාරකම්වල යොදවා ඉගෙනීමට ඉඩ සැලසීම, දරුවන්ට ක්‍රීඩාව / සෞන්දර්යය වැනි ක්‍රියාකාරකම් සහ නිසි මගපෙන්වීම යටතේ නිර්මාණාත්මක/නවෝත්පාදන කටයුතුවලට දිරි ගැන්වීම සහ එවැනි ක්‍රියාකාරකම්වල නියැලීමට වැඩි කාලයක් ලබා දීම, ඉගෙනීමට සහ සමාජ අන්තර්ක්‍රියා වර්ධනය කිරීමට මිත්‍රශීලී සහ ප්‍රියජනක පරිසරයක් නිර්මාණය කිරීම, අන් අයට ගරු කිරීම, සම්පත් බෙදාගැනීම, අවිභීෂාව, තරඟකාරී නොවන ආකල්ප, ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදය, නීතියේ ආධිපත්‍යය ඇතුළු සදාචාරාත්මක වටිනාකම් ඇති කිරීමට ක්‍රම හඳුන්වා දීම සහ සියලු දරුවන්ට යහපත් පුරවැසියන් වීමට

උපකාර කිරීම සඳහා විවේචනාත්මක චින්තනය, ගැටලු විසඳීම, උපදේශනය හා ගැටුම් නිරාකරණය වැනි කුසලතා ද ඉගෙන ගැනීමට ඉඩ දිය යුතු බව යි (Presidential Task Force Report, 2020).

අධ්‍යාපනය යනු ඵලදායී ශ්‍රම බලකායක් නිර්මාණය කිරීම පමණක් ම නොවේ. අධ්‍යාපන 2030 වාර්තාවේ (ආර්ථික සහයෝගිතාව සහ සංවර්ධනය සඳහා වූ සංවිධානය - OECD, 2019) දක්වන්නේ ප්‍රීතිමත්, සෞඛ්‍ය සම්පන්න සහ මනාව ගැලපෙන ජීවිතයක් ගත කිරීමට අවශ්‍ය නිපුණතා සමඟ ස්වයං සවිබල ගැන්වීම ද එහි අරමුණ විය යුතු බව ය. ‘අනාගත කුසලතා අභියෝග විසඳීම’ යන නමින් පළ කරනු ලැබූ එංගලන්ත විශ්වවිද්‍යාල වාර්තාවේ (Solving Future Skills Challenges - Universities UK) “ඉහළ පෙළේ ප්‍රජානන කුසලතා” සේවා යෝජකයින් විසින් බෙහෙවින් අගය කරනු ලබන බව අවධාරණය කර ඇත (Universities UK, 2018, p.14). උසස් අධ්‍යාපනය සඳහා තත්ත්ව සහතික කිරීමේ නියෝජිතායතනය (2018) නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය, අනුවර්තනය වීමේ හැකියාව, ගැටලු විසඳීම සහ සන්නිවේදන කුසලතා රැකියා නියුක්තියට අදාළ සහ සියලුම සිසුන්ට වටිනාකමක් ඇති කුසලතා ලෙස හඳුන්වයි (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2018). ඉහත සඳහන් කර ඇති නව්‍ය පර්යේෂණ වාර්තා විසි එක් වැනි සියවසට සහ ඉන් ඔබ්බට ශ්‍රී ලාංකීය සිසුන් සුදානම් කරන්නේ කෙසේ ද යන්න සිතීමට හොඳ මඟ පෙන්වීමක් සපයයි.

**සාහිත්‍ය විමර්ශනය**

විසි එක් වැනි සියවසේ කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීම සඳහා පාසල් සිසුන්ට සහාය විය හැකි විශේෂ සන්දර්භයන් කෙරෙහි අවධානය යොමු කර ඇති පර්යේෂකයෝ එය පාසල් පන්ති කාමරය තුළ හෝ පන්ති කාමරයෙන් පිටත විෂය සමගාමී ක්‍රියාකාරකම් ලෙස සකස් විය හැකි බව යෝජනා කරති (Goodman et al., 2015). නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා නාට්‍ය කලා විෂයයන් හරහා සංවර්ධනය කළ හැකි බවත්, ඒ සඳහා ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය වැනි ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම භාවිත කිරීම සුදුසු විය හැකි බවත් **Bowell** සහ **Heap (2017)** සහ **Saunders (2019)** ගේ අදහසයි. බටහිර බොහෝ රටවල

සෞන්දර්ය විෂයයන් සංසන්දනය කිරීමේ දී එහි නාට්‍ය හා රංගකලාව යන නාමයට යොදනු ලබන්නේ “ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය” (process drama) යන නාමය ය. මෙම වචනය මුලින් ම යොදනු ලැබුවේ Heathcote විසින් (Wagner, 1976). ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය, පුළුල් නාට්‍ය කාණ්ඩය තුළ එක් ප්‍රවර්ගයකි (Bowell & Heap, 2001).

ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යයේ සුවිශේෂතා කිහිපයක් ඇත. ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යයේ දී ඉගෙනීමේ නිර්මාණාත්මක ක්‍රියාවලිය කෙරෙහි වැඩි අවධානයක් යොමු කරයි (Bowell & Heap, 2017). ගුරුවරයා සහ සිසුන් පන්ති කාමරයේ මන:කල්පිත ලෝකයක් නිර්මාණය කරන අතර නාටකාකාර වැඩිදියුණු කිරීම් හරහා අභියෝග සහ සිදුවීම්වලට ප්‍රතිචාර දැක්වීම හරහා විෂය ඉගෙනීම සිදු වේ (O'Farrell et al., 2009). සිසුන් සහයෝගී කථා කීමේ නිරත වන අතර ඔවුහු භූමිකාවන්, තත්ත්වයන් සහ අදහස් ගවේෂණය කරති (Neelands, 2009). එහි ඇත්තේ ක්‍රියාකාරී සහභාගීත්වයකි. එය ගැටලු විසඳීම, ස්වයං ප්‍රත්‍යාවේක්ෂණය අවධාරණය කරමින් සිසුන්ට ද්‍රව්‍ය සමඟ ගැඹුරින් සම්බන්ධ වීමට, සහකම්පනය වීමට විචාරශීලී සහ නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනය සමඟ සන්නිවේදනය වැනි කුසලතා වර්ධනය කිරීමට ඉඩ සලසයි (Ewing, 2018). සියලුම සහභාගිවන්නෝ (ගුරුවරයා ඇතුළුව) විවිධ භූමිකා භාරගෙන කතාවක් නිර්මාණය කිරීමට සම්බන්ධ වෙති (Neelands & Goode, 2010). ගුරුවරයා සහ සිසුන් අධ්‍යාපනික අරමුණු සඳහා නව නාට්‍යමය සන්දර්භයක් අත්විඳිති (Bowell & Heap, 2017). භූමිකාවන්හි විවිධත්වය සහ කථා නිර්මාණය කිරීමේ ක්‍රියාවලිය හරහා ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය පන්තියක් ගතික ඉගෙනුම් ප්‍රජාවක් බවට පරිවර්තනය කිරීමට උපකාර වේ (Catterall & Dumais, 2012). සිසුන්ට විවේචනාත්මකව සිතීමට, නිර්මාණශීලීව ප්‍රකාශ කිරීමට සහ විවිධ මතවලට ගරු කිරීමට වැඩි ඉඩක් ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යයෙහි පවතී (Davis, 2017). සිසුන් කණ්ඩායම් වශයෙන් වැඩ කරන බැවින්, තීරණ ගැනීමට, ස්වයංපෝෂිතභාවය වර්ධනය කිරීමට සහ කණ්ඩායම් සමගීය පෝෂණය කිරීමට නම්‍යශීලී බවක් ඇත (Glass et al., 2013). ගුරුවරයා කේන්ද්‍ර කරගත් ඉගෙනුම් රටාවක් නීති නිසා ගුරුවරයා ද පාඩමේ වර්තයකි (Toivanen, 2016). ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යයේ ප්‍රතිඵලය බාහිර ප්‍රේක්ෂකයින් සඳහා කාර්ය සාධන අපේක්ෂාවක් නොවේ. ඒ වෙනුවට, එය නිර්මාණාත්මක චින්තනයේ වර්ධනයක් වන අතර, එමඟින් ගුරුවරු සහ සිසුහු ඔවුන්ගේ

ම අභ්‍යන්තර ප්‍රේක්ෂකයින් සඳහා හවුල් ප්‍රබන්ධයක් නිර්මාණය කර පවත්වා ගෙන යන අතර, සංකීර්ණ ගැටලුවලට විසඳුම් සොයාගැනීම (Bowell & Heap, 2017). ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යය අත්දැකීම් සහිත සහ සමාජ-නිර්මාණාත්මක ඉගෙනීමේ සංකල්පය නියෝජනය කරයි (Davis, 2017).

ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය සාම්ප්‍රදායික නාට්‍ය ආකෘතියට වඩා වෙනස් වේ. එය සිසුන්ට ඔවුන්ගේ ගුරුවරයා සමඟ එක්ව නාට්‍යමය සම්ප්‍රකාරයක් පිහිටුවීමට ආරාධනා කරයි, නව ඉගෙනුම් රාමු යෝජනා කරයි (Bowell & Heap, 2017). එසේ ම, ගුරුවරුන්ට සහ සිසුන්ට විවිධ භූමිකාවන් අනුගමනය කිරීමට, හැඟීම් ප්‍රකාශ කිරීමට සහ විවිධ දෘෂ්ටිකෝණයන්ට ඉඩ සලසයි (Piazzoli, 2012). ගුරුවරයා යම් කරුණක් දක්වා ක්‍රියාවලිය කළමනාකරණය කරයි. සන්දර්භය ලබා දීමෙන් ප්‍රධාන භූමිකාව රභපාමින්, ගුරුවරයාගේ භූමිකාව තුළ සිටී. සමහර විට භූමිකාවන් තුළට සහ පිටතට ගමන් කිරීම, අවශ්‍ය විට පහසුකම් සැපයීම සහ මහ පෙන්වීම සිදු කරනු ලබයි. ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය එක්තරා ආකාරයක නිර්මාණාත්මක උපදේශන ක්‍රමයකි. එමෙන් ම ඉගෙනුම් ක්‍රියාවලිය සඳහා ආරක්ෂිත අවකාශයක් සපයන්නකි. සිසුන්ට ඔවුන්ගේම අත්දැකීමක් නිර්මාණය කිරීමට, ඔවුන්ගේම කතා පැවසීමට, පෙරහුරු කිරීමට සහ තේමාත්මක රාමුව තුළ රභ දැක්වීමට හැකියාව ලබා දෙන්නකි (Jurinović, 2016). මෙහි දී ගුරුවරයාගේ භූමිකාව තීරණාත්මක ය. ගුරුවරයාට පැහැදිලි ඉලක්කයක් තිබිය යුතු ය. ඉගෙනගන්නන්ගේ අපේක්ෂිත ප්‍රතිඵල සාක්ෂාත් කර ගැනීම සඳහා අත්දැකීම් වර්ධනය කිරීම සහ ප්‍රගතිය කරා ගෙන යා යුතු ය (Jurinović, 2016).

සමහර අධ්‍යයනයන් (උදා: Duatepe et al., 2009; Fleming et al., 2004) පෙන්වා දී ඇත්තේ ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය සිසුන් වඩාත් සමාජ වගකීම් දැරීමට සහ ක්‍රියාශීලී වීමට දිරිමත් කරන බවය, අනාගත අභියෝග සඳහා ඔවුන්ව හොඳින් ස්ථානගත කරන බව ය, මෙම ක්‍රියාවලිය හරහා සිසුන්ට වැඩි යමක් මතක තබා ගැනීමේ ප්‍රවණතාවක් ඇති බවය, ගැඹුරු අවබෝධය ප්‍රදර්ශනය කළ හැකි බවය. McNaughton (2004) දක්වා ඇත්තේ ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය මගින් ශිෂ්‍යයන් භූමිකාවේ සිටින විට සහ පසුව ඇතිවන ප්‍රත්‍යාවේක්ෂණ සාකච්ඡාව තුළින් අදහස්, සාරධර්ම සහ ආකල්ප පරීක්ෂා කිරීමට හැකි වන ආකාරය නිරූපණය කළ

හැකි බව ය. උක්ත කරුණු අනුව පැහැදිලි වන්නේ ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය විවිධ ආකාරයේ ඉගෙනීම් සඳහා ප්‍රයෝජනවත් මෙවලමක් බවත් නිර්මාණාත්මක සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා සංවර්ධනයට සහය මංපෙතක් බවත් ය.

විවාර ආසන (hot-seat), කතන්දර කීම (storytelling), සහ ක්ෂණික නිරූපණය (improvisation) ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යයෙහි බහුලව යොදා ගනු ලැබෙන ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම ත්‍රිත්වයකි. විවාර ආසන (hot-seat) ක්‍රමය යනු පන්තිකාමර සමාකරණ හෝ කෙටි කාර්ය සාධනය සඳහා භාවිත කරන වාචික නාට්‍ය තාක්ෂණයකි (Billikova & Kissova, 2013). යම්කිසි වර්තයක භූමිකාවක් රඟ දක්වන අයකුගෙන් ප්‍රශ්න කිරීමට හෝ සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාවක් කිරීමට ලැබෙන අවස්ථාවක් ලෙස මෙය ක්‍රියාත්මක වේ (Kathleen, 2007). ඉන් බලාපොරොත්තු වන්නේ සිසුන්ට ප්‍රබන්ධ සහ ප්‍රබන්ධ නොවන යන දෙඅංශයෙන්ම මුණගැසෙන පෞරුෂයන් පිළිබඳ ගැඹුරු අවබෝධයක් ලබා ගැනීමට උපකාර කිරීමයි (Theodorou & Nind, 2010). වර්තවල අභිප්‍රේරණ, සන්දර්භය, මනෝභාවයන් තේරුම් ගැනීමට සහ විවිධ පෞරුෂයන්ගේ ලක්ෂණ නිරීක්ෂණය කිරීමට සහ පිළිබිඹු කිරීමට මේ නිසා හැකියාව ලැබේ.

කතන්දර කීම (storytelling) අදහස් උත්පාදනය සහ උත්තේජනය කරන සහ අර්ථවත් සමාජ අන්තර්ක්‍රියාවලට තුඩු දෙන ප්‍රබල සහ ඵලදායී තාක්ෂණික ශිල්ප ක්‍රමයකි. එය සිසුන්ගේ වාචික සහ ප්‍රජානන කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීමට මෙන් ම සමාජකරණය සහ සමාජ ප්‍රමිතීන් අවබෝධ කර ගැනීම සම්බන්ධයෙන් විශ්වාසය වර්ධනය කිරීමට උපකාර වේ (Phillips, 2000). ගැටලු විසඳීම, නිර්මාණශීලිත්වය, විවේචනාත්මක චින්තනය, චිත්තවේගීය බුද්ධිය සහ සමාජ කුසලතා ඇතුළුව සම්පූර්ණ පරාසයක කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීමේ හැකියාවක් කතන්දර කීමෙහි ඇත (Karwowski & Soszynski, 2008). කතන්දර කීමේ ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම මගින් ශිෂ්‍යයන්ට තමන්ව යෝග්‍ය ලෙස ප්‍රකාශ කිරීමට, සම වයසේ මිතුරන්ට ඔවුන්ගේ පෞද්ගලික කතාව පැවසීමට, ඔවුන්ගේ සම වයසේ මිතුරන්ගේ කතාවලට ගරු කිරීමට ඉගෙන ගැනීමට සහ චිත්තවේගීය බුද්ධිය වර්ධනයට අවකාශ ලැබේ (Rutland & Killen, 2015).

ක්ෂණික නිරූපණය (improvisation) ශිෂ්‍යයාගේ මනස, ශරීරය සහ කච්ඡඩ පිළිබඳ දැනුවත්භාවය වැඩිදියුණු කිරීමට උපකාර වේ (Holdhus et al., 2016). එය සහයෝගීතාව සහ විවේචනාත්මක තර්කනය දියුණු කරයි (Kim, 2011). එය එදිනෙදා ජීවිතයේදී අවශ්‍ය අන්තර් කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය මෙන් ම තර්කයේ සහ සන්නිවේදනයේ සහ වාචික සහ වාචික නොවන ප්‍රකාශනයේ පැහැදිලි බවද වැඩි දියුණු කරයි (Hainselin et al., 2018).

එසේ ම, විවිධ රටවල පර්යේෂකයන් ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ හැකියාව සංවර්ධනය කිරීම සඳහා ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යයේ ප්‍රතිලාභ පර්යේෂණ මගින් පෙන්වා දී ඇත. උදාහරණයක් ලෙස, Lin (2012) විසින් තායිවානයේ පාසල් දෙකක ළමුන් 67ක් (වයස අවුරුදු 11-12) සඳහා කතන්දර කීම සහ භූමිකා රභ දැක්වීමේ ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම ඇතුළත් නාට්‍ය පාඩම් විස්සක් සති දහයක් පුරා මැදිහත්වීමේ අධ්‍යයනයක් ලෙස පවත්වන ලදී. ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණාත්මක හැකියාවන්, සෙල්ලක්කාර බව, නවාකරණය, නමාශීලී බව සහ ගැඹුරින් ඉගෙනීමේ කුසලතා ඉහළ ගොස් ඇති බව එම අධ්‍යයනයෙන් අනාවරණ විය. කෙසේ වෙතත්, මෙම අධ්‍යයනයේ පාලන කණ්ඩායමක් හෝ විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය, පිළිගත හැකි බව සහ ශක්‍යතාව මැන බැලීමක් සිදු කර තිබුණේ නැත. හොංකොංහි Hui ඇතුළු පිරිස වසර පහක් (2008 - 2013) පුරා සිසුන් 2846ක් සමඟ ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම යොදා ගනිමින් සිදු කරන ලද අධ්‍යයනයක දී පර්යේෂණාත්මක කණ්ඩායම (N = 1857) සහ පාලන කණ්ඩායම (N = 989) අතර පාසල් මට්ටම් තුනකින් (ළදරු, ප්‍රාථමික, සහ ද්විතීයික) වෙනස්වීම් සංසන්දනය කරන ලදී. එහි දී මැදිහත් වීමට පෙර සහ පසු පන්තිකාමර පරිසරය තුළ නාට්‍ය පදනම් කරගත් ප්‍රවේශ භරණ ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ සෙල්ලක්කාර බව නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය ඉහළ නංවන බව තහවුරු කරනු ලැබී ය (Hui et al., 2015). කෙසේ වෙතත් අධ්‍යයනයට සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායමක් ඇතුළත් නොවූ අතර, මැදිහත්වීමේ දී විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය, පිළිගත හැකි බව සහ ශක්‍යතාව පිළිබඳව මැන බැලීමක් සිදු කර තිබුණේ නැත.

ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ද්විතීයික පාසල් ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා වැඩි දියුණු කළ හැකි බව පෙන්වන අධ්‍යයනයක් 2020 වනවිටත් සිදුකර තිබුණේ නැත. එහෙත්, ප්‍රායෝගික නාට්‍යවලට සිසුන් සම්බන්ධ කර ගැනීමෙන් ඔවුන්ගේ අභිප්‍රේරණය, නියැලීම සහ නම්‍යශීලී බව වැනි අනුවර්තනය වීමේ ලක්ෂණ සංවර්ධනය කරන බව පෙන්වා දී ඇති සමහර අධ්‍යයන තිබුණි. Martin සහ පිරිස නාට්‍ය පාදක ක්‍රියාකාරකම් මගින් ශිෂ්‍යයන් අනුවර්තනය වීමට පොලඹවන්නේ ද ශාස්ත්‍රීය උද්‍යෝගීභාවය සහ පන්ති කාමර වැඩවලට සහභාගීත්වය වැඩි කරන්නේ ද යන්න සොයා බැලීමට ඕස්ට්‍රේලියාවේ 5 ශ්‍රේණියේ සිට 11 ශ්‍රේණිය දක්වා සිසුන් සමඟ සහ වසරකට පසුව නැවතත් 6 ශ්‍රේණියේ සිට 12 ශ්‍රේණිය දක්වා සිසුන් සමඟ අන්වායාම (longitudinal) අධ්‍යයනයක් සිදු කළහ. එහි ප්‍රතිඵල මගින් පෙන්වුම් කරනු ලැබුයේ නාට්‍ය පාදක ක්‍රියාකාරකම් ශිෂ්‍යයන් අනුවර්තනය කිරීමට පොලඹවන බවත්, ශාස්ත්‍රීය උද්‍යෝගීභාවය සහ පන්ති කාමර වැඩවලට සහභාගීත්වය වැඩි දියුණු කරන බවත් ය. කෙසේ වෙතත්, මෙම අධ්‍යයනයේ දී ඔවුන් යොදාගත් සුවිශේෂ නාට්‍ය පදනම් වූ ක්‍රියාකාරකම් මොනවාදැයි සඳහන් කර නැත (Martin et al., 2013a).

ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම භාවිතය හා සම්බන්ධ ඉහත කෙටි සමාලෝචනය ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ නාට්‍ය අධ්‍යාපනය සඳහා වැඩි දියුණු තාර්කිකත්වයක් සැකසීමට දායක විය හැකි ය. එය නව මාවතක් විවර කරයි. නාට්‍ය තුළින් ඉගැන්වීම සහ ඉගෙනීම පිළිබඳ නව සංජානනයට ඉඩ සලසයි. එහෙත්, තවමත් ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ඵලදායී ද, එය ක්‍රියාත්මක කළ හැකි ද, ගුරුවරුන්ට සහ සිසුන්ට එහි පිළිගත හැකි ශක්‍යතා මොනවා ද යන්න පිළිබඳව සොයා බැලීමට ශ්‍රී ලංකාව තුළ කිසිදු පර්යේෂණයක් සිදු වී නොමැති හෙයින්, මෙම අධ්‍යයනයේ අරමුණ වූයේ නාට්‍ය හා රංගකලාව විෂයය ඉගැන්වීම සඳහා ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය පදනම් කරගත් ප්‍රවේශයන් ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනයට සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා සංවර්ධනයට බලපාන්නේ ද යන්න විමර්ශනය කිරීම යි.

**පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමවේදය**



**පර්යේෂණ පිරිසැලසුම**

අධ්‍යාපනික මැදිහත්වීම්වල සඵලතාව තක්සේරු කිරීමේ “රන් ප්‍රමිතිය” (gold standard) සසම්භාවී පාලිත අත්හදා බැලීම (Randomised Controlled Trial - RCT) ලෙස සලකනු ලබයි (Torgerson & Torgerson, 2001). කෙසේ වෙතත්, රන් ප්‍රමිතිය සෑම විට ම මැදිහත්වීම් සඳහා හොඳම විසඳුම නොවන බවත් එය සැමවිට ම කළ හැකි දෙයක් නොවන බවත් සමහරක් පර්යේෂකයෝ විශ්වාස කරති (උදා. Ikenaga et al., 2016). එසේ ම, නියැදි ගත කිරීමේ දී සහභාගිවන්නන් අහඹු ලෙස යොදා ගැනීමත්, සසම්භාවීකරණය හරහා තේරීම් නැඹුරුව අඩු කිරීමත්, හේතු-ඵල සම්බන්ධතා ඇති කර ගැනීමේ ශක්තිමත් හැකියාවක් පැවතීමත්, සදාචාරාත්මක ගැටලු මතුවීමේ හැකියාවක් පැවතීමත් සහ සැලකිය යුතු අන්දමින් සම්පත්, කාලය සහ දැඩි සමාජ ධුරාවලියකට යටත්ව ක්‍රියා කළ යුතු වීමත්, බොහෝ විට මිල මෙන් ම කාලය වැය වීමත්, ස්වභාවික පන්තිකාමර පරිසරයන් සහ ශිෂ්‍ය වර්ගාවලට බාධා වීම් ඇති විය හැකි නිසාත් සසම්භාවී පාලිත අත්හදා බැලීම පාසල් අධ්‍යයනයන් සඳහා බොහෝ විට යොදා නොගැනේ.

පාසල් පාදක අධ්‍යයනයන්ගේ සඵලතාව තක්සේරු කිරීම සඳහා යෝග්‍ය මෙන් ම ප්‍රතිඵල සාමාන්‍යකරණය කිරීමට සහාය විය හැකි වඩා හොඳ පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමවේදයක් ලෙස පිළිගන්නේ සසම්භාවී නොවන පාලන අත්හදා බැලීම් (Non Randomized Control Trial - NRCT) ප්‍රවේශය යි (Deeks et al., 2003). පාසල්වල පවතින්නේ නිශ්චිත ලෙස බෙදනු ලැබූ කණ්ඩායම් ය. සසම්භාවී නොවන පාලන අත්හදා බැලීම් මෙම ස්වාභාවික ව්‍යුහයට ගරු කරන අතර එය පාසලේ පරිපාලන ප්‍රතිපත්තිවලට හෝ ඉගැන්වීම් කාලසටහනට හෝ දෙමාපියන්ගේ මනාපයන්ට බාධා නොකරයි. සසම්භාවී නොවන පාලන අත්හදා බැලීම් ප්‍රවේශයේ පාසල් පාදක මැදිහත්වීම් එදිනෙදා සැකසුම් සඳහා නිර්මාණය කරන අතර මෙම තත්වයන් සසම්භාවී පාලන අත්හදා බැලීම් හි (Randomized Control Trial - RCT) පාලිත පරිසරයට වඩා නිවැරදිව පිළිබිඹු කරයි. එසේ ම සීමිත සම්පත්වලින් ක්‍රියාත්මක වන බොහෝ පාසල්වල අවම සම්පත්වලින් සහ පහසුවෙන් කළමනාකරණය කිරීමේ හැකියාව ඇත (Fraser, 2004; Smith & Noble, 2014). ඉහත කරුණු සලකා බලා මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සසම්භාවී නොවන පාලන අත්හදා බැලීම්

ප්‍රවේශය මත ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ 7 ශ්‍රේණියේ නාට්‍ය හා රංග කලාව හදාරන සිසුන් සඳහා වන මැදිහත්වීමේ වැඩසටහනක සමස්ත ඇගයීම සිදු කර ඇත. මෙම මැදිහත්වීමේ ඉලක්කය වූයේ මැදිහත්වීමේ උපාය මාර්ග සිසුන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනයට සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතාවන්ට බලපෑවේ කෙසේ ද යන්න ගවේෂණය කිරීම යි.

**පර්යේෂණ ප්‍රශ්න**

මෙම මැදිහත්වීම් අධ්‍යයනයේ ප්‍රධාන පර්යේෂණ ප්‍රශ්නය වූයේ “නාට්‍ය ඉගෙනුම්-ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රියාවලියේ දී ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම ඇතුළත් කිරීමෙන් කනිෂ්ඨ ද්විතියික පාසල් සිසුන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා වැඩි දියුණු කරයි ද?” යන්න යි. මෙම ප්‍රධාන පර්යේෂණ ප්‍රශ්නය මත පදනම් ව අනු ප්‍රශ්න තුනක් ද මතු කරන ලදී.

- (i) ගුරුවරු මැදිහත්වීම් විශ්වාසවන්තව ක්‍රියාත්මක කළෝ ද?, මැදිහත් වීම ගුරුවරුන්ට පිළිගත හැකි මට්ටමක පැවතියේ ද?
- (ii) ගුරුවරුන් මැදිහත්වීමේ ක්‍රියාවලියට විශ්වාසවන්තව සිටියා ද?, සහ
- (iii) සිසුන් මෙම ඉගැන්වීමේ ක්‍රමය කෙතරම් දුරට පිළිගත්තා ද? යන්න සොයා බැලීම යි.

**නියැදිය**

සහේතුක නියැදිකරණය මඟින් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ බස්නාහිර පළාතේ 1AB පාසල් තුනක සිසුන් 161 දෙනෙකු (7 ශ්‍රේණිය, වයස අවුරුදු 11-12) සහ නාට්‍ය ගුරුවරුන් හය දෙනෙකු මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සඳහා තෝරා ගැනිණි. අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍යාංශයේ අනුමැතියට යටත්ව නිර්ණායක තුනක් ඔස්සේ මේ තෝරාගැනීම සිදුකරනු ලැබුණි. ඒවා නම්, (i) අවම වශයෙන් 7 ශ්‍රේණියේ නාට්‍ය හා රංගකලාව ඉගෙන ගැනීමට ශිෂ්‍යයන් 25 සිටීම; (ii) පාසල සහ නාට්‍ය ගුරුවරයා අධ්‍යයනයට සහභාගි වීමට කැමැත්තෙන් සිටීම; සහ (iii) ගුරුවරුන් දෙදෙනෙකුට ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ඉගැන්වීමේ ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම පිළිබඳව හුරුපුරුදු බවක් තිබීම වේ. පාසල් සලකා බැලීමේ දී සමාන සමාජ සහ ආර්ථික පසුබිම සලකා බැලූ අතර මෙම පාසල් ත්‍රිත්වය භූගෝලීය වශයෙන් සමීප වූ නමුත් එකිනෙකා සමඟ සන්නිවේදනය නොකිරීමට වගබලා ගැනීමට

දිස්ත්‍රික්ක වශයෙන් තෝරා ගැනුණි. කොළඹ දිස්ත්‍රික්කය මැදිහත්වීමේ කණ්ඩායම ලෙස නම් කෙරුණු අතර, එක් පාසලක් ගැහැනු (n = 25) සහ අනෙක් පාසල පිරිමි (n = 37) විය. කළුතර දිස්ත්‍රික්කය සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායම ලෙස නම් කෙරුණු අතර, එක් පාසලක් ගැහැනු (n = 25) සහ අනෙක් පාසල පිරිමි (n = 24) විය. ගම්පහ දිස්ත්‍රික්කය පාලන කණ්ඩායම ලෙස නම් කෙරුණු අතර, එක් පාසලක් ගැහැනු (n = 20) සහ අනෙක් පාසල පිරිමි (n = 30) විය. පූර්ව පරීක්ෂණය සහ පසු පරීක්ෂණ අතර සිසුන් 33 දෙනෙකුගේ සහභාගීත්වය සම්පූර්ණව නොතිබීම නිසා එම 33 ප්‍රතිඵලවලින් ඉවත් කළ අතර, අවසන් ප්‍රතිඵලය ගනිනු ලැබූයේ සිසුන් 128 දෙනාගෙනි.

**මිනුම් උපකරණ**

(i) නවීකරණය කරන ලද නිර්මාණාත්මක චින්තනයේ ටොරන්ස් පරීක්ෂණ (Torrance, 1974)

ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලී කුසලතාව මැන බැලීම සඳහා නවීකරණය කරන ලද Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking මිනුම භාවිත කරන ලදී. මෙම පරීක්ෂණය භාෂා 64කට පරිවර්තනය වී ඇතත් (Kim, 2011) මූල්‍ය සීමාවන්, මුල් පරීක්ෂණයට ප්‍රවේශ වීමේ සීමාවන් සහ මුල් පරීක්ෂණයේ දී ශ්‍රී ලංකාව සඳහා ඇති ප්‍රමිතීන් නොමැතිකම හේතුවෙන් නොමිලේ අන්තර්ජාලයෙන් ලබා ගත හැකි වාචික සහ රූපමය පරීක්ෂණ සාම්පලය අධ්‍යයනය වෙනුවෙන් යොදා ගන්නා ලදී. වාචික පරීක්ෂණය (the verbal test) (i) නිෂ්පාදන වැඩිදියුණු කිරීම (product improvement), (ii) උපකල්පනය කිරීම (just suppose), සහ (iii) අසාමාන්‍ය භාවිතය (unusual uses) යන ක්‍රියාකාරකම් තුනෙන් සමන්විත විය. මෙම ක්‍රියාකාරකම් නිර්මාණාත්මක චින්තනයේ අංශ ත්‍රිත්වයක් ඔස්සේ ඇගයීමට ලක් කරන ලදී. එනම්, ව්‍යාකෘතභාවය (fluency), නම්‍යතාව (flexibility), සහ නවතාව (originality) යන ඒවා ය. රූපමය පරීක්ෂණය (the figural test) (i) පින්තූර සම්පූර්ණ කිරීම, සහ (ii) දියමන්ති හැඩවල පුනරාවර්තන රූප සටහන් කිරීම යන ක්‍රියාකාරකම් දෙකකින් සමන්විත විය. මෙම ක්‍රියාකාරකම් දෙක නිර්මාණාත්මක චින්තනයේ අංශ පහක් ඔස්සේ ඇගයීමට ලක් කරන ලදී. ඒවා නම්, නවතාව (originality), ව්‍යාකෘතභාවය (fluency), විස්තාරණය (elaboration), මාතෘකාවේ විසුක්තඛණ්ඩ (abstractness), සහ කාර්යයක් සම්පූර්ණ කිරීමේදී විවෘත මනසක් තබා ගත හැකි ප්‍රමාණය (resistance to premature closure) යි. 0.90ක අන්තර්

ශ්‍රේණිගත කිරීමේ ගිවිසුමක් සමඟින් ලකුණු දෙකක් ස්වාධීනව ලකුණු කිරීම සමඟින්, ලකුණු කිරීම සඳහා ඇගයුම් නිර්ණායක නිර්මාණය කරන ලදී.

*(ii) අනුවර්තනය වීමේ පරිමාණය (Martin et al., 2013b)*

මැදිහත්වීමට පෙර සහ පසුව ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ අනුවර්තන කුසලතා මැනීමට මාටින්ගේ සාමාන්‍ය අනුවර්තනය වීමේ පරිමාණය (Martin et al., 2013b) කතෘවරයාගේ අවසරය මත භාවිත කරන ලදී. අනුවර්තනය වීමේ පරිමාණය යනු වාක්‍ය ඛණ්ඩයක් සමඟ ස්ථාවර කර ඇති ලකුණු හතක ප්‍රතිචාර පරිමාණයක් සහිත අයිතම 9කි (1- දැඩි ලෙස එකඟ නොවේ, 7- දැඩි ලෙස එකඟ වේ). එය ශිෂ්‍යයෙකුට ඔහුගේ හෝ ඇයගේ වින්තනය, හැසිරීම, බලපෑම් සහ හැඟීම් ප්‍රතිචාර වශයෙන් සකස් කිරීමට ඇති හැකියාව ගැන එහි සඳහන් කරයි. මෙම අධ්‍යයනයේ දී අනුවර්තනය වීමේ හැසිරීම්වල සාධක තුනක් ඇගයීමට ලක් කෙරුණේ ප්‍රජානන, වර්යාත්මක සහ වින්තවේගීය අංශවලිනි. සෑම සාධකයකට ම අයිතම තුනක් ඇතුළත් වූ අතර, එයින් අයිතම 9ක පරිමාණයක් නිපදවිණි. වර්තමාන අධ්‍යයනයේ දී, පූර්ව පරීක්ෂණය සඳහා පරිමාණය සඳහා Cronbach's alpha .85 සහ පසු පරීක්ෂණය සඳහා 0.92 ලෙස යොදා ගන්නා ලදී.

ක්‍රියාපටිපාටිය

සමස්ත අධ්‍යයනය වෙනුවෙන් ආචාර ධර්ම අනුමත කරන ලද්දේ ඕස්ට්‍රේලියානු විශ්වවිද්‍යාල මානව පර්යේෂණ ආචාර ධර්ම කමිටුව (Australian University Human Research Ethics Committee) විසිනි. කොළඹ දිස්ත්‍රික්කයේ තෝරා ගත් පාසල් දෙක මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායම ලෙසත්, කළුතර දිස්ත්‍රික්කයේ තෝරා ගත් පාසල් දෙක සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායම ලෙසත් ගම්පහ දිස්ත්‍රික්කයේ තෝරා ගත් පාසල් දෙක පාලන කණ්ඩායම ලෙසත් නම් කරන ලදී. තෝරාගත් ගුරුවරුන් භයදෙනා ම වසරකට නොවැඩි ඉගැන්වීමේ පළපුරුද්ද සහිත පශ්චාත් උපාධි අධ්‍යාපන ඩිප්ලෝමාව ලැබූ කාන්තා ගුරුවරු වූහ.

මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායම අයත් පන්ති දෙකෙහි ගුරුවරු පර්යේෂිකාව විසින් සකස් කරන ලද මැදිහත්වීම් අත්පොත (Intervention manual) භාවිත කළහ. පර්යේෂිකාව මේ සඳහා ආචාර්ය උපාධිය අතරතුර, ඇය අනුයුක්ත වූ නිර්මාණාත්මක කර්මාන්ත, අධ්‍යාපනය සහ සමාජ සාධාරණත්වය පිළිබඳ පීඨයේ (Faculty of Creative Industries, Education and Social Justice - QUT) ප්‍රථම උපාධි සහ පශ්චාත් උපාධි අපේක්ෂකයින් සඳහා පවත්වනු ලබන නාට්‍ය උපදේශන සැසි සඳහා සහභාගී වී ප්‍රායෝගික අත්දැකීම් සහ ක්වින්ස්ලන්තයේ බ්‍රිස්බේන්හි රජයේ පාසල්වල නාට්‍ය පාඩම් කිහිපයක් නිරීක්ෂණය කරමින් ඉගෙනුම් ක්‍රියාවලියේ අත්දැකීම් ලබා ගන්නා ලදී. මෙම අත්දැකීම් මැදිහත්වීම් අත්පොතෙහි ඇතුළත් කර ඇති අන්තර්ගතය සඳහා උත්තේජනයක් සැපයී ය. අත්පොතෙහි ඇති සියලුම පාඩම් දෙවන වාරය සඳහා නියම කර ඇති ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ගුරු මාර්ගෝපදේශයට අනුකූලව සකසා ඇත.

නිර්මාණාත්මක ක්‍රියාවලීන් කෙරෙහි සැලකිය යුතු අවධානයක් යොමු කරමින් (පරිකල්පනය, ප්‍රකාශ කිරීම, ප්‍රතිචාර දැක්වීම, සහ ප්‍රාසංගික බව) මැදිහත්වීම් අත්පොතෙහි පාඩම් සකස් කරන ලදී. සෑම පාඩමක් ම විචාර ආසන (hot-seat), කතන්දර කීම (storytelling), සහ ක්ෂණික නිරූපණය (improvisation) යන ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම මත රඳා පැවති අතර ඉගැන්වීම මුළුමනින් ම රඳා පැවතියේ කණ්ඩායම් ක්‍රියාකාරකම් ලෙස ය. සෑම කණ්ඩායම් ක්‍රියාකාරකමක් ම ගුරුවරුන් විසින් නිරීක්ෂණය කළ අතර, සමාජීය සහ පුද්ගල සවිබල ගැන්වීමේ මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය

දිරිමත් කරන 'එදිනෙදා ජීවිතය සඳහා නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය' යන තේමාවේ ඇති ගැටලු සහ වෙනස්කම්වලට එලදායි ලෙස ප්‍රතිචාර දැක්වීමට හැකිවන පරිදි පාඩම් මෙහෙයවීම අරමුණ විය. මැදිහත්වීම් අත්පොතෙහි පාඩමේ ප්‍රවේශය විවිධ නිර්මාණශීලී මැදිහත්වීම් හරහා සිදුකරන ලදී. නමාශීලී බව සංවර්ධනය කර ගැනීම සඳහා සිසුන්ට සහාය වීම ඉගෙනුම් ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රියාවලිය පුරා සිදු විය.

මැදිහත්වීමේ කණ්ඩායම් දෙක විසින් පාසලේ නියමිත කාලසටහනට අනුකූලව පැය දෙකක් මැදිහත්වීම් අත්පොත උපයෝගී කරගෙන අඛණ්ඩව සතිපතා පැය දෙක බැගින් සති දොළහක් ඉගෙනුම් ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රියාවලිය සිදු කරන ලදී. වැඩසටහනේ විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය සහතික කිරීම සඳහා පර්යේෂිකාව විසින් පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණ සැසි 40ක් (එක් පංතියක 20 බැගින්) පවත්වන ලදී. ගුරුවරුන් සහ සිසුන් යන දෙඅංශය ම වැඩසටහන පිළිගැනීම තීරණය කිරීම සඳහා මැදිහත්වීමේ ගුරුවරුන් සමඟ අර්ධ ව්‍යුහගත සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා 10 බැගින් 20 ක් පවත්වන ලදී. සෑම පාසලකම එක් ශිෂ්‍ය කණ්ඩායමකින් ම එකක් බැගින් නාභිගත සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා දෙකක් පවත්වනු ලැබූයේ සිසුන් මෙම ඉගැන්වීමේ ක්‍රමය කෙතරම් දුරට පිළිගත්තා ද යන්න පරීක්ෂා කිරීමට යි. පන්තිකාමර නිරීක්ෂණ, ගුරු සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා සහ ශිෂ්‍ය නාභිගත කණ්ඩායම් මගින් වැඩසටහනේ ශක්‍යතාව තක්සේරු කරන ලදී.

සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායම් දෙක ද පාසලේ නියමිත කාලසටහනට අනුකූලව පැය දෙකක් ඉගෙනුමෙහි නිරත වූවත් ඔවුහු එයින් විනාඩි 40ක් සාම්ප්‍රදායික ගුරු කේන්ද්‍රීය ඉගෙනීමට සහ අනෙක් විනාඩි 80 එම වාරයේ නියමිත පාඩම්වලට සම්බන්ධ රංග භාණ්ඩ සෑදීමේ ප්‍රායෝගික ක්‍රියාකාරකමෙහි නිරත වීමට යෙදවූහ. එහි විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය පමණක් සහතික කිරීම සඳහා පර්යේෂිකාව විසින් පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණ සැසි 10ක් මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායම්වලට සමාන ආකාරයෙන් නිරීක්ෂණය කරන ලද්දේ පර්යේෂණාත්මක බලපෑම පාලනය කිරීම සඳහා ය. මෙම නිරීක්ෂණ දත්ත කිසිවක් දත්ත විශ්ලේෂණය වෙනුවෙන් යොදා නොගන්නා ලදී. පාලන කණ්ඩායම් දෙකෙහි කිසිදු වෙනසක් සිදු නොවූ අතර, පුරුදු පරිදි ඔවුන්ගේ ගුරුවරු දෙදෙනා සතියකට පැය දෙක බැගින් සාම්ප්‍රදායික ලෙස ඔවුන්ට නියමිත පාඩම්

ඉගැන්වීම සිදු කළහ. කණ්ඩායම් හයට ම පළමු සහ අවසන් සතියේ පෙර හා පසු පරීක්ෂණ පවත්වන ලදී.

**දත්ත විශ්ලේෂණය**

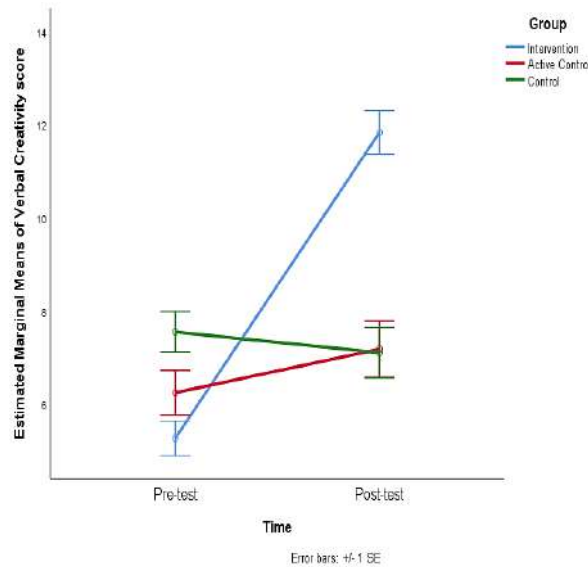
කාලය (පෙර සහ පසු) සහ විෂයය තුළ සාධකයක්, විෂය අතර සාධකයක් ලෙස කොන්දේසි (මැදිහත්වීම, ක්‍රියාකාරී-පාලනය සහ පාලනය) සහ ස්ත්‍රී-පුරුෂභාවය (පිරිමි සහ ගැහැනු) විෂය අතර සාධකයක් ලෙස සලකා ගුණාත්මක දත්ත විශ්ලේෂණය සඳහා A2 x 3 x 2 මිශ්‍ර-නිර්මාණ ANOVA යොදා ගන්නා ලදී. Levene ගේ පරීක්ෂණයට අනුව විචල්‍ය උපකල්පනයේ සමජාතීයතාවයට ( p <.05) කඩවීමක් සිදුවී ඇති බව යෝජනා කරයි. දෝෂ විචල්‍යයන් පෙර සහ පසු මැදිහත්වීම් පරීක්ෂණ ලකුණුවල දී විවිධ කණ්ඩායම් හරහා ඒකාකාරව බෙදා හැර නොතිබුණි. මෙය පාලනය කිරීම සඳහා සංඛ්‍යානමය වැදගත්කම තීරණය කිරීම වෙනුවෙන් ඇල්ෆා මට්ටම අඩු කරන ලදී ( p <.025).

**ප්‍රතිඵල**

නිර්මාණාත්මක වින්තනයේ ධාරාත්ප් පරීක්ෂණ වාචික පරීක්ෂණ ලකුණ සලකා බැලීමේ දී පූර්ව ලකුණ සහ පසු ලකුණෙහි වෙනසක් මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායම්වල ඇත (Wilks' Lambda = .4, F(1,122) = 182.63, p < .001). (රූප සටහන 1)

**රූප සටහන 1**

පෙර සහ පසු වාචික නිර්මාණශීලීත්වයේ සම්පූර්ණ ලකුණු



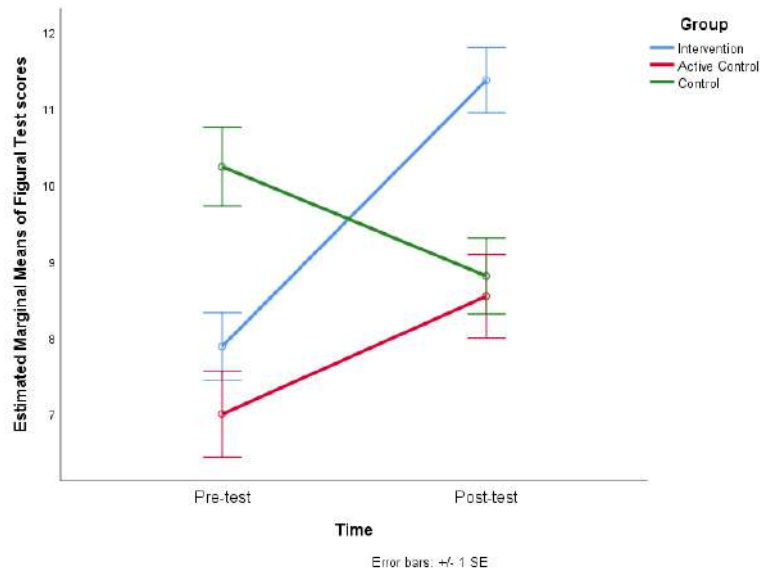
ඒ සමානව සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායම්වල ද ලකුණු වැඩි වී ඇත (Wilks' Lambda = .98, F (2, 122) = 2.26, p = .136). එහෙත් පසු ලකුණුවල වෙසෙසි වෙනසක් පාලන කණ්ඩායම්වල දක්නට නොමැත (Wilks' Lambda = 1, F (1, 122) = .62, p = .432 ).

මේ ආකාරයට ම නිර්මාණාත්මක චින්තනයේ ටොරන්ස් රූපමය පරීක්ෂණ ලකුණ සලකා බැලීමේ දී පූර්ව ලකුණ සහ පසු ලකුණෙහි වෙසෙසි වෙනසක් මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායම්වල ඇත (Wilks' Lambda = .646, F (1,122) = 66.78, p < .001). (රූප සටහන 2)

රූප සටහන 2



පෙර සහ පසු රූපමය නිර්මාණශීලීත්වයේ සම්පූර්ණ ලකුණු

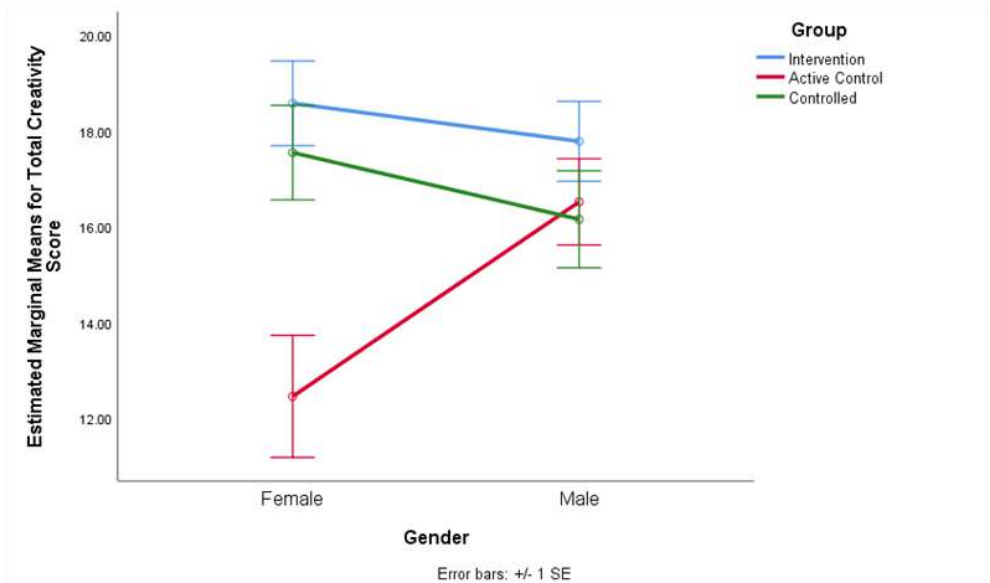


ඒ සමානව සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායම්වල ද ලකුණු වැඩි වී ඇත (Wilks' Lambda = .939,  $F(1,122) = 7.93$ ,  $p = .006$ ). එහෙත් පසු ලකුණුවල වෙසෙසි වෙනසක් පාලන කණ්ඩායම්වල දක්නට නොමැත. ශිෂ්‍ය කණ්ඩායම් දෙකම සඳහා රූපමය නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය වර්ධනය කිරීම සඳහා නාට්‍ය පදනම් වූ මැදිහත්වීම් වැඩසටහනේ ප්‍රබල බලපෑමක් යෝජනා කරයි.

නවීකරණය කරන ලද Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) මිනුම් පරීක්ෂණයේ වාචික සහ රූපමය පරීක්ෂණ දෙකම ඒකාබද්ධ කිරීමෙන්, කාලය සහ කණ්ඩායමෙහි සැලකිය යුතු ප්‍රධාන බලපෑමක් ඇති බව සොයා ගන්නා ලදී. කාලය සහ කණ්ඩායම සහ කණ්ඩායම සහ ස්ත්‍රී-පුරුෂභාවය අතර සැලකිය යුතු අන්තර්ක්‍රියා පසු විපරම් කිරීම සඳහා (රූප සටහන-3හි පෙන්වා ඇත).

**රූප සටහන 3**

සමස්ත නිර්මාණාත්මක ලකුණු සඳහා සමූහය සහ ස්ත්‍රී-පුරුෂභාවය අතර අන්තර්ක්‍රියා

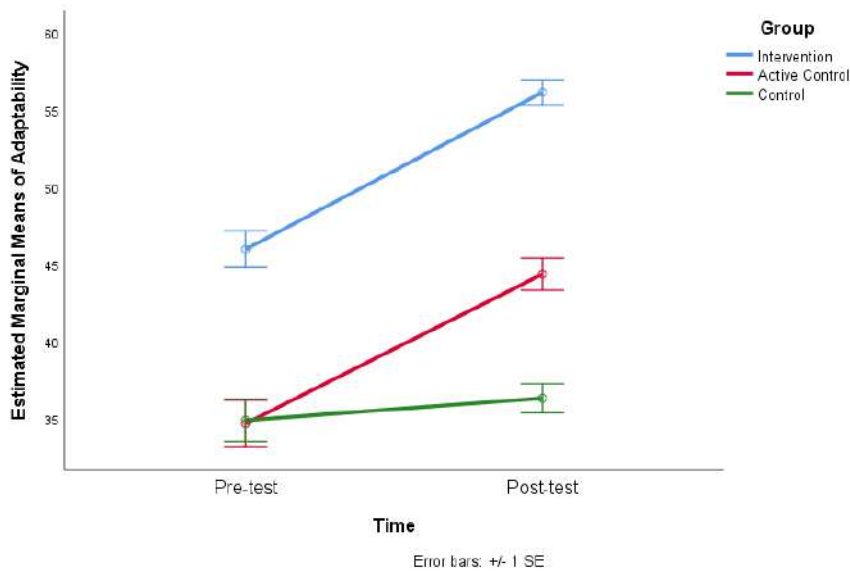


ස්ත්‍රී-පුරුෂභාවයේ එක් එක් මට්ටම්වල සමූහයේ සරල බලපෑම් විමර්ශනය කරන ලදී. කැපී පෙනෙන ලක්ෂණයක් වූයේ TTCT- වාචික සහ TTCT-රූපමය ප්‍රතිඵලවල පෙර/පසු-පරීක්ෂණයෙන් කණ්ඩායම සහ ස්ත්‍රී-පුරුෂභාවය අතර අන්තර්ක්‍රියා පෙන්වූම් කරන්නේ ගැහැනු දරුවන් සිටින්නේ කුමන කණ්ඩායමට ද යන්න මත ඔවුන්ගේ සමස්ත නිර්මාණාත්මක ලකුණු වෙනස් වන බව යි.  $F(2,122) = 8.1, p < .001$ . පසු විපරම් සැසඳීමේදී පෙන්වූම් කළේ මැදිහත්වීමේ කණ්ඩායමේ ( $p < .001$ ) සහ පාලන කණ්ඩායමේ ( $p = .002$ ) ගැහැනු දරුවන්ට වඩා සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායමේ ගැහැනු දරුවන්ට අඩු නිර්මාණශීලී ලකුණු ඇති බව යි.

මාටින්ගේ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ පරිමාණයේ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ ලකුණු සැලකීමේ දී එක් එක් කණ්ඩායම තුළ කාලය සහ කණ්ඩායම අතර අන්තර්ක්‍රියා මැදිහත්වීමේ කණ්ඩායමේ සම්පූර්ණ පූර්ව සහ පශ්චාත් පරීක්ෂණ ලකුණු අතර සැලකිය යුතු වෙනසක් අනාවරණය විය ( $Wilks' \Lambda = .63, F(1,122) = 71.64, p < .001$ ). (රූප සටහන 4)

**රූප සටහන 4**

පෙර/පසු අනුවර්තනය වීමේ සම්පූර්ණ ලකුණු



සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායමෙහි ලකුණු වැඩි වීමක් සිදු විය (Wilks' Lambda = .76, F (1,122) = 39.43, p < .001), සහ පාලන කණ්ඩායමේ වෙනසක් නොමැත (Wilks' Lambda = .99, F(1,122) = 1.03, p = .312).

මැදිහත්වීමේ විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය, පිළිගත හැකි බව සහ ශක්‍යතාව පිළිබඳ ප්‍රතිඵල

ප්‍රධාන පර්යේෂණ ප්‍රශ්නය මත පදනම් ව ගොඩ නගනු ලැබූ අනු ප්‍රශ්න තුන මගින් මැදිහත්වීමේ විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය, පිළිගත හැකි බව සහ ශක්‍යතාව පිළිබඳ ප්‍රතිඵලය සොයා බලන ලදී. එය අනාවරණය කර ගනු ලැබූයේ පන්තිකාමර නිරීක්ෂණ, ගුරු සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා සහ නාභිගත සිසු කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා මගිනි. පන්තිකාමර නිරීක්ෂණ මගින් පෙන්නුම් කළේ මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායම් දෙක ම මැදිහත්වීම් අත්පොතෙහි අඩංගු සියලු පාඩම් උගන්වා ඇති බව ය. තව ද සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායම දේශන සහ සටහන් ගැනීමට අමතරව රංග භාණ්ඩ නිර්මාණය කරමින් ප්‍රායෝගික ක්‍රියාකාරකම්හි විශ්වාසවන්තව කටයුතු කළ බවත්, පාලන කණ්ඩායමහි කිසිදු වෙනසක් සිදු නොවූ බවත්, එමගින් විශ්වාසවන්තභාවය සහතික කරන බවත් අනාවරණ විය. මැදිහත්වීමේ ගුරුවරුන්ගෙන්

එක්රැස් කරන ලද දත්තවලින් පෙන්වුම් කළේ ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම භාවිතය නිසා සිසු ඉගෙනීමේ ඇතිවූ ශිෂ්‍ය දියුණුව සහ ඒ සම්බන්ධයෙන් ඔවුන්ගේ පැවති පිළිගැනීම ය. කෙසේ වෙතත්, සුදානම් වීමට ඇති කාලය අවම වීම, විභාගයට ඇති පීඩනය සහ පන්තිකාමරවල ඉඩ ප්‍රමාණවත් නොවීම සම්බන්ධයෙන් ගුරුවරුන් ගැටලු වාර්තා කිරීම නිසා වැඩසටහනේ ශක්‍යතාව පිළිබඳ අභියෝග මතු විය. නාභිගත සිසු කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාවලින් හෙළි වූයේ ඔවුන් ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම භාවිතයෙන් ඉගෙනීමට ඇති කැමැත්ත ය. ඔවුන් මැදිහත්වීමට කැමති වීමට පැවති හේතු අතර, ඉගෙනීමේ දී වඩාත් ලිහිල් බවක් දැනීම, සහයෝගීතාව සමඟින් සහභාගීත්ව කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය වීම, විශ්වාසය ගොඩ නැඟීම, ගැටලු සොයා යෑම සහ ඒ සඳහා පිළිතුරු ලැබීම, මෙන් ම ඉගෙනීම කෙරෙහි ගුරුවරුන්ගේ මැදිහත්වීම අවම වීම ප්‍රධාන විය.

**සාකච්ඡාව**

අධ්‍යයනයේ සොයාගැනීම්වලින් පෙන්වුම් කළේ සුදුසු ක්‍රමෝපායන් යොදාගන්නේ නම් පාසල් දරුවන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සංවර්ධනය කළ හැකි බව යි. මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායමේ ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ හැකියාව පිළිබඳ ගුණාත්මක ලකුණු වැඩි වීම මෙහි සාක්ෂිය ය. මෙම අනාවරණ බටහිර ලෝකයේ අනෙකුත් අධ්‍යයනයන් සමඟ සමපාත වේ (නිදසුන් ලෙස, Burke & Williams, 2008; Freeman et al., 2003; Garaigordobil, 2006; Hui et al., 2015; Lin, 2012; Martin et al., 2013a). මෙහි ඇති අනෙක් විශේෂත්වය නම්, සක්‍රීය පාලන කණ්ඩායමේ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වයේ ලකුණු සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ ලකුණු පාලන කණ්ඩායමට වඩා වැඩි වීම යි. මෙම අනාවරණය යෝජනා කරන්නේ වෙනස් දෙයක් කිරීමේ පර්යේෂණාත්මක බලපෑම ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ කුසලතා සංවර්ධනයට ද බලපා ඇති බැවින් ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය හා සමාන මට්ටමකට නොව, පාලන කණ්ඩායමක් පමණක් නොව, ක්‍රියාකාරී පාලන කණ්ඩායමක් පර්යේෂණයකට ඇතුළත් කිරීමේ වැදගත්කම යි. එසේ ම, පර්යේෂණාත්මක බලපෑමට අමතරව මෙම ප්‍රතිඵලය පාඩම්වලට සම්බන්ධ රංග භාණ්ඩ සෑදීමේ ප්‍රායෝගික ක්‍රියාකාරකම නිසා සිසුන්ට විවිධ ද්‍රව්‍ය සහ නිර්මාණ ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම භාවිත කරමින් ඔවුන්ගේ

නිර්මාණාත්මක කාර්ය සාධන කුසලතා පුළුල් කරන නිර්මාණාත්මක අවස්ථාවන්ට සම්බන්ධ වීමට ලැබීම යි ( Kemple, 2017; Muffatti, 2018 ).

මෙම මැදිහත්වීමේ ලැබූ අනෙක් ප්‍රතිඵල වූයේ එය ශිෂ්‍ය පෙලඹවීම සහ ශිෂ්‍ය අන්තර් ක්‍රියාකාරීත්ව වැඩි දියුණු වී තිබීම යි. නාභිගත කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාවල දී ශිෂ්‍යයන් කියා සිටියේ ඊට පෙර ඔවුන් නිෂ්ක්‍රීය සවන්දෙන්නන් වූ නමුත් මැදිහත්වීම් පාඩම්වල දී ඔවුන් වඩා ක්‍රියාකාරී වූවා පමණක් නොව ප්‍රායෝගික ක්‍රියාකාරකම්වලට ඉහළ පෙලඹවීමකින් සම්බන්ධ වූ බව යි. වඩා වැදගත් කරුණ නම්, සිසුන් ඔවුන්ගේ අත්දැකීම් සහ මැදිහත්වීමට සහභාගී වීමෙන් ඔවුන් ලැබූ වාසි අගය කිරීම යි. මෙයින් පෙන්වන්නේ ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ ධනාත්මක අත්දැකීම් නාට්‍ය පන්තිකාමරවල නිර්මාණාත්මක ඉගෙනුම් අත්දැකීම් ක්‍රියාවට නැංවීම සඳහා සහ ඔවුන්ගේ හැකියාවන් කරා ළඟා වීමට උපකාර කිරීම සඳහා ඉගෙනගන්නන්ගේ මැදිහත්වීම අභිරුචිකරණය කිරීම අත්‍යවශ්‍ය බව යි.

ගුරුවරුන්ගේ සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා, නාභිගත සිසු කණ්ඩායම් සාකච්ඡා සහ පන්තිකාමර නිරීක්ෂණවලින් පෙනුණු කෙරුණේ ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම ධනාත්මක වර්ගාත්මක නියැළීමක් සමඟ සම්බන්ධ වී ඇති බව යි. විශේෂයෙන් ම විවාර ආසන ක්‍රම ශිල්පීය ක්‍රමය (Hot-seat) මැදිහත්වීම තුළ ඉතා ජනප්‍රිය විය. ලෝකයේ බොහෝ රටවල විවාර ආසන ක්‍රම ශිල්පීය ක්‍රමය (Hot-seat) යොදා ගත්ත ද ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ පළමුවරට මෙම ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම යොදාගනු ලැබුණි. මෙම ශිල්පීය ක්‍රමයට ගුරුවරු දෙදෙනා මෙන් ම ශිෂ්‍යයෝ ද වැඩි කැමැත්තක් දැක්වූහ. ඔවුන් විශ්වාස කළේ විවාර ආසන ක්‍රමය සමවයස් මිතුරන් සමඟ කතා කිරීමේ දී වචනවල බලය ලබා දීමට, කණ්ඩායම් සහයෝගීතාව සඳහා උද්යෝගිමත් සහ ධනාත්මක ප්‍රතිඵලයක් ලබා දෙන ඉගෙනුම් අත්දැකීමක් ලබා දුන් බව යි. ශිෂ්‍ය නාභිගත කණ්ඩායම් සාකච්ඡාවලින් හෙළි වූයේ ද විවිධ කුසලතා ගවේෂණය කිරීමට මෙන් ම මිත්‍රත්වයේ වැදගත්කම හඳුනාගැනීමට ද විවාර ආසන ක්‍රම ශිල්පීය ක්‍රමය ඉවහල් වූ බව යි. මෙම දත්ත Scale විසින් 2010 දී ලැබූ දත්තවලට සමාන ය. එබැවින්, ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍යය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය පන්ති කාමර සඳහා ඉතා

යෝග්‍ය වන අතර, සිසුන්ට ඔවුන්ගේ පාඩම්වලින් වඩාත් ක්‍රියාශීලී සහ නිර්මාණාත්මක අත්දැකීමක් අත්විඳීමට ඉඩ සලසන බව කිව හැකි ය.

මැදිහත්වීම නිරීක්ෂණයේ දී ඇතැම් සාමාන්‍යමය අංශ ද හඳුනා ගත හැකි විය. ඉන් පළමුවැන්න, මැදිහත්වීම් කණ්ඩායම් නියැදියේ සිටි ගුරුවරුන් දෙදෙනාට ම පාඩම් සඳහා කිසිදු ආකාරයේ සුදානමක් නොමැති වීම ය. පාඩම් සැලසුම් කිරීම සාමාන්‍යයෙන් එලදායි ඉගැන්වීමේ වැදගත් අංගයක් ලෙස සැලකේ. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ සෑම ගුරුවරයෙකු ම සැලසුම්සහගත ලෙස ප්‍රජානන, ආවේදන සහ මනෝවාලක ක්ෂේත්‍ර හඳුනා ගනිමින් සම්පූර්ණ පාඩම් සැලැස්මක් සකස් කළ යුතු යැයි අපේක්ෂා කෙරේ (MoE, 2013). කෙසේ වෙතත්, මෙම අධ්‍යයනයේ දී ගුරුවරුන් දෙදෙනා ම වාර්තා කළේ තමන් මෙතෙක් නාට්‍ය ඉගැන්වීම සඳහා ක්‍රමවත් පාඩම් සටහනක් සකස් නොකරන බව යි. ඔවුන් පැවසුවේ ඒ වෙනුවෙන් වැඩි කාලයක් ගත වන බවත්, ඒ සඳහා ඔවුන්ට කාලයක් නොමැති බවත් ය. එහෙත් පර්යේෂණ සාහිත්‍යයට අනුව පාඩම් සැලසුම් කිරීම සඳහා සැලකිය යුතු කාලයක් ගත වේ. පාඩමක් සැලසුම් කිරීම අභියෝගාත්මක ය (Boikhutso, 2010); එය එලදායි ඉගැන්වීමේ කේන්ද්‍රස්ථාන ය (Reed & Michaud, 2010). නිර්මාණාත්මක කලාවන් ඉගැන්වීමේ දී සෞන්දර්යයාත්මක වටිනාකම පිළිබඳ සංකල්පය අවබෝධ කර ගැනීමටත්, ඉගෙනීම ඔවුන්ගේ ම සමාජ හා පෞද්ගලික ජීවිතයට ආකල්පමය වශයෙන් සම්බන්ධ කිරීමටත්, වර්තන නිර්මාණය කිරීමටත් ප්‍රජානන හැකියා වර්ධනය කිරීමටත් පාඩම් සැලසුම් අවශ්‍ය වේ. කෙසේ වෙතත්, නිර්මාණශීලීව ඉගැන්වීම සහ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සඳහා ඉගැන්වීම ශ්‍රී ලංකාව තුළ තවමත් සිදුවන ප්‍රවේශයන් අවම බව අනාවරණය විය.

පාඩම් සැලසුම් කර උගන්වනවාට වඩා ශිෂ්‍යයන් විභාග සඳහා සුදානම් කිරීම වැදගත් බව ගුරුවරුන් දෙදෙනාගේ අදහස යි. ගුරුවරුන් වාර්තා කළේ ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ඉගැන්වීමේ ආධිපත්‍යය විභාග මත පැටවෙන නිසා නිර්මාණාත්මක කුසලතා වර්ධනය කිරීමට වඩා විභාග ලකුණු ඉහළ නැංවීම සඳහා අන්තර්ගත දැනුම සහ පරීක්ෂණ කුසලතා කෙරෙහි අවධානය යොමු කර උගන්වන බව යි. තව ද, තම දරුවන්ගේ අධ්‍යාපනික ජයග්‍රහණ පිළිබඳ දෙමාපියන්ගේ පවතින ඉහළ අපේක්ෂාවන් ද ගුරුවරුන්ගේ

ඉගැන්වීම කෙරෙහි බලපා ඇත. මේ සම්බන්ධයෙන් ශ්‍රී ලංකා අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රමයේ යම් වෙනසක් අවශ්‍ය ය (Irugalbandara & Campbell, 2020).

ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය නාට්‍ය පන්තිකාමරයේ ඉඩකඩ මදිකම ඉගෙනුම් ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රියාවලියට බාධාවකි. මැදිහත්වීම් අධ්‍යයනයේ පන්තිකාමර අවකාශයන්හි අභ්‍යන්තර සැකැස්ම ප්‍රායෝගික නාට්‍ය වැඩ සඳහා ප්‍රශස්ත නොවී ය. එහි සැකැස්ම වූයේ මේස සහ පුටුවලින් යුත් දේශන ශෛලියේ සටහන් ගැනීමේ පාඩම් ඉදිරිපත් කිරීම සඳහා සැකසූ අවකාශයකි. නාට්‍ය පාඩම්වල ප්‍රායෝගික ඉගැන්වීම කොර්ඩෝ අවකාශයන්, හුදකලා ස්ථාන හෝ ක්‍රීඩා පිට්ටනිය හෝ එළිමහන් වේදිකාව තුළ විය. මේ නිසා පාඩම ඉගැන්වීමේ දී පැවතියේ සෝෂාකාරී පරිසරයකි. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ පන්තිකාමර සෝෂාවට එක් පොදු හේතුවක් වන්නේ පන්තිකාමරවල තදබදය වැඩි වීම යි. කාමර ධාරිතාවට වඩා සිසුන් වැඩි ය. යහපත් ඉගෙනුමක් පවත්වා ගැනීම සඳහා පන්තිකාමර ශබ්දය තීරණාත්මක බව Grebennikov සහ Wiggins (2006)ගේ අදහස යි. එසේම, මධ්‍යස්ථ ශබ්ද පරිසරයක වැඩ කරන විට ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලිත්වය වැඩි දියුණු වූ බව පර්යේෂකයන් පෙන්වා දී ඇති අතර, අධික ශබ්දය ඉගෙනීමට අහිතකර බව ද පෙන්වා දී ඇත (Chiang & Lai, 2008; DiSarno et al, 2002; Massonnié et al., 2019). Sallis (2009) යෝජනා කරන්නේ පාසල්වල නාට්‍ය පන්ති කාමරයක ශිෂ්‍ය ප්‍රමාණය 25 සීමාව නොඉක්මවිය යුතු බවයි. එහෙත්, අප රටෙහි ඇතැම් නාට්‍ය පන්තිකාමර සිසුන් හතළිහකට වඩා සිටින විට සහ පන්තිකාමර සෝෂාව බාධාවක් වනවිට නිර්මාණශීලිත්වය සංවර්ධනය වීමට අවස්ථා අහිමි වේ.

**අධ්‍යයනයේ සීමා**

අධ්‍යයනයේ ප්‍රධාන සීමාවන් දෙකක් වූයේ භාවිත කරන ලද පර්යේෂණ උපකරණ දෙක (නවීකරණය කරන ලද TTCT සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ පරිමාණය) ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය සන්දර්භය තුළ අලුත් වූ බැවින් ප්‍රතිඵල සසැදීමට සම්මතයන් නොතිබීම යි. කෙසේ වෙතත්, මෙම උපකරණ කණ්ඩායම් අතර සසැදීම් සඳහා

සුදුසු විය. එසේ ම, මෙම පියවර දෙකම ස්වයං-චාර්තා පියවරයන් විය. කෙසේ වෙතත්, සංසන්දනාත්මක අරමුණු සඳහා, එක් එක් කණ්ඩායම මැදිහත්වීමට පෙර සහ පසු ඔවුන්ගේම ලකුණු සමඟ සංසන්දනය කරන ලද බැවින් මෙය ගැටලු සහගත නොවී ය.

මීට අමතරව, අධ්‍යයනය වෙනුවෙන් යොදා ගනු ලැබුවේ බස්නාහිර පළාතේ දිස්ත්‍රික්ක තුන ආවරණය වන පාසල් හයක් පමණි. මෙම පාසල් හය ස්ත්‍රී-පුරුෂභාවය, ආදායම සහ ස්ථානය සැලකීමේ දී සමාන නමුත් මෙම සමානකම දිවයිනේ සෑම පාසලකම සමාන නොවන නිසා අධ්‍යයනයේ සොයාගැනීම් අනෙකුත් පළාත් අවේ පිහිටි පාසල්වලට සාමාන්‍යකරණය කිරීම අපහසු ය. කනිෂ්ඨ ද්විතීයික පන්තිවලින් ඔබ්බට ගොස් නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ හැකියාව කෙරෙහි ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය සමාන බලපෑමක් ඇති කරන්නේ දැයි පරීක්ෂා කිරීමට නම් වෙනත් ශ්‍රේණිත්වලත් මෙම මැදිහත්වීම් නැවත සිදු කිරීම ප්‍රයෝජනවත් වනු ඇත.

**නිගමන සහ යෝජනා**

සසම්භාවී නොවන පාලන සැලසුමක් භාවිත කරමින්, නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීම අරමුණු කර ගනිමින්, ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය පාසල්වල සිදු කරනු ලැබූ පළමු පර්යේෂණාත්මක අධ්‍යයනය මෙය යි. සමස්ත අධ්‍යයන ප්‍රතිඵලවලින් අනාවරණය වූයේ ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීම සඳහා ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය ශිල්පීය ක්‍රමයන්ගේ ඵලදායිතාව යි. ප්‍රතිපත්ති සම්පාදකයින් සහ අධ්‍යාපන බලධාරීන් සඳහා මෙහි ඇඟවුම් ගණනාවක් ඇත. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ප්‍රතිපත්ති සම්පාදකයින්ට (අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍යාංශය/ජාතික අධ්‍යාපන ආයතනය) කනිෂ්ඨ ද්විතීයික පාසල් සිසුන්ගේ නිර්මාණශීලීත්වය සහ අනුවර්තනය කුසලතා සංවර්ධනය කිරීම නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනය සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා ඉගැන්වීම සඳහා මෙම ප්‍රවේශයට සහාය වීම සඳහා සාක්ෂි පදනම් කරගත් මැදිහත්වීම් වර්ධනය කිරීම සලකා බැලිය හැකි ය. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ඵලදායී හා ඉහළ කාර්ය සාධනයක් ඇති පාසල් ප්‍රවර්ධනය කිරීමේ දී පාසල් විදුහල්පතිවරු ප්‍රමුඛ කාර්යභාරයක් ඉටු කරති.



එබැවින් ගුරුවරුන්ට ඵලදායීව හා නවාතැන්ගෙනගෙන වැඩ කිරීමට නිදහස ලබා දෙන සුදුසු පාසල් වාතාවරණයක් පාසල් විදුහල්පතිවරුන්ට නිර්මාණය කළ හැකි ය. නාට්‍ය අධ්‍යාපනයේ සාර්ථකත්වය සඳහා තාක්ෂණය, ඉගැන්වීම් සහ ඉගෙනුම් සම්පත්, උපකරණ සහ අමතර සම්පත් ඇතුළු භෞතික සන්දර්භය සහ පරිසරය ද අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ. මෙම ප්‍රවේශය ක්‍රියාවට නැංවීම සඳහා නාට්‍ය ගුරුවරුන්ගේ කුසලතා ඉහළ නැංවීම ද අවශ්‍ය වනු ඇත. ඔවුන්ගෙන් බොහෝ දෙනෙකුට සටහන් දීම හැර වෙනත් නාට්‍ය ඉගැන්වීමේ ක්‍රමයක් පිළිබඳ අත්දැකීම් නොමැත. සිසුන් ක්‍රියාශීලී, ප්‍රායෝගික අත්දැකීම්වලින් ඉහළ පෙළඹවීමක් ඇති බව මැදිහත් වීමෙන් පෙන්වුම් කළ පරිදි, පාසල් පරිපාලකයන්ට මේ ආකාරයෙන් නාට්‍ය ඉගැන්වීම සඳහා වඩාත් ඵලදායී යටිතල පහසුකම් සහ අවකාශය සැපයීමට අවශ්‍ය විය හැකි ය. ක්‍රියාවලි නාට්‍ය වැනි නවාතැන්, සම්ප්‍රදායික නොවන ඉගැන්වීම් භාවිත කිරීමට ගුරුවරුන්ට නිදහස සලසන සුදුසු පාසල් වාතාවරණයක් පාසල් පරිපාලකයන් විසින් නිර්මාණය කිරීමට ද අවශ්‍ය වනු ඇත.

සමස්තයක් වශයෙන්, මෙම අධ්‍යයනය ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ වත්මන් ඉගැන්වීම් පිළිවෙත් පිළිබිඹු කරන අතර, නව ප්‍රවේශයන් ප්‍රගුණ කිරීමට ගුරුවරුන්ට අවස්ථා අවශ්‍ය බව අවධාරණය කරයි. මෙම පරිචය නව දැනුම, නව දැනුවත් කිරීම් සහ ඉදිරි දර්ශනයේ යම් වෙනස්කම් ඇතුළත් වේ. එයට නාට්‍ය අධ්‍යාපනයේ ස්වභාවය, අභිප්‍රාය සහ විභවය නැවත සිතීම සහ වැඩිදියුණු කළ සෞන්දර්යාත්මක හැඟීමක් සහ අධ්‍යාපනික දිශානතියක් ඇතුළත් වේ. මේ අනුව, මෙම සන්දර්භය තුළ නිර්මාණාත්මක සංවර්ධන අධ්‍යාපනයේ සංකීර්ණත්වය පිළිබඳ වැඩිදුර අවබෝධයක් ලබා ගැනීමට සහ අදාළ සංකීර්ණ හා ගතික අභියෝගවලට ප්‍රතිචාර දැක්වීම සඳහා විවිධ ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය නාට්‍ය පන්තිකාමර සන්දර්භයන් හරහා ප්‍රවේශ මාලාවක් අනුගමනය කරමින් පර්යේෂණ කිරීමේ සැබෑ අවශ්‍යතාවක් පවතී. අනාගත ආර්ථික ඉල්ලීම් අඛණ්ඩව වෙනස් කිරීමට වෙනස් වීම සැමවිටම අභියෝගාත්මක වන අතර, ඉගෙනීම, සමාජ අන්තර්ක්‍රියා, නිර්මාණශීලී චින්තනය සඳහා ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ නියැලීම සහ අනුවර්තනය වීමේ කුසලතා වර්ධනය අතර සම්බන්ධතාව පිළිබඳ නව සලකා බැලීම් සඳහා ගුරුවරුන්ට උපකාර කිරීමට මග පෙන්වීම අවශ්‍ය වනු ඇත.

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## Changes in Stakeholders' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education Practices

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### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the extent to which the attitudes of stakeholders are changed about the regular classroom practices that have been transformed as Inclusive Education (IE) practices in the school system. The research design was a case study, and the research approach was qualitative. Five government schools in the Batticaloa district that practice IE were selected using a convenience sampling method. Five Assistant Directors of Special Education, five principals, five class teachers, and ten subject teachers were selected as participants, purposively. The interview schedules were administered to gather data from Assistant Directors of Special Education, principals, and class teachers. The focus group discussion schedule was utilized to collect data from subject teachers of inclusive classrooms. The observation schedule was utilized to collect data from selected schools. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data by coding and categorizing. Stakeholders have positive attitudes and practices in both the key practices of information provisions for IE and student interactions in IE. On the other hand, negative attitudes were observed among the stakeholders regarding the development of individual education programmes for students with special educational needs, and a policy for IE. Also, there are mixed attitudes towards the practice of physical features for IE among stakeholders. As a recommendation, awareness should be created about the importance of IE policy and individual education program at school level and zonal level. Additionally, awareness should be created regarding the importance of physical features in IE and the responsibilities of stakeholders.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Special Educational Needs, stakeholder attitudes

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## உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பாக பங்குதாரர்களின் மனப்பாங்கில் ஏற்படும் மாற்றங்கள்

### ஆய்வுச் சுருக்கம்

சாதாரண பாடசாலை அமைப்பு உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளாக மாற்றமடைவது தொடர்பில் பங்குதாரர்களின் மனப்பாங்கு எந்தளவுக்கு மாற்றப்பட்டுள்ளது என்பதனை ஆராய்வதே இந்த ஆய்வின் நோக்கமாகும். இவ் ஆய்வானது விடய ஆய்வு வடிவமைப்பு மற்றும் பண்புசார் அணுகுமுறையையும் பின்பற்றி முன்னெடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விமுறையைப் பின்பற்றும் ஐந்து சாதாரண பாடசாலைகள் வசதி மாதிரி முறை மூலம் தெரிவு செய்யப்பட்டன. ஐந்து விசேட கல்விக்கான உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள், ஐந்து அதிபர்கள், மற்றும் ஐந்து வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள், 10 பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் பங்கேற்பாளர்களாகத் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டனர். நேர்காணல் அட்டவணைகள் விசேட கல்விக்கான உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள், அதிபர்கள், வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் ஆகியோர்களிடமிருந்து தரவைச் சேகரிக்க நிர்வகிக்கப்பட்டன. உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைகளின் பாட ஆசிரியர்களிடமிருந்து தரவுகளை சேகரிக்கக் குழுமியக் கலந்துரையாடல் அட்டவணை பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டது. குறியீடாக்கம், வகைப்படுத்துதல் மற்றும் கருப்பொருள் மூலம் தரவுகளைப் பகுப்பாய்வு செய்ய விவரணப் பகுப்பாய்வு முறை பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டது. கண்டுபிடிப்புக்களுக்கமைய உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான தகவலுக்கான ஏற்பாடுகள் மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் மாணவர்களின் இடைத்தொடர்புகள் ஆகிய இரு பிரதான நடைமுறைகளிலும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியின் பங்குதாரர்கள் நேர் மனப்பாங்கினையும் நடைமுறைகளையும் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள். மறுபுறம் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்ட உருவாக்கம், மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கைகள் தொடர்பில் பங்குதாரர்களிடையே எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கும் நடைமுறைச் சவால்களும் காணப்படுகின்றன. மேலும், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான பௌதீக அமைப்புக்கள் நடைமுறையை நோக்குமிடத்து கலந்த மனப்பாங்குகள் காணப்படுகின்றன. அந்தவகையில், உயர் அதிகாரிகள் மட்டத்தில் எதிர் மனப்பாங்கும் ஆசிரியர்கள் மத்தியில் நேர் மனப்பாங்கும் காணப்படுகின்றன. பரிந்துரைப்புக்களாக, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தின் அரசு பாடசாலைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விச் செயன்முறைகளை மேம்படுத்தும் வகையில் பாடசாலை மட்டத்திலும் வலய மட்டத்திலும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கையின் முக்கியத்துவம் மற்றும் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் குறித்து விழிப்புணர்வை ஏற்படுத்தல் வேண்டும். அத்துடன், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் பௌதீக அம்சங்களின் அவசியம் தொடர்பிலும் பங்குதாரர்களின் பொறுப்புக்கள் தொடர்பிலும் விழிப்புணர்வுகளை ஏற்படுத்தல் வேண்டும்.

**கலைச் சொற்கள்:** உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி, பங்குதாரர்கள், விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள்

## அறிமுகம்

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி என்ற எண்ணக்கரு உலகில் கல்வித் துறையில் மிகவும் பிரபலமானதாக வளர்ந்துள்ளது. மேலும், இது உலகில் உள்ள அனைத்துக் குழந்தைகளுக்கும் கல்வியை வழங்குவதற்கான எல்லையை விஸ்தரிக்கும் எதிர்பார்ப்புடன் நடைமுறைப்படுத்துகிறது. உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறை விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு ஒரு சிறந்த கொடையாக நோக்கப்படுகின்றது. மேலும், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி குழந்தைகளின் உரிமை, மாறாக அது சலுகையாகக் கருதப்படமுடியாது (Mag, Sinfield & Burns, 2017). மேலும், ஒவ்வொரு குழந்தையும் தனித்துவமானது மற்றும் வித்தியாசமானது என்பதால் வினைத்திறனான உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி மிகவும் முக்கியமானது. குறிப்பாக, விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய குழந்தைகள் வெவ்வேறு திறன்களைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர்; வெவ்வேறு வழிகளில் மற்றும் வெவ்வேறு வேகங்களில் கற்றுக்கொள்கின்றார்கள். உலகெங்கிலும் உள்ள ஒவ்வொரு பாடசாலையிலும் சமூகத்திலும் உள்ளடங்கல், கற்றல், நட்பு மற்றும் தடையற்ற சூழல்கள் உருவாக்கப்பட வேண்டும், இதன் மூலம் அனைத்துக் குழந்தைகளும் அவர்களின் முழுக் கல்வி, சமூக, உணர்ச்சி மற்றும் உடல் திறன்களை உருவாக்க முடியும். ஒரு குழந்தையின் கல்வித் திறனை அவளது அல்லது அவரது சமூக, உணர்ச்சி மற்றும் உடல் திறன் ஆகியவற்றிலிருந்து தனித்தனியாக உருவாக்க முடியாது என்பதை நினைவில் கொள்வது அவசியம், ஏனெனில் அவை குழந்தையின் வளர்ச்சியின் ஒன்றோடொன்று சார்ந்த அம்சங்களாகும் (Haddad, 2009; Peters, 2003). எனவே, குடும்பத்திலிருந்து சமூகம் வரை சேர்ப்பது தொடங்கப்பட வேண்டும், மேலும் வழக்கமான கல்வி முறையில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் இல்லாத மாணவர்களுடன் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களுக்கு கல்வி கற்பிக்க பாடசாலைகள் முக்கிய பங்கு வகிக்க வேண்டும்.

இந்நிலையில், விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் பங்குதாரர்களான பெற்றோர்கள், சமூக அங்கத்தவர்கள், சகபாடிகள், குடும்ப உறுப்பினர்கள், பாடசாலை ஆசிரியர்கள், அதிபர்கள் போன்றோரின் மனப்பாங்கு மையப்புள்ளியாகக் காணப்படுகின்றது.

### ஆய்வுப் பிரச்சினை

மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டம் 30 வருட உள்நாட்டு யுத்தம் மற்றும் சனாமி, சூறாவளி, வெள்ளம் போன்ற இயற்கை அனர்த்தங்களினால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டது, இதன் விளைவாக அதிக வறுமை விகிதமும், அதிக ஊட்டச்சத்து குறைபாடும் காணப்படுகின்றது. குறிப்பாக மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் அதிகளவான விசேட தேவையுடைய சிறுவர்கள் வாழ்கின்றனர். சில ஆராய்ச்சி கண்டுபிடிப்புகள் மற்றும் ஆய்வாளர்களின் அனுபவத்தின்படி, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ள சாதாரண பாடசாலைகள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி முறையை நடைமுறைப்படுத்தினாலும், விசேட தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்கள் முறையான கல்வியைப் பெறுவதில் சவால்களை எதிர்கொள்கின்றனர் (Ketheeswaran, 2019). இப் பிரச்சினைகளை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டு, இந்த ஆய்வு சாதாரண பாடசாலை அமைப்பு உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளாக மாற்றமடைவது தொடர்பில் பங்குதாரர்களின் மனப்பாங்கு எந்தளவுக்கு மாற்றப்பட்டுள்ளது என்பதை ஆராய்ந்து உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியை மேம்படுத்தும் வகையில் இவ்வாய்வு முன்னெடுக்கப்பட்டது.

### உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி என்பது அனைத்து மாணவர்களும் கலந்துகொள்வது மற்றும் அவர்களின் அருகிலுள்ள பாடசாலைகளினால் மாணவர்களின் வயதுக்கு ஏற்ப, வழக்கமான வகுப்புகளில் வரவேற்கப்படுவதுடன், பாடசாலையின் வாழ்க்கையின் அனைத்து அம்சங்களையும் கற்கவும்,

பங்களிக்கவும் மற்றும் பங்கேற்கவும் உதவுகிறது. உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி என்பது எங்கள் பாடசாலைகள், வகுப்பறைகள், நிகழ்ச்சிகள் மற்றும் செயல்பாடுகளை எவ்வாறு உருவாக்கி வடிவமைக்கிறோம் என்பது பற்றியது, இதன் மூலம் அனைத்து மாணவர்களும் ஒன்றாகக் கற்கவும் பங்கேற்கவும் முடியும் (Nilholm, 2021).

இவ்வாய்வில், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி என்பது தகவல், பௌதீக அம்சங்கள், உள்ளடங்கற் கொள்கைகள், தனியாளர் மையக் கல்வித் திட்டம், மாணவர் தொடர்புகள், பணியாளர்கள் மற்றும் வாண்மையாளர்களின் திறமைகள், வெளிப்புறத் தொடர்புகள், அடைவுகளின் மதிப்பீடு, பாடத்திட்டம் மற்றும் வழக்கமான அமைப்பில் அவர்களின் திறனை வளர்ப்பதற்கு விசேட தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்குக் கல்வி கற்பித்தல் உத்திகள் ஆகியவற்றின் செயல்பாடுகளுடன் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி முறையை நடைமுறைப்படுத்துவதாகும்.

#### **நடைமுறைச் சவால்கள்**

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் உள்ள சிக்கல்கள் மற்றும் சவால்கள் பற்றிய சான்றுகள் உள்ளன. அதன்படி, சவால்களும் தடைகளும் நன்கு புரிந்து கொள்ளப்பட்டுள்ளன, மேலும் 21 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டின் முற்பகுதியில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான ஒரு சில தடைகள் அறியப்பட்டன. இதற்கு மேலாக, நிபுணர்களின் கருத்துக்களும் ஆவணங்களும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் உள்ள சிக்கல்கள் தொடர்பான தற்போதைய புரிதலை விளக்குவதாகக் காணப்படுகின்றது (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002; Mittler, 2012; Peters, 2003).

வெற்றிகரமான உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விச் செயல்பாடுகள் மற்றும் நடைமுறைகளுக்கு சர்வதேச அளவில் மிகவும் பொதுவான சவால்களாக கொள்கை மற்றும் சட்ட உதவிகள் இல்லாமை, போதிய பாடசாலை வளங்கள் மற்றும் வசதிகள் இல்லாமை, போதிய நிபுணத்துவம் வாய்ந்த பாடசாலை

வாண்மையாளர்கள் இல்லாமை, உள்ளடங்கற் சிந்தனை மற்றும் நுட்பங்களில் போதிய ஆசிரியர் பயிற்சியற்ற நிலை, செயற்திறனற்ற கல்வியியல் நுட்பங்கள், இறுக்கமான பாடத்திட்டம். இடமளித்தல், மாற்றியமைத்தல் அல்லது தனிப்பயனாக்கம், உதவியற்ற பாடசாலைகள், மற்றும் பிராந்தியத் தலைமைப் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் இயலாமை பற்றிய சமூக-கலாச்சார எதிர்மறையான மனப்பான்மை (Eide & Ingstad, 2011; Eleweke & Rodda, Johnstone & Chapman, 2009; Mittler, 2012; Peters, 2003; Rose, 2010; Schuelka, 2018; Yasunaga, 2014). இந்த முக்கிய சவால்கள் சர்வதேச அளவில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்துவதையும் விருத்திசெய்வதையும் கட்டுப்படுத்துகிறது.

விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் திறன்மிக்க உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் இலங்கைக்கு சிக்கல்கள் மற்றும் சவால்கள் உள்ளன என்பதற்கான சான்றுகள் உள்ளன. உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறையில் (Alwis, 2012) அனைத்து மாணவர்களுக்கும் தகுந்த வழிமுறைகளை வழங்குதல், விசேட தேவையுடையோருக்கான வரையறுக்கப்பட்ட வளங்கள் மற்றும் வாய்ப்புகள் மற்றும் விசேட தேவையுடைய குழந்தைகளிடையே போதிய கல்வி வாய்ப்புகள் மற்றும் கிராமப்புறங்களில் பாடசாலைகளுக்குப் பிந்தைய சமூகப் பங்கேற்புக்கான தடைகள் (Higashida et al., 2016). சர்வதேச மற்றும் தேசிய அளவிலான ஆய்வு முடிவுகள் உலகளாவிய மற்றும் தேசிய மட்டத்தில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பான சவால்கள் மற்றும் சிக்கல்களை ஆராய்கின்றன.

கிழக்கு மாகாண கல்வித் திணைக்களத்தின் புள்ளிவிபரத் தரவுகளின்படி இலங்கையின் மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் 7248 மாற்றுத்திறனாளிகள் வாழ்கின்றனர். மேலும், சமூக-பொருளாதாரத்தின் முக்கிய குறிகாட்டிகள் வறுமை விகிதம் 19.4%, 10.99% குடும்பங்கள் ஊட்டச்சத்துக் குறைபாட்டால் பாதிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளனர் மற்றும் 27,706 பெண்கள் குடும்பத்தைத் தலைமை தாங்கி மட்டக்களப்பு

மாவட்டத்தில் வாழ்கின்றனர் (Guruge, et al, 2017). குறிப்பாக, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் மாற்றுத்திறனாளிகளின் எண்ணிக்கை அதிகரிப்பதற்கு மேற்கூறிய காரணிகள் பங்களிக்கின்றன. இதேவேளை, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ள 174 அரசு பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைகளில் 247 விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளுள்ள மாணவர்கள் கல்விகற்று வருகின்றார்கள். இந்தப் பின்னணியில் இவ்வாய்வு முன்னகர்த்தப்பட்டது.

### **ஆய்வு நோக்கம்**

சாதாரண பாடசாலை அமைப்பு உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளாக மாற்றமடைவது தொடர்பில் பங்குதாரர்களின் மனப்பாங்கு எந்தளவுக்கு மாற்றப்பட்டுள்ளது என்பதனை ஆராய்வதே இந்த ஆய்வின் நோக்கமாகும்.

### **ஆய்வு முறையியல்**

#### **ஆய்வு அணுகுமுறையும் வடிவமைப்பும்**

ஆய்வு அணுகுமுறையும் ஆய்வு வடிவமைப்பும் ஆய்வு முறையியலில் முக்கிய அம்சங்களாகக் காணப்படுகின்றன. அந்தவகையில், முழுமையான பண்புசார் அணுகுமுறை இவ்வாய்வினை முன்னெடுப்பதற்காகப் பின்பற்றப்பட்டது.

இந்த ஆய்வுக்கு பல்வகை விடய ஆய்வு வடிவமைப்பு தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்டது. ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட உண்மை உலக விஷயத்தைப் பற்றிய உறுதியான மற்றும் சூழ்நிலை தொடர்பான ஆழமான அறிவைப் பெற ஆராய்ச்சியாளர்கள் முற்படும் போது விடய ஆய்வு ஒரு பொருத்தமான ஆராய்ச்சி வடிவமைப்பாகக் காணப்படுகின்றது. மேலும் விடயம் தொடர்பான முக்கிய பண்புகள், விளக்கங்கள் மற்றும் தாக்கங்களை ஆராய விடய ஆய்வு அடிப்படையாக அமைகின்றது.



**ஆய்வுக் குடித்தொகையும் மாதிரித் தெரிவும்**

இலங்கையில் 4,431 அரசு பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி முறையில் உள்ளது. மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் அமைந்துள்ள அரசு பாடசாலைகளை உள்ளடக்கியதாக இந்த ஆய்வு மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டது. இதன்படி, இந்த ஆய்வின் குடித்தொகையானது மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியை நடைமுறைப்படுத்தும் 174 அரசு பாடசாலைகள் காணப்படுகின்றன.

இந்நிலையினை விரிவாக நோக்குமிடத்து, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் ஐந்து கல்வி வலயங்கள் முறையே மட்டக்களப்பு மத்தி, மட்டக்களப்பு மேற்கு, மட்டக்களப்பு, கற்குடா மற்றும் பட்டிருப்பு ஆகியன காணப்படுகின்றன. அவற்றில் மட்டக்களப்பு மத்தி கல்வி வலயத்தினை நோக்குமிடத்து 76 பாடசாலைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது, அவற்றில் 31 பாடசாலைகள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளன. அவை 52 விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களையும் 50 உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி வகுப்பாசிரியர்களையும் 232 உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பிற்கான பாட ஆசிரியர்களையும் கொண்டமைந்துள்ளன.

தொடர்ந்து மட்டக்களப்பு மேற்குக் கல்வி வலயத்தினை நோக்குமிடத்து 68 பாடசாலைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது, அவற்றில் 25 பாடசாலைகள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளன. அவை 34 விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களையும் 29 உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி வகுப்பாசிரியர்களையும் 179 உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பிற்கான பாட ஆசிரியர்களையும் கொண்டமைந்துள்ளன.

மட்டக்களப்புக் கல்வி வலயத்தினை நோக்குமிடத்து 65 பாடசாலைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது, அவற்றில் 41 பாடசாலைகள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளன. அவை 54 விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களையும் 51 உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி வகுப்பாசிரியர்களையும் 257 உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பிற்கான பாட ஆசிரியர்களையும் கொண்டமைந்துள்ளன.

மேலும், கற்குடா கல்வி வலயத்தினை நோக்குமிடத்து 83 பாடசாலைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது, அவற்றில் 49 பாடசாலைகள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளன. அவை 72 விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களையும் 69 உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி வகுப்பாசிரியர்களையும் 302 உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பிற்கான பாட ஆசிரியர்களையும் கொண்டமைந்துள்ளன.

இறுதியாக, பட்டிருப்பு கல்வி வலயத்தினை நோக்குமிடத்து 69 பாடசாலைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது, அவற்றில் 28 பாடசாலைகள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளன. அவை 35 விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களையும் 32 உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி வகுப்பாசிரியர்களையும் 186 உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பிற்கான பாட ஆசிரியர்களையும் கொண்டமைந்துள்ளன.

ஐந்து கல்வி வலயங்களும் தலா ஒரு விசேட கல்விக்கான உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளரையும் தலா ஒரு விசேட கல்விக்கான ஆசிரிய ஆலோசகரையும் கொண்டமைந்துள்ளமை குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

இதனடிப்படையில், ஐந்து கல்வி வலயங்களில் இருந்து தலா ஒரு உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலை வசதி மாதிரி முறையைப் பயன்படுத்தி தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டது. இந்த ஆய்வில் பங்கேற்பவர்களைத் தேர்ந்தெடுக்க நோக்க மாதிரி முறை பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டது. அந்தவகையில், தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்ட ஐந்து உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைகளில் இருந்து ஒரு உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறை தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டது.

தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்ட பாடசாலைகளிலிருந்து ஐந்து அதிபர்கள், வகுப்பாசிரியர்கள், இரண்டு பாட

ஆசிரியர்களும் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டனர். மேலும், ஐந்து கல்வி வலயங்களிலிருந்தும் ஐந்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் நோக்க மாதிரி அடிப்படையில் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டனர்.

### **தரவு சேகரிப்புக் கருவிகள்**

பாடசாலை அதிபர்கள், விசேட கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பாசிரியர் மற்றும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய பிள்ளைகளின் பெற்றோர்களிடமிரும் தரவுகளைச் சேகரிக்க தனித்தனியே நேர்காணல் படிவங்கள் தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்டு விருத்தியாக்கப்பட்டன உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைப் பாட ஆசிரியர்களிடமிருந்து தரவுகளைப் பொற்றுக்கொள்ள குழுமியக் கலந்துரையாடற் படிவம் தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்டு தயாரிக்கப்பட்டது.

அனைத்துத் தரவு சேகரிப்புச் செயன்முறைகளும் ஆய்வாளரினால் முன்னெடுக்கப்பட்டு தரவுகள் சேமிக்கப்பட்டது.

### **தரவு சேகரிப்புக் கருவிகளின் செவ்வைபார்ப்பு**

விருத்திசெய்யப்படாத நேர்காணல் படிவமும் குழுமியக் கலந்துரையாடற் படிவமும் துறைசார் கலாநிதி ஒருவரிடமும் ஆய்வியல் சார் பேராசிரியர் ஒருவரிடமும் நிபுணர்களின் தரமறி முறையின் கீழ் செவ்வைபார்க்கப்பட்டன.

### **நம்பகத்தன்மை பேணல்**

தரமான ஆய்வுகள் நம்பகமானதாக இருக்க வேண்டும். அந்தவகையில் ஆய்வின் நம்பகத்தன்மையை உறுதி செய்வதற்காக, ஆய்வாளர்கள் துல்லியம், நம்பகத்தன்மை போன்ற பல குறிகாட்டிகளைப் பயன்படுத்துகின்றனர் (Higashida, 2014). அதன்படி, ஆய்வின் நம்பகத்தன்மையை உறுதிப்படுத்த இந்த ஆய்வின் ஆராய்ச்சியாளர் நடவடிக்கை எடுத்துள்ளார். அந்தவகையில் தரவுகளின்

துல்லியத்தன்மை, உறுதிப்பாடு, மற்றும் நம்கம் போன்ற தன்மைகளை உறுதிசெய்ததன் மூலம் ஆய்வுத் தரவுகளின் நம்பகத்தன்மை பேணப்பட்டது.

### **தரவுப் பகுப்பாய்வு**

சேகரிக்கப்பட்ட தரவுகள் குறியீடாக்கம் செய்யப்பட்டு பின்னர் குறியீடுகள் வகைப்படுத்தப்பட்டு, கருப்பொருட்கள் உருவாக்கப்பட்டன. தரவைப் பகுப்பாய்வு செய்ய விவரணப் பகுப்பாய்வு முறை பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டது.

### **ஆய்வொழுக்கம்**

ஆய்வொழுக்கத்தைப் பேணும் வகையில் மாகாணக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளரிடம் அனுமதிக் கடிதம் பெறப்பட்டது. மேலும் வலயக்கல்வி அதிகாரிகளிடமும் பாடசாலை அதிபர்களிடமும் அனுமதிக் கடிதம் பெறப்பட்டதுடன். தரவு சேகரிப்பின் முன்னர் ஒவ்வொரு பங்குதாரர்களிடமும் அனுமதி பெறப்பட்டதன் பின்னர் நேர்காணல்களும் குழுமியக் கலந்துரையாடல்களும் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டன.

தரவு சேகரிக்கப்பட்டு பகுப்பாய்வின் போது பங்குபற்றுனரின் உண்மையான அடயாளங்களுக்குப் பதிலாக போலியான அடயாளங்கள் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டன.

### **ஆய்வின் வரையறைகள்**

ஆய்வானது மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் மாத்திரம் செய்யப்பட்டமையும் அங்கு காணப்பட்ட 174 உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைகளில் ஐந்து (5) பாடசாலைகள் மாத்திரம் ஆய்வுக்காகத் தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்டமையும் ஆய்வியல்சார் வரையறைகளாகக் காணப்படுகின்றன.

**ஆய்வுப் பகுப்பாய்வும் கண்டுபிடிப்புக்களும் கலந்துரையாடல்களும்**

சேகரிக்கப்பட்ட தரவுகள் பகுப்பாய்வு செய்யப்பட்டு கண்டுபிடிப்புக்கள் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டு கலந்துரையாடல்கள் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டது. பகுப்பாய்வின் போது தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்ட ஐந்து பாடசாலைகளும் A, B, C, D, E எனப் பெயரிடப்பட்டன. அவ்வாறே தகவல் வழங்கிய பங்குபற்றுனரின் உண்மையான பெயர்களுக்குப் பதிலாக மாதிரிப் பெயர்கள் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டன. அவை தொடர்பான விடயங்கள் பின்வரும் அட்டவணை - 1 இல் வழங்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

**அட்டவணை 1**

**பங்குபற்றுனர்களின் மாதிரிப் பெயர்களும் பாடசாலைகளுக்கான குறியீடுகளும்**

பாடசாலைக மாதிரிப் பெயர்கள்						
ள் (விடயம்)	பாடசாலைகளின் வகைகள்	மாணவர்கள்	உதவிக் பணிப்பாளர்	கல்விப் பதிபரின் பெயர்	வகுப்பாசிரியரின் பெயர்	பாட ஆசிரியர்களின் பெயர்கள்
A	1AB	மாலா	அருள்	பாமினி	சந்திரிக்கா	(1) குகன் (2) ரோஜா
B	வகை 1	பாலு	பாபு	குமார்	சாந்தி	(1) ஜோதி (2) ரதி
C	1C	கோகிலா	குமாரி	கனா	ஜானு	(1) சிறி (2) நிசன்
D	1C	குஸ்னா	அப்துல்லா	பதுருடன்	குஸன்	(1) பாத்திமா (2) முபாரக்
E	வகை 1	அமல்	பார்வதி	குமலன்	சரஸ்வதி	(1) வள்ளி (2) கலா

மேலும் தரவுப் பகுப்பாய்வானது உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான தகவலுக்கான ஏற்பாடுகள், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான பௌதீக அம்சங்கள், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கைகள், தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள், மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் மாணவர்களின் இடைத்தொடர்புகள் ஆகிய உபதலைப்பின் கீழ் பகுப்பாய்வு முன்னெடுக்கப்பட்டது.

#### உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான தகவலுக்கான ஏற்பாடுகள்

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான தகவலுக்கான ஏற்பாடுகள் இரண்டு வகைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது.

1. உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பாக பாடசாலை மற்றும் பங்குதாரர்களுக்கு இடையேயான தொடர்பு.
2. உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பங்குதாரர்களுடனான ஒத்துழைப்பு.

அந்தவகையில், அனைத்து ஐந்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும் தமது கல்வி வலயத்தில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்குப் பாடசாலை மற்றும் பங்குதாரர்களுக்கு இடையேயான தொடர்பை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கான பணிகளை மேற்கொண்டுள்ளனர். அதன்படி, பாடசாலை A, C, D மற்றும் E ஆகியவற்றிலிருந்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் பங்குதாரர்களுடன் தொடர்புகொள்ளக் கூட்டங்களை நடத்துகின்றனர். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர் பாடசாலை A இல் இருந்து அருள் குறிப்பிடதற்கமைய, "...மாதத்திற்கு ஒருமுறை கூட்டத்தை நடத்தி மாணவர்களுக்கு கிடைக்கும் சேவைகளைப் பெற்றுக்கொள்ள வலயத்துடன் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ளவுமும், சேவைகளைப் பெற அதிகாரிகளுக்கு வழிகாட்டுகின்றேன்..". மேலும், அனைத்து ஐந்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும் அரசசார்பற்ற நிறுவனங்கள், காவல் துறைகள், சமூக உறுப்பினர்கள், மருத்துவர்கள், கல்வித் துறை மற்றும் பாடசாலைச் சமூகம் போன்ற பங்குதாரர்கள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கு ஒத்துழைத்துள்ளனர் அத்துடன் உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும்

ஒத்துழைப்பை மேம்படுத்த பல்வேறு பங்குதாரர்களுடன் இணைந்து செயல்படுகிறனர், பாபு பாடசாலை வலயம் B கூறியது, "...காவல் துறைகள், சமூக அமைப்புகள், தன்னார்வ தொண்டு நிறுவனங்கள், வலயக் கல்வித் துறை ஆகியன பாடசாலை உள்ளடங்கற் நடைமுறைகளுக்கு ஒத்துழைக்கின்றன..".

நான்கு பாடசாலை அதிபர்கள் (A, B, C & E) பங்குதாரர்களுடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டு உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்த விழிப்புணர்வை ஏற்படுத்துகின்றார்கள். மேலும், அவர்கள் தங்கள் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்த பங்குதாரர்களுடன் இணைந்து பணியாற்றுகிறார்கள். உதாரணமாக, பாடசாலை C யிலிருந்து உதவிக்கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர் குமாரி குறிப்பிடுகிறார், "...இந்தப் பாடசாலையில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் நலனுக்காக வேஸ்ட் விஸன் மற்றும் சமூக உறுப்பினர்கள் எங்களுடன் இணைந்து பணியாற்றுகிறார்கள்..". பாடசாலை மற்றும் பங்குதாரர்களுக்கு இடையிலான தொடர்பு மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் பங்குதாரர்களுடனான ஒத்துழைப்பை அவர்கள் நேர்மறையாக உணர்ந்துள்ளனர் என்பதை இது காட்டுகிறது. மேலும், பெரும்பான்மை (நான்கு) அதிபர்களின் நேர்மறை கருத்துக்கள் அவர்களின் அறிவு மற்றும் அணுகுமுறைகளைக் காட்டுகிறது, இது தகவல் வழங்குவதன் மூலம் அவர்களின் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கும் உதவுகிறது. இருப்பினும், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பாடசாலை மற்றும் பங்குதாரர்களுக்கு இடையேயான தொடர்பு மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பங்குதாரர்களின் ஒத்துழைப்பு குறித்து ஒரு பாடசாலை அதிபர் (D) எதிர்மறையான கருத்தைக் கொண்டிருந்தார். உதாரணமாக, பதுருதீன் குறிப்பிட்டார், "...இந்த சமூகம் பெண்களின் கல்விக்கு முன்னுரிமை அளிப்பதில்லை, எனவே பெற்றோர்கள் எங்களுடன் இணைந்து பணியாற்றுவதில் ஆர்வம் காட்டுவதில்லை.." மேலும் அவர் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய பெண் மாணவர்களின் கல்வி பற்றிய சமூகத்தின் போலியான சிந்தனைகளுக்கு முன்னுரிமை

அளிக்கிறார். பாடசாலையில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தகவல் வழங்கல்களை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு இது தடையாக இருக்கலாம்.

உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைகளின் ஐந்து வகுப்பாசிரியர்களும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தகவல்களை வழங்குவதில் சாதகமாக மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள்.

இரண்டு ஆசிரியர்கள் (பாடசாலை A & C) பெற்றோருடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டனர், மேலும் இரண்டு ஆசிரியர்கள் (பாடசாலை B & D) முந்தைய ஆசிரியர்களுடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டனர் மற்றும் ஒரு ஆசிரியர் (பாடசாலை E) பெற்றோர்கள் மற்றும் முந்தைய ஆசிரியர்களுடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டார்.

பாடசாலை E இன் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியை சரஸ்வதி குறிப்பிட்டுகையில், "...அமலுடன் உள்ளடங்கல்

வகுப்பறையில் வேலை செய்வதற்காக முந்தைய வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களிடமும், அமலின்

பெற்றோரான அனுலாவிடமும் நான் பேசி யோசனைகளைப் பெற்றேன்..." பாடசாலை B, C, மற்றும்

E இன் உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களின்

பெற்றோருடன் பணிபுரிகின்றனர், உதாரணமாக, பாடசாலை D இன் உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பாசிரியர்,

"...நான் மாணவர் ஆலோசகர் ஆசிரியரிடமிருந்து ஆதரவைப் பெறுகிறேன், நாங்கள் குஸ்னாவை

மேம்படுத்த ஒன்றாகச் செயல்படுகிறோம்..." என்று வெளிப்படுத்தினார். இப்பகுப்பாய்வின்படி,

உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைகளின் அனைத்து ஐந்து வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களும் பங்குதாரர்களுடன்

ஒத்துழைப்பதை இது சான்றளிக்கிறது. பங்குதாரர்கள் மற்றும் ஆசிரியர்களிடமிருந்து உள்ளடங்கற்

கல்வி மீதான நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கும் அர்ப்பணிப்பும் பாடசாலைக்குள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி

நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்துகிறது என்பது உறுதிப்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது.

உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பின் பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பில்

நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கை 10 பங்குபற்றுணரில் எட்டு பங்குபற்றுணர்கள் (A, B, C & E பாடசாலை

இருந்து) வெளிப்படுத்தினர். அதன்படி, அவர்கள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்த



பெற்றோர்கள், வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள், பிற பாட ஆசிரியர்கள், அதிபர்கள், சமூக உறுப்பினர்கள் மற்றும் விசேட பாடசாலைகளுடன் தொடர்பு கொள்கிறார்கள். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, பாட ஆசிரியை ரோஜா, “...புதிய ஆசிரியர்கள் வரும்போது மாலா பற்றிய எனது அனுபவங்களைப் பகிர்ந்து கொள்கிறேன்...” எனக்கூறினார். மேலும், மேற்கூறிய பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் அதிபர்கள், ஆசிரியர்கள், பெற்றோர்கள், சக மாணவர்கள் மற்றும் விசேட பாடசாலையுடன் ஒத்துழைக்கிறார்கள். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, கலா பாட ஆசிரியர் பாடசாலை E குறிப்பிடுகையில், “...அமலின் தாய் அனூலா ஒரு ஆசிரியர் மற்றும் அமலை மேம்படுத்த என்னுடன் இணைந்து பணியாற்றுகிறார்...”. இது உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தகவல் வழங்கல்களை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு பாட ஆசிரியர்களின் நேர் மனப்பாங்கினைக் காட்டுகிறது மற்றும் விசேட தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களின் உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு இது துணைபுரிகிறது.

மறுபுறம், இரண்டு பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் ஒரே பாடசாலையில் இருந்து உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கு தகவல் வழங்குவது தொடர்பில் எதிர்மறையாக உணர்ந்தனர். உதாரணமாக, பாட ஆசிரியர் பாடசாலை D இல் இருந்து பாத்திமா, “...விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் பெற்றோருடன் தொடர்புகொள்வது கடினம்...” என்று குறிப்பிட்டார், மேலும் இது அவர் குஸ்னாவின் பெற்றோருடன் தொடர்புகொள்வதற்கு எந்த நடவடிக்கையும் எடுக்கவில்லை, அதன் பிறகு தொடர்பு கொள்ள வேண்டிய அவசியத்தை புறக்கணித்தார். மேலும், பாடசாலை D இன் பாட ஆசிரியர் முபாரக், “...குஸ்னாவின் தாயார் உணர்ச்சி ரீதியாக தகுதியற்றவர், அதனால் நாங்கள் அவருடன் வேலை செய்ய முடியாது...” என்று கூறினார். குஸ்னாவின் பெற்றோருக்கு அவள் உணர்ச்சி ரீதியில் தகுதியற்றவள் என்று சுட்டிக்காட்டி தண்டிக்க முயற்சிக்கிறார் என்பதை இது அம்பலப்படுத்துகிறது. உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தகவல்களை வழங்குவதில் பாட ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கு இல்லை என்பதை இது உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது.

தொகுப்பாக, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தின் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் கல்வி வலயங்களில் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தகவல்களின் ஏற்பாடுகள் தொடர்பில் அனைத்து ஐந்து உதவிக்கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும் நேர் மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள். மேலும், நான்கு அதிபர்கள் தங்கள் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகள் பற்றிய தகவல்களை வழங்குவது குறித்து நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைகளின் அனைத்து ஐந்து வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களும் வகுப்பறை மற்றும் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகள் பற்றிய தகவல்களை வழங்குவதில் நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர் மற்றும் எட்டு பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளின் தகவல்களின் விதிகள் பற்றிய நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள். இந்நிலை, உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகள் பற்றிய தகவல்களை வழங்குவதில் ஆசிரியர்கள், அதிபர்கள் மற்றும் உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களின் நேர் மனப்பாங்கு அவர்களின் அறிவு மற்றும் அணுகுமுறைகளைக் காட்டுகிறது மற்றும் மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தின் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் கல்வி வலயங்களில் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு இது துணைபுரியலாம். Bouillet (2013) நடத்திய ஆய்வில், குரோஸ்டிய பாடசாலைகளில் தகவல் தொடர்பு மற்றும் ஒத்துழைப்பு நன்கு ஒழுங்கமைக்கப்படவில்லை மற்றும் வரையறுக்கப்படவில்லை, மேலும் இந்தக் கண்டுபிடிப்பு தற்போதைய ஆய்வுடன் முரண்படுகிறது. குரோஸ்டி பாடசாலை உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளின் தகவல் தொடர்பு மற்றும் ஒத்துழைப்பு குறித்த பாடசாலைகளில் சமூகத்தின் நேர் மனப்பாங்கு இல்லாததால் இந்நிலை ஏற்பட்டிருக்கலாம். மேலும், உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தகவல்களின் ஏற்பாடுகள் பற்றிய நேர் மனப்பாங்கு பங்குதாரர்களின் விழிப்புணர்வை உறுதிசெய்து மட்டக்களப்பு அரசு பாடசாலைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களின் உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பாக அவர்களின் சிறப்பான பங்காற்றலுக்கு உதவலாம்.

இருப்பினும், ஒரு பாடசாலை மற்றும் இரண்டு பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகள் பற்றிய தகவல்களை வழங்குவது பற்றி எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினைக் கொண்டுள்ளமை குறித்த பாடசாலையின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விச் செயற்பாடுகளில் பாதகமான விளைவினை ஏற்படுத்தலாம்.

#### **உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான பௌதீக அம்சங்கள்**

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பௌதீக அம்சங்களின் கீழ் இரு பிரதான விடயங்கள் உள்ளடங்குகின்றன.

1. விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கான பாதுகாப்பான சூழல்
2. மாணவர்களுக்கு அணுகக்கூடிய சூழல்கள்

இதில் உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் உள்ள பாடசாலை அதிபர்களின் கருத்துக்கள் ஆராயப்படுகின்றன. அதன்படி, அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் அனைத்து அதிபர்களும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களுக்குப் பாதுகாப்பான சூழல் மற்றும் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் கல்வி வலயத்தில் அணுகக்கூடிய சூழல் குறித்து எதிர்மறையாகப் பதிலளித்துள்ளனர். பொதுவாக, பாதுகாப்பான மற்றும் அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலை உருவாக்குவது கடினம் என்றும் பாடசாலை கட்டிடங்களை வடிவமைக்கப் பொறுப்பான அதிகாரிகள் இருப்பதாகவும் அவர்கள் தெரிவித்தனர். உதாரணமாக, பாடசாலை B யைச் சேர்ந்த பாபு, "...கட்டிடங்கள் பொறியாளர்களால் வடிவமைக்கப்படுவதால், பாதுகாப்பான சூழலைப் பற்றி என்னால் எதுவும் செய்ய முடியாது..." என்று கூறினார், மேலும் பாடசாலை A யைச் சேர்ந்த பாமினி குறிப்பிடுகையில், "...பாதுகாப்பான சூழலை உருவாக்குவது நம் கையில் இல்லை...", பொறுப்பு வாய்ந்த அதிகாரிகள் தங்கள் பங்கை ஆற்ற வேண்டும் என்பதை இந்த அறிக்கைகள் காட்டுகின்றன. எவ்வாறாயினும், உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் அதிபர்களும் பாடசாலைச் சூழலின் வளர்ச்சியில் ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட பங்கை வகிக்க வேண்டும்.

உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைகளின் பாதுகாப்பான மற்றும் அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலை வளர்ப்பதில் உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் அதிபர்கள் தங்கள் பங்கை அறிந்திருக்கவில்லை என்பதை இந்தப் பதில்கள் உறுதி செய்தன. பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் கல்வி வலயங்களில் பௌதீக அம்சங்கள் தொடர்பில் எதிரான மனப்பாங்கினை வெளிப்படுத்துகின்றது.

மேலும், நான்கு உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் (பாடசாலைகள் A, C, D & E) தங்கள் பதில்களை வெளிப்படுத்தினர், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறையில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்கள் வகுப்பறை மற்றும் பாடசாலைச் சூழலில் பாதுகாப்பாக உணர்கிறார்கள் மற்றும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்கள் விடயங்களை மற்றும் வகுப்பறை மற்றும் பாடசாலைச் சூழலில் உள்ள இடங்களை அணுகுவதில் சவால்களை எதிர்கொள்ளவில்லை என்பது புலப்படுகின்றது. எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, பாடசாலை C யைச் சேர்ந்த ஜானு குறிப்பிடுகையில், "...கோகிலாவுக்கு ஓரளவு செவித்திறன் குறைபாடு உள்ளது, இருப்பினும் அவர் இயக்கத்தில் எந்தச் சவாலையும் உணரவில்லை...". இக்கூற்று விசேட தேவைகளுடனான மாணவரின் பாதுகாப்பான சூழலை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. மேலும், பெரும்பான்மையான (நான்கு) வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள், விசேட தேவைகளுள்ள மாணவர்களுக்குப் பாதுகாப்பான சூழலையும், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலையும் சாதகமாக உணர்ந்துள்ளனர். மேலும், பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பாதுகாப்பான மற்றும் அணுகக்கூடிய பௌதீக அம்சங்களை இது உறுதிப்படுத்தியது. இருப்பினும், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர் (பாடசாலை - B) விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்குப் பாதுகாப்பான சூழலையும், உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலையும் எதிர்மறையாக உணர்ந்தார். உதாரணமாக, சாந்தி, "...பாலு வகுப்பறையில் இயக்கத்தில் மாற்றங்களை எதிர்கொள்கிறார், அது அணுகலைப் பெறுவதில் ஒரு தடையாக இருக்கிறது..." என்று கூறினார், மேலும் இந்தக் கூற்று

பாடசாலையின் அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலைப் பற்றிய அவரது எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கை உறுதி செய்கிறது மற்றும் இந்நிலை தடையாக அமையலாம். பாடசாலையில் பாலுவின் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகள். மேலும், மாணவர் விசேட கல்வித் தேவையுள்ள பிள்ளைகளின் இயலாமையின் வகை மற்றும் இயலாமையின் தீவிரத்தன்மை உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியின் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான அணுகளவு நிலைக்கு ஏற்ப உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களின் மனப்பாங்கைப் பாதிக்கலாம்.

உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறையின் எட்டு பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் (பாடசாலை A, C, D & E), விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்கள் வகுப்பறையிலும் பாடசாலைச் சூழலிலும் பாதுகாப்பாக உள்ளனர் மற்றும் பொருட்களையும் இடங்களையும் அடைவதில் சவால்களை எதிர்கொள்ளவில்லை என்று பதிலளித்தனர். உதாரணமாக, ரோஜா பாடசாலை A கூறியதாவது, "...மாலா வழக்கமான வகுப்பறையில் சில சமயங்களில் அவளுக்கு இடங்களை அடைய உதவி தேவைப்படுகின்றது..." மற்றும் பாடசாலை E யிலிருந்து கலா, "...அமல் இந்தச் சூழலில் வசதியாக இருப்பதாகவும், பாடசாலைச் சூழலில் அவர் மகிழ்ச்சியாக இருப்பதாகவும் நான் நினைக்கிறேன்..." என்று தெரிவித்தார். உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைகளின் பெரும்பான்மையான (நான்கு) பாட ஆசிரியர்கள், விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களுக்குப் பாதுகாப்பான சூழலையும் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலையும் சாதகமாக உணர்ந்துள்ளனர். இருப்பினும், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர் (பாடசாலை B) விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்குப் பாதுகாப்பான சூழலையும், உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலையும் எதிர்மறையாக உணர்ந்தார். உதாரணமாக, ரதி, "...பாலுவுக்கு அடிக்கடி சிறுநீர் கழிக்க வேண்டும், ஆனால் அவர் கழிவறைக்கு வெகுதூரம் நடக்க வேண்டும், அது அவருக்கு ஒரு சவாலாக இருக்கிறது..." என்று கூறினார், மேலும், இது அவர்களின் பௌதீக அம்சத்தைப் பற்றிய எதிர்மறையான கருத்தை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. மேலும், கண்டுபிடிப்புகள் விசேட கல்வித்

தேவைகளின் தன்மை, இயலாமையின் வகை மற்றும் இயலாமையின் தீவிரம் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பில் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களின் மனப்பாங்கைப் பாதிக்கலாம்.

பகுப்பாய்வின் அடிப்படையில், அனைத்து ஐந்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் ஐந்து உள்ளடங்கல் பாடசாலை அதிபர்களும் கல்வி வலயங்களிலும் பாடசாலைகளிலும் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பௌதீக அம்சங்கள் தொடர்பில் எதிர் மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர்.

இந்நிலை, பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கு இடையூறாகவும் அமையலாம்.

இருப்பினும், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறையின் நான்கு வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் மற்றும் எட்டு பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளின் பௌதீக அம்சங்கள் தொடர்பில் நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினைக் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள். மறுபுறம், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறையின் ஒரு உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர் மற்றும் இரண்டு பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளின் பௌதீக அம்சங்கள் தொடர்பில் எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினைக் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள். இந்தக்

கண்டுபிடிப்புகள், அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும் மற்றும் ஐந்து அதிபர்களும் உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பௌதீக அம்சங்கள் தொடர்பில் எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினைக் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள் என்பதைக் காட்டுகிறது. இதற்கிடையில், பெரும்பாலான

ஆசிரியர்கள் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளின் பௌதீக அம்சங்கள் தொடர்பில் நேர் மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான பௌதீக அம்சங்கள் குறித்து உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நிர்வாகிகள் மற்றும் வகுப்பறை ஆசிரியர்களின் மனப்பாங்குகளில் முரண்பாடுகள் இருப்பதை

இது உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. Ackah-Jnr மற்றும் Danso (2019) நடத்திய ஆய்வில், வகுப்பறைகள் மற்றும் கட்டிடங்களில் பயனுள்ள பௌதீக மற்றும் செயற்கை வெளிச்சம், வசதிகளை மாற்றியமைத்தல் மற்றும் பாடசாலைகளின் பௌதீக நிலப்பரப்பின் மறுவடிவமைப்பு, பாதுகாப்பு மற்றும் அணுகல் மற்றும் பயன்பாட்டை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு நல்ல கட்டிடக்கலை வடிவமைப்புகளின் அவசியத்தை கண்டறிந்துள்ளது. உள்ளடங்கல் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ள

அனைத்து மாணவர்களுக்கும் பாதுகாப்பான மற்றும் அணுகக்கூடிய சூழலின் முக்கியத்துவத்தை இந்தக் கண்டுபிடிப்பு உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. எனவே, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்திலுள்ள அரசு பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் உள்ள பௌதீக அம்சங்களைப் பற்றிய தமது நேர்மறை மனப்பாங்கினை அனைத்து பங்குதாரர்களும் மேம்படுத்த வேண்டும்.

#### உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கைகள்

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கைகள் என்ற அமைப்பின் கீழ்,

1. பாடசாலை மட்டத்திலான கொள்கைகள்
2. தேசிய மட்டத்திலான கொள்கைகள் என இரு பிரதான விடயங்கள் பகுப்பாய்வு செய்யப்படுகின்றன.

அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும் அனைத்து அதிபர்களும் தங்கள் வலயங்கள் மற்றும் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைக் கொள்கைகள் குறித்து எதிர்மறையான எண்ணக்கருவையே கொண்டுள்ளனர். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, பாடசாலை Dயைச் சேர்ந்த அப்துல்லா, "...விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளைக் கொண்ட மாணவர்களின் கல்விக்கு ஏற்ப எங்கள் கல்வி வலயத்திற்கான ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட கொள்கை எங்களிடம் இல்லை..." என்று கூறினார், மேலும் இது உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைக் கொள்கைகளின் மீதான எதிரான மனப்பாங்கை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. இந்நிலை பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கு சவாலானதாக அமையலாம்.

உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைக் கொள்கைகள் தொடர்பில் உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் மற்றும் பாட ஆசிரியர்களின் கருத்துக்கள் விளக்கப்படுகின்றது. அதன்படி, அனைத்து உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறை ஆசிரியர்களும் மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறையின் அனைத்து பாட ஆசிரியர்களும்

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைக் கொள்கை நடைமுறை தொடர்பில் எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினைக் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள். உதாரணமாக, பாடசாலை C யிலிருந்து ஜானு, "...உள்ளடங்கற் கொள்கை பற்றி எனக்கு எந்த யோசனையும் இல்லை..." மற்றும் பாடசாலை E இலிருந்து வள்ளி, "...விசேட கல்விக் கொள்கைகள் பற்றி நான் கற்றுக்கொள்ளவில்லை..." என்று கூறினார், மேலும் இது உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலை தொடர்பாக ஆசிரியர்களின் போதிய மனப்பாங்கின்மையைக் காட்டுகிறது. மேலும், இந்நிலை பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்குச் சவாலாக அமையலாம்.

மொத்தமாக, அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும் உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலைகளின் அதிபர்கள், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் மற்றும் பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் கல்வி வலயங்களில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான கொள்கைகள் குறித்து எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். Ireri et al., (2020) ஆகியோரால் நடத்தப்பட்ட சமீபத்திய ஆய்வு, சிறப்பான உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விச் செயற்படுத்துவதற்குத் தடையாக இருக்கும் பௌதீகத் தடைகளைக் கடக்க, உள்ளடங்கற் கொள்கைகள் அவசியம் என்பதை வெளிப்படுத்தியது. மேலும், இது உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியைச் நடைமுறைகளுக்கான உள்ளடங்கற் கொள்கைகளின் அவசியத்தை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. எனவே, மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தின் அரசு பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியை நடைமுறைப்படுத்துவதற்கான உள்ளடங்கற் கொள்கையின் மீது பங்குதாரர்கள் நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினை விருத்தியாக்க வேண்டும்.

#### **தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள்**

தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் இரண்டு வகைகளாக நோக்கப்படுகின்றது.

1. விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம்



2. விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டக் குழு.

அந்தவகையில், அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பிணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் அனைத்துப் பாடசாலை அதிபர்களும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் மற்றும் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டக் குழு பற்றி எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு அவர்களின் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் கல்வி வலயத்தில் உள்ள உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்ட நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பில் வெளிப்படுத்தியுள்ளனர். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, பாடசாலை A யின் அருள், “...தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் அவர்களின் கல்வி வலயத்தில் நடைமுறையில் இல்லை...” என்று கூறினார், மேலும் பாடசாலை D லிருந்து பதுருதீன் குறிப்பிட்டார், “...தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் அவர்களின் கல்வி வலயத்தில் நடைமுறையில் இல்லை...”. இந்நிலை, உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் மற்றும் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டக் குழுவுடன் தொடர்புடைய உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் அதிபர்களின் அர்ப்பணிப்பு சார் நிலையையும் மனப்பாங்கையும் தெளிவுபடுத்துகின்றது.

அனைத்து ஐந்து உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறை ஆசிரியர்களும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டத்தை எதிர்மறையாக உணர்ந்தனர், விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களுக்குத் தங்கள் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்ட நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பில் பின்வருமாறு குறிப்பிட்டார்கள். உதாரணமாக, பாடசாலை D யிலிருந்து ஹசன் குறிப்பிடுகையில், “...பாடசாலையில் குஸ்னாவின் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் பற்றி எனக்குத்

தெரியாது..." மற்றும் "... தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டக் குழு பாடசாலையில் இல்லை...". தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் மற்றும் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டக் குழு பற்றிய மனப்பாங்கு அவர்களுக்கு இல்லை என்பதை இது காட்டுகிறது.

மேலும், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறையின் அனைத்து பாட ஆசிரியர்களும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் மற்றும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டக் குழுவை தங்கள் பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டத்தினை எதிர்மறையாக உணர்ந்தனர். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, பாடசாலை E இலிருந்து வள்ளி, "... அமல் போன்ற மாணவர்களுக்குத் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் தேவையற்றது..." என்று கூறினார், மேலும் பாடசாலை B யிலிருந்து ஜோதி, "... விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் பற்றி எனக்கு எந்த யோசனையும் இல்லை..." என்று குறிப்பிட்டார். உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் திட்டம் பற்றிய அறிவும் விழிப்புணர்வும் ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு இல்லை என்பதை மேலே குறிப்பிட்ட பதில்கள் காட்டுகின்றன.

ஒட்டுமொத்தமாக, அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும், உள்ளடங்கல் பாடசாலைகளின் அதிபர்கள் மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் மற்றும் பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் பாடசாலை உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கு விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் தொடர்பில் எதிர்மறையான கருத்தைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். இருப்பினும், திமோதி (Timothy) மற்றும் அக்பெனியேகா (Agbenyega, 2018) நடத்திய ஆய்வில், மாணவர்களின் கற்றல் தேவைகளைத் தொடர்புகொள்வதற்கான வழிமுறைகளை வழங்கும் திட்ட ஆவணங்களாக தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள் பாடசாலைத் தலைவர்களால் பயன்படுத்தப்படுகின்றன என்பது தெரியவந்துள்ளது. தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் திட்டங்களை

உருவாக்கும் போது பாடசாலைத் தலைவர்கள் சக ஊழியர்களிடையே ஒத்துழைப்பையும் ஆலோசனையையும் ஊக்குவித்தனர். இந்தக் கண்டுபிடிப்பு உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகள் பற்றிய பங்குதாரர்களின் நேர்மறையான கருத்தை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது, மேலும் இது தற்போதைய ஆய்வின் கண்டுபிடிப்புகளுடன் முரண்பாடுகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது, மேலும் இது மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தின் பாடசாலைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்ட நடைமுறைகள் குறித்து பங்குதாரர்களுக்கு விழிப்புணர்வு இல்லாததாக இருக்கலாம். இருப்பினும், Kovač-Cerović மற்றும் பலர் (2016) நடாத்தித்திய ஆகியோரால் நடத்தப்பட்ட மற்றொரு ஆய்வில், தனியாள் மையக் கல்வித் திட்டங்களின் அறிமுகம் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் ஆசிரியர்களின் “பாரம்பரிய பழக்கவழக்கங்களுக்கு” இடையே பல முரண்பாடுகளை உருவாக்கியுள்ளது, மேலும் இது அவர்களின் எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கின் வெளிப்பாட்டை உறுதி செய்கிறது. இந்தக் கண்டுபிடிப்பு தற்போதைய ஆய்வுடன் ஒற்றுமையைக் கொண்டுள்ளது. எனவே, பங்குதாரர்கள் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டத்தைப் பின்பற்றுவதில் உள்ள சவால்களைக் கடக்க வேண்டும். விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டக் குழு தொடர்பான பங்குதாரர்களின் எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கு மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்ட அரசு பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளுக்குச் சவாலாக இருக்கும்.

#### **உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வியில் மாணவர்களின் இடைத்தொடர்புகள்**

உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர் இடைத் தொடர்புகள் இரண்டு வகைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ளது,

1. உள்ளடங்கல் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் சகபாடித் தொடர்பு.

2. உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்-ஆசிரியர் தொடர்பு.

அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும் அதிபர்களும் பாடசாலைகள் மற்றும் கல்வி வலயங்களில் சகபாடிகளின் தொடர்பு பற்றி நேர்மறையான கருத்துக்களைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, பாடசாலை E இருந்து பார்வதி குறிப்பிடுகையில், "...உடல் ஊனமுற்ற ஒரு மாணவருக்கு வகுப்பு ஒன்றில் இடமளிக்கும் போது நடக்க முடியவில்லை, அவர் படிப்படியாக முன்னேறி இன்று நன்றாக நடக்கிறார், ஏனெனில் அவருக்கு சகாக்கள் அளித்த ஆதரவின் காரணமா..." மற்றும் மேலும் இது விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் குறைபாடுகளின் அளவைக் குறைப்பதற்கான சகபாடித் தொடர்பு ஆதரவைக் காட்டுகிறது. மேலும், பாடசாலை B யில் இருந்து அதிபர் குமார், "...சகாக்களின் தொடர்பு மற்றும் ஆசிரியர் - மாணவர்கள் இந்தப் பாடசாலையில் நட்புச் சூழலை உருவாக்குகிறார்கள்..." என்றார். மேலும் பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் ஒரு நட்பு சூழலை உருவாக்க சகபாடித் தொடர்பு ஆதரவை வெளிப்படுத்துகிறது.

அனைத்து ஐந்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்கள் மற்றும் அதிபர்கள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்-ஆசிரியர் தொடர்புகளை சாதகமாக உணர்ந்தனர். உதாரணமாக, D யில் இருந்து அப்துல்லா குறிப்பிடுகிறார், "... சந்திப்பின் போது ஆசிரியர்-மாணவர் தொடர்புகளின் முக்கியத்துவத்தை நான் எடுத்துரைக்கிறேன்..." மேலும் பாடசாலை E இன் அதிபர் கூறினார், "...உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறையில் மாணவர்- ஆசிரியர் தொடர்பு விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களுக்கு வசதியான சூழலை உருவாக்குகிறது...". இது உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளரின் கருத்தை மேலும் உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது.

உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்- ஆசிரியர் தொடர்பு பற்றி அதிபர்கள் நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். இந்த பகுப்பாய்வு, உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்களின் இடைத் தொடர்பு குறித்த நேர்மறையான உணர்வைக் காட்டுகிறது. மேலும், அவர்கள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் உடைய மாணவர்களின் கல்வி மற்றும் சமூக செயல்பாடுகளை மேம்படுத்த உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர் தொடர்புகளைப் பயன்படுத்தலாம்.

உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பறைகளின் ஐந்து வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களும் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர் தொடர்புகளை நேர்மறையாக உணர்ந்தனர். சான்றாக, பாடசாலை வகுப்பு ஆசிரியை சாந்தி, உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் கற்பித்தல்-கற்றலை ஆதரிக்கிறார். எடுத்துக்காட்டாக, ஆசிரியர் பாடசாலை E "... எனது கற்பிதலுக்கு உதவ நான் சகபாடித் தொடர்புகளை மேம்படுத்துகிறேன்...". மேலும், மாணவர் ஆசிரியர் தொடர்பு, விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் உள்ளடங்கலுக்கு உதவுகின்றது. உதாரணமாக, வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர் பாடசாலை A இல் இருந்து சந்திரிகா, "... எனக்கு மாலாவுடன் நல்ல உறவு இருக்கிறது, மேலும் அது அவளை இந்த வகுப்பறையில் உள்ளடக்க உதவுகின்றது..." இது வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கு உதவுகின்றது என்பதை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. இந்நிலை உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்களின் தொடர்பு பற்றிய நேர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கினை வெளிப்படுத்துகின்றது.

அனைத்து 10 பாட ஆசிரியர்களும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்களின் தொடர்பு தொடர்பாக நேர்மறையான கருத்தைக் கொண்டுள்ளனர். அதன்படி, பாடசாலை D மற்றும் B இலிருந்து பாட ஆசிரியர்கள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களின் கல்வி மற்றும் சமூக சாதனைகளுக்கு சகபாடித் தொடர்புக்கான ஆதரவை வெளிப்படுத்தினர். உதாரணமாக, பாடசாலை D இல் இருந்து பாட ஆசிரியர் ஜோதி, "... விசேட

கல்வித் தேவைகள் உடைய மாணவர்களின் கல்விச் செயல்பாடுகளை மேம்படுத்த சகபாடித் தொடர்பு உதவுகின்றது..." என்று கூறினார். மேலும், ஆசிரியர் - மாணவர் தொடர்புகளின் முக்கியத்துவம் மற்றும் நன்மைகள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறையில் அனைத்து பாட ஆசிரியர்களாலும் வெளிப்படுத்தப்பட்டது. உதாரணமாக, பாட ஆசிரியர் முபாரக் கூறினார், "...ஆசிரியர் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளைக் கொண்டுள்ள மாணவர்களுடன் நல்ல உறவைக் கொண்டிருக்க வேண்டும்...". பாட ஆசிரியர்களின் பதில்கள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்களின் தொடர்பு பற்றிய நேர்மறையான கருத்தை உறுதிப்படுத்தியது, மேலும், உள்ளடங்கல் நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளை உடைய மாணவர்களின் கல்வி மற்றும் சமூக செயல்பாடுகளை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு இது உதவும்.

ஒட்டுமொத்தமாக, அனைத்து உதவிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்களும், உள்ளடங்கற் பாடசாலை அதிபர்களும், உள்ளடங்கல் வகுப்பு ஆசிரியர்களும் பாட ஆசிரியர்களும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர்களின் தொடர்புகளை நேர்மறையாக உணர்ந்தனர். உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர் தொடர்புகளை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கான அனைத்துப் பங்குதாரர்களினதும் அறிவு, திறன்கள் மற்றும் மனப்பான்மையை இது உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. மேலும், மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்ட பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளை ஊக்குவிப்பதற்கான மாணவர்களின் தொடர்புகளை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு அவர்கள் அர்ப்பணிப்புடன் இருப்பார்கள் என்பது தெளிவுபடுகின்றது. கேமரூன் (Cameron, 2014) நடத்திய ஆய்வின் கண்டுபிடிப்புகள், குறைபாடுகள் உள்ள மாணவர்களில் அதிக தனிப்பட்ட கவனம் செலுத்துவதை ஆசிரியர்கள் அறிந்துள்ளனர் மற்றும் பயனுள்ள கற்பித்தல் குறித்த ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு இசைவாக தங்கள் அறிவுறுத்தல்களை அவர்கள் மாற்றியமைக்கும் பல வழிகளை விவரித்துள்ளனர். மேலும், மாமாஸ் மற்றும் அவ்ரமிடிஸ் (Mamas & Avramidis, 2013), விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகள் இல்லாத சாதாரண குழந்தைகள் விளையாட்டு நேரம் மற்றும் கட்டமைக்கப்பட்ட விளையாட்டு நடவடிக்கைகளின் போதும் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய குழந்தைகளுடன் உதவுவதற்கும் விளையாடுவதற்கும்

சுய-உந்துதல் கொண்டவர்களாக இருப்பதைக் கண்டறிந்துள்ளனர். இந்தக் கண்டுபிடிப்புகளின் ஒற்றுமை உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் மாணவர் தொடர்புக்கு ஏற்ப தற்போதைய ஆய்வின் கண்டுபிடிப்புகளை உறுதிப்படுத்துகிறது. மேலும், மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ள அரசு பாடசாலைகளின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் கல்வி மற்றும் சமூக செயற்பாடுகளை மேம்படுத்துவதற்கு இது துணைபுரியும்.

### முடிவுரை

மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தின் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விச் செயல்நடைகள் தொடர்பில் தரவுப்பகுப்பாய்வு மற்றும் கலந்துரையாடல்கள் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான தகவலுக்கான ஏற்பாடுகள், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான பௌதீக அம்சங்கள், உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கைகள், தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்கள், மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் மாணவர்களின் இடைத்தொடர்புகள் ஆகிய உப தலைப்புக்களின் கீழ் விளக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

### ஆய்வு முடிவு

மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தில் உள்ள ஐந்து பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறையின் நடைமுறைகள் தொடர்பில் பங்குதாரர்களின் மனப்பாங்கில் பூரண மாற்றம் ஏற்படவில்லை.

- மொத்தத்தில், தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்ட பாடசாலைகளில் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வி நடைமுறைகளுக்கான தகவல்களை வழங்குவது பற்றி பங்கேற்பாளர்களின் நேர்மறையான மற்றும் எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்குகளை ஐந்து பாடசாலைகளிலும் ஆய்வுகளின் அடிப்படையில் ஆய்வின் முடிவுகள் காட்டுகின்றன.

- உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான தகவலுக்கான ஏற்பாடுகள் மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் மாணவர்களின் இடைத்தொடர்புகள் ஆகிய இரு பிரதான நடைமுறைகளிலும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியின் பங்குதாரர்கள் நேர் மனப்பாங்கினையும் நடைமுறைகளையும் கொண்டுள்ளார்கள்.

- விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களுக்கான தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டங்களை உருவாக்கம், மற்றும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கைகள் தொடர்பில் பங்குதாரர்களிடையே எதிர்மறையான மனப்பாங்கும் நடைமுறைச் சவால்களும் காணப்படுகின்றன.
- உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான பௌதீக அமைப்புகள் நடைமுறையை நோக்குமிடத்து கலந்த மனப்பாங்குகள் காணப்படுகின்றன. அந்தவகையில், உயர் அதிகாரிகள் மட்டத்தில் எதிர் மனப்பாங்கும் ஆசிரியர்கள் மத்தியில் நேர் மனப்பாங்கும் காணப்படுகின்றது.

#### ஆய்வின் பரிந்துரைப்புக்கள்

- மட்டக்களப்பு மாவட்டத்தின் அரசு பாடசாலைகளில் விசேட கல்வித் தேவைகளையுடைய மாணவர்களின் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விச் செயன்முறைகளை மேம்படுத்தும் வகையில் பாடசாலை மட்டத்திலும் வலய மட்டத்திலும் உள்ளடங்கற் கல்விக்கான கொள்கையின் முக்கியத்துவம் மற்றும் தனியாள் மையக் கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சித்திட்டம் குறித்து விழிப்புணர்வை ஏற்படுத்தல் வேண்டும்.
- உள்ளடங்கற் கல்வியில் பௌதீக அம்சங்களின் அவசியம் தொடர்பிலும் பங்குதாரர்களின் பொறுப்புக்கள் தொடர்பிலும் விழிப்புணர்வுகளை ஏற்படுத்தல் வேண்டும்.

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## Latent Teacher: The Enfolded Potentials for Enhanced Teaching

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### Abstract

Teaching makes use of all excellent general qualities that are intrinsic and develop subliminally as people mature. The impact of education on the level and quality of one's maturity determines the efficacy of one's teaching too. This paper reviews and synthesises the evidence on latent teachers and awakened teachers: compares the empirical data for and against the natural teachers, enlists and emphasizes the generic skills, and confirms the weightage of latent potentials over the methods and approaches in education. Data sources include empirical studies and published literature available from websites. The review finds that teaching is a dynamic process just as human life is dynamic; and that the latent teacher within ought to be awakened to address the complex process of education. The findings suggest that educational reforms focusing on the techniques and methods of teaching without sharpening the latent teaching potentials bear little fruit.

**Keywords:** *Latent potentials, natural, implicit, explicit, generic skills, system of systems, teacher education*

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## Introduction

" Education is unfoldment of what is already enfolded in the germ." – F. W. Froebel

The ability to learn and to teach is an exclusive characteristic that made homo sapiens distinctive among all other species. As a cognitive quality teaching is species-typical, and it is species-unique (Strauss & Ziv, 2012), which enabled them to adapt to their surroundings, and also to get the surroundings adapted to them. Consequently, human species have been amazingly flourishing practically in every habitat on the planet and even beyond. Human evolution across generations have been facilitated by their exceptional ability to communicate and convey their cumulative culture and innovations in a nongenetic way. This is teaching, which, like any skill, is meant to promote personal and social growth and advancement.

Along with the evolution of social system and the development of specialized knowledge, teaching has become a sophisticated profession (Tezcan, 1996; Erden, 2007). Professional teaching requires professional training (Cipani, 2008; Hotaman, 2010). In 1948, University Education Commission of India had confirmed that education was a profession for which intensive preparation was necessary. The quality of education being a decisive factor in national progress, periodical improvement of teaching became a global agenda. European Commission (2013,p.16) advocated “quality frameworks” which fulfills “an ‘ethical’ obligation precisely about teacher educators’ work. In Australia, the design of teacher education programmes underlined clear goals including the content covered in the courses (O’Meara, 2011). Teacher education in Scotland focused on the triumvirate of Values, Skills and Knowledge, with research underpinnings (Menter & Hume, 2011). Finnish teacher education programmes emphasized on

research base (Sahlberg, 2011), and National Education Policy 2020 of India proposed multidisciplinary perspectives focusing on dispositions and values for teacher education.

While there are incisive recommendations across the globe to improve teaching (Bruns & Luque, 2014), there are teachers, irrespective of the scholarly backup, who are naturally successful in teaching (Strauss, 2005; Malikow, 2006; Ellis, 1994). Success story of human species is also the success story of their teaching which is purely implicit and natural at the onset. Researchers have recommended a knowledge-sharing framework that recognizes the examples of successful practice along with research-based practices (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Lowrie, 2014) so that teacher education can become plausible with an impactful position in future. Here opens a space for a review on effective teaching, weighing the natural and instinctive teaching skills against the instilled ones.

### **Aim and Objectives**

This review paper aims to fix a poise between the question of innate skills and acquired skills and their respective effectiveness in teaching. How much teaching is a natural human characteristic which implicitly develops, and how much of it is explicitly acquired through training, is discussed.

This study does not entertain the concept of born teachers: the view that a person can, by nature, be exclusively fit for the teaching profession while some are not. Instead, it proposes that every human being is a teacher. Pertaining to that, the following questions are addressed:

1. Is teaching an instinctively common human characteristic?

2. Does teaching require exclusively specific skills?
3. What are the generic skills applied in teaching?
4. Is teacher development a nonconscious implicit process?
5. Is explicit training imperative for developing teacher competence?
6. What could be accountable for the dilemmas in teacher education?

Specifically, the goal of this paper is to discuss the latent teaching skills and to delineate the dynamic shift from functional level to potential level of teaching.

### **Method and Design**

The method of study is narrative review, and it is designed for exploring the representative data to identify the indicators of innate characteristics and the sophisticated model of teaching. Relevant and qualitative secondary data from seventy-seven (77) research papers are purposively culled and acknowledged. The review sources mostly spread from the year 2000 to 2024 with a few exceptions. The data are thematically analysed, interpreted and synthesised through an inductive process of back and forth shifting between the main theme and the database.

### **Rationale**

Critical reviewers have reported that there are “many persistent and intractable dilemmas in teacher education” (Kennedy, 2010, p.1). Consequently, there have been no dearth of recommendations for the improvement of teaching across the globe (Kosnik et al., 2016). Many of the reformations in education have been inconsistent pushing in different directions. Studies



by Freeman et al., (2014) have confirmed that the student-active and project-based approaches positively impact student learning against the teacher-active and lecture-based classes. Whereas Martella et al. (2024) found a different result in their study that compared the impact of project-based and lecture-based learning. They found that the lecture-based approach was more effective than student-active learning. They also found that the lecture method interfaced with the project method has significant impact on student learning, even though not significantly different from lecture only learning.

Such conflicting evidence are not rare in the realm of education, which come by way of the “dilemma management” as Lampert (1985,p.185) had put it. Tessema (2007) observed that in Ethiopia, the teacher education terrain is characterized by contradictory activities. Similarly, Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012, p.129) reported that in Australia, there was “a confusing blend of professionalizing and de-professionalizing initiatives”; and in Netherlands, “calls for higher standards have been accompanied by a call for the establishment of alternative routes”. In India, the Justice Verma Commission in 2012 criticized the existing teacher education as reproducing rituals of teacher preparation. Hence, there is a widely felt need to improve teaching and teacher education by studying it closely and deliberately (Kennedy, 2010), which this study intends to.

Apart from incoherence, there are unceasing shifts of direction in teacher education with new reform emphases every couple of years (Kosnik et al., 2016). Reforms in pedagogy, with their undue focus on the technology and techniques of teaching, fail to hit the point: the human

element in teaching; the potentials that ‘tick’ inside for teaching. The interaction of teacher–learner dyad being the core of human pedagogy, the researcher felt that what actually animates the pedagogy has been cast outside the limelight. Bearing on the generations of experiences, it is now evident that there is no magical method of teaching.

Hence, away from the pedantic propositions, this study features natural endowments and generic skills, and their promises and possibilities. Specifically, the present study highlights the innate teacher potential which can be tuned up for specific professional performances. The research questions of this paper are addressed in the discussions under the subsequent headings.

## **Discussion**

### **Natural Teachers**

The first question to stir the review is whether teaching is an instinctively common human characteristic. Education, as John Dewey (1897) had observed, is not preparation for life, but is life itself. The man is exposed to teaching from early age, and it is a prerequisite for his development. Teaching is a vital part of rearing younger generations among all living creatures, and it is especially so in the case of human species (Strauss & Ziv, 2012) who has a long childhood compared to other animals. Children normally meddle with their parents asking questions, and the parents, in turn, naturally respond with appropriate answers. While the fledglings learn through emulation of the elders, they are also taught and trained by their caretakers how to step into and progress in this world. As such, parenting is seamless with teaching where the parents,

like teachers, believe that they have something to give to their kids, and that they ought to bring up those kids that are entrusted with them.

Review of the apposite articles have evinced that as learning is very natural among human beings, teaching is very natural too, because the human brain has been designed for both (Rodriguez & Fitzpatrik, 2014); essentially, teaching and learning mean using the brain very normally. Some people possess a combination of personality characteristics that are conducive to effective teaching (Malikow, 2006). They teach effortlessly and without instruction despite the complexity involved in teaching (Strauss, 2005).

Among the trained teachers, sometimes, teaching takes a natural form of excellence without them being aware of its underlying logic (Strauss, 1993; Strauss & Shilony, 1994). It means, teachers intuitively develop their own strategy or resort to some techniques in certain challenging situations of teaching. For example, when they found a study material too complex for the students, instinctively they broke it up; they altered the classroom setting, or even arranged a field experiment to make the learning easier for their pupils (Steiner, 2002; Strauss & Shilony, 1994). Nevertheless, they were unaware of the cognitive principles underlying the measures they adopted for ensuring effective teaching (Strauss, 2005).

Researchers affirm that teaching is a natural cognitive ability in humans (Strauss et al., 2002; Strauss, 2005; Csibra & Gergely, 2009). Cosmides and Tooby (2010) remind that natural cognitive abilities have five properties: cognitive abilities are (1) complexly structured for solving a specific

type of adaptive problem; (2) distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently; (3) applied without any conscious awareness of their underlying logic; (4) developed without any conscious effort and in the absence of any formal instruction; and (5) reliably developed in all normal human beings. All these properties are applied to teaching, making it connatural. Thus, there are no specific skills exclusively for teaching, and no skills are branded solely for teaching.

Teaching mental models comprise of cognitive goals; cognitive processes leading to these goals; and cognitive assumptions about how a particular teaching ensures these cognitive processes and, in turn, the cognitive goals (Rodriguez & Fitzpatrik, 2014). Essentially, the goal, the process and the assumptions are triggered by the innate psychological skills that are latent in any individual who embarks on any endeavours. In the context of classroom, the innate skills are employed for formulating teaching goals, teaching processes and meta-assumptions about teaching. The term latent teacher stands for this innate potential that is dormant in every individual.

Since teaching is inert in human, it appears to be ubiquitous: it exists in homes between parents and children and between babysitters and caretakers; it appears on playgrounds where children teach each other; and in schools where teaching and learning are pivotal (Frye & Ziv, 2004; Strauss, 1993). When an individual responds to a demanding situation, teaching happens very spontaneously, even without conscious awareness. Thus, teachers emerge, and teaching happens in any informal daily life situation.

## **The Trajectory of Teaching**

As a natural human characteristic, teaching is reliably developing over the years. In fact, it is an evolving cognitive skill which extends from birth to adulthood (Rodriguez & Fitzpatrick, 2014). Cosmides and Tooby (2010) explain that the ability of teaching universally follows a similar developmental trajectory among children who are without serious developmental disabilities and who are exposed to a conventional social environment, no matter what that society might be.

Natural unfolding of teaching has been investigated by researchers around. They noted that youngsters spontaneously engage in teaching effortlessly, without intentional instruction. Children teach peers and adults how to play certain games and to perform skills such as movements of dancing and building constructions with blocks (Frye, & Ziv 2004). In research conducted by Akagi (2012), an experimenter made a mistake by trying to put a triangular-shaped object in a round hole in the presence of some 1-year-olds, and the infants often pointed to the correct hole to put it in. The study concluded that fundamental aspects of teaching are present at a very early age.

In another study, children of age 5 could teach peers the rules of games by explanations and demonstrations (Bensalah et al., 2012; Davis-Unger & Carlson, 2008a, 2008b; Strauss et al., 2002). Children at this age can demonstrate how a game is played, but their dominant teaching strategy is explanation. It was found that when the learner errs, a teacher who is in the Pre-Operational

stage can typically repeat or remind the learner of a rule that has previously been explained, usually in a shortened version or by demonstration. As the young teachers progress in their life span, five-year-olds are found to be better than three-year-olds at monitoring the learning process and can adapt their teaching to the learner's progress.

Further development was observed among the natural teachers at their Concrete Operational stage who could engage in more systematic but flexible teaching. Accordingly, a seven-year-old teaches a peer learner whose progress in learning determines the teacher's style and strategies of teaching. The young teacher is able to adjust a kind of scaffolded teaching according to the condition and need of the learner (Wood et al., 1995; Ziv et al., 2008). Researchers noted that if the learner succeeds, the teacher offers less help in the next intervention. If the learner fails, the teacher uses more controlled intervening. The seven-year-old has advanced in the understanding of mind. Similarly, studies among nine- to eleven- year-olds found that they were capable of offering strategic advice regarding alternative choices available to the learner (Garbarino, 1975).

As children advance in cognitive skills, there is surely more development in actual teaching between age eleven and adulthood in the Formal Operational period. The quality and efficiency of adult teaching is determined by their cognitive competence and emotional maturity: the ability to understand, accept and appreciate the distinctive human nature. Therefore, adult teaching displays adults' mental models of the dynamic workings of pupils' minds when learning occurs (Haim et al., 2004; Mevorach & Strauss, 2012).

The aforesaid studies confirm that a teacher lay latent in every individual, and that teaching as a natural skill appears to be developmentally reliable. The trajectory is from proto-teaching among 1-year-olds who do not yet speak, to demonstrations among 3-year-olds; then explanations in 5-year-olds, followed by contingent teaching among 7-year-olds and culminating in mental models among adults. There exists an internal script of teaching remaining latent in every individual and develops as one grows up. The existence of a rudimentary internal script of a skill can be regarded as a prerequisite to practice a skill (Fischer et al., 2013) and to develop the internal script of performing the skill as well as the actual performance of the skill (Chi et al., 2008). While an individual develops further in life, the latent internal script gets pruned and shaped by the experiences from the environment.

### **Implicit Acquisition**

The second question placed in this study is whether teaching requires exclusively specific skills. Reviews confirm that as everyone has a natural propensity for teaching, teacher development is a natural daily process without training for specialized skills. Researchers like David Gordon (1980) who argue that teachers are born and not made are skeptical of the institutions that exclusively make teachers. Constantine et al. (2009) found that the different kinds of teacher training have no significant difference in the achievement scores among the students. Goldhaber & Brewer (2000) also noted no difference in science and mathematics achievement among students taught by teachers with different levels of qualifications.

As an advancing cognitive skill, teaching is fostered and formed by the experiences of life. The normal way of learning is nonconscious as people implicitly take in much information from their environments and acquire them without conscious awareness (Reber, 1989). The fourth research question of this study, whether teacher development is a nonconscious implicit process, is cited by several researchers. According to Michael Gazzaniga (2018), 90% of what is learned is without conscious awareness. Non-conscious mind picks up large amounts of information from everyday experiences and makes sense out of them, leading to the formation of knowledge, skills, aptitude and attitude, which are not necessarily manifested by an immediate overt response but lay latent awaiting its time. The learning that occurs in the absence of any obvious reinforcement or noticeable behavioural changes is called latent learning (Soderstrom & Bjork, 2015). Tolman (1948) proposed that people and animals are dynamic information processors who pick up information from every day experiences and utilize them as and when the situation demands.

The concept of latent learning was developed in 1929 by Hugh C. Blodgett who described it in laboratory rodents that gradually improved the way while they navigated through mazes. In 1930, Edward Tolman and Charles Honzik conducted an experiment of rats running in a maze and suggested that learning could occur even when it is not immediately visible. In the same framework, students having almost fifteen years of 'maze running' in schools do retain tacit knowledge of teaching in their subconscious mind.

Every action of a teacher inside and outside the classroom has a profound impact on a student, not just for a few days but for decades. Children being great imitators, their behaviour is largely



shaped by how they see their teachers present themselves, deal with a subject matter, demonstrate concepts, and respond to diverse situations in the classrooms. Thus, teachers are instrumental in raising confident, creative and efficient future teachers. Tacit knowledge is primarily acquired, not by direct instruction from others but, rather, from one's experience of operating within a given context (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995; Sternberg et al., 2002). According to Bandura (1986), observing others is one step towards learning the observed skill; the observation fosters the initial steps of creating a sort of a cognitive schema of how and when that internal script of skill is applied (Fischer et al., 2013).

Teacher education, thus, virtually starts from school education. For many successful teachers, professional passion had been sparked during their school days; and the sparks lay latent within them advancing as they grow until some triggering situations arrive. Therefore, any individual who is untrained for teaching and even without any overt pedagogical expressions, can have a functional teacher latent within awaiting activation (Wade & Tavris, 1997). The latent teacher can be prompted at any time at home, in the playground, marketplace, nursing home, in crisis or in the formal classroom.

### **The Latent Potentials**

Review on the third research question concerning the generic skills applied in teaching is dealt in this section. Candal (2015, p.15) pointed out that schools consider personal qualities and characteristics, not just baseline academic and professional qualifications for hiring teachers. Important components considered are the promises held within that “can fill ‘holes’ in a

department or school". This means that while teaching is a universal human ability, people are not equally promising in teaching; as personalities differ, their performances differ.

The latent potential for teaching is displayed diversely across different individuals at varying levels of efficacy. When it comes to performance, everyone may not teach in an appropriate manner, just like parenting. Whilst one can be a parent naturally, everyone may not be an effective parent emotionally and intellectually. As such, some people cannot teach while some are not interested in teaching at all due to various reasons. Again, some are interested to teach but are unable to present facts in a methodical manner. Regarding the skills and qualities that markup teaching, people, place and time matter a lot.

Teaching is an adaptive skill that has continued to develop over thousands of years (Rodriguez, & Fitzpatrik, 2014). It grows and adapts each time when it occurs in a new context. Social changes do influence teaching. From the survival requirement of primitive jungle, teaching has grown to meet the need for success in the civilized society. Similarly, personality changes do influence the efficacy of teaching. It means that the latent cognitive schema of teaching gets accommodated or even replaced as people grow and time passes. The concept and content of teaching as well as the quality and characteristics of teachers considerably alter as society changes.

However, there are certain basic and stable human characteristics that act as ingredients for effective teaching. The first in the list is leadership, for, teaching is primarily based on leadership

(Khachaturova, 2021). Etymologically, the word pedagogy means to lead children (Longenecker, 1982). Currently, a pedagogue is one who leads by teaching. The second in the list is communication which is a core skill in almost all the roles in modern society. Every communication contains an intent of informing or instructing. Both communication and leadership include an array of micro skills commonly shared by many disciplines, but they are particular for teaching.

A study by Undiyaundeye (2015) contends against the idea that a person by nature is exclusively fit for a particular profession. The skills a person is endowed with can make him successful in any endeavour. Therefore, leaders, businessmen, social workers or counsellors can also be teachers as teaching involves abilities that are not specific to teaching. For example, cognitive templates involve executive functions (Davis-Unger & Carlson, 2008b), language skills (Premack & Premack, 1996), skills for understanding human mind, personal beliefs and philosophy of life. These are separate, yet intertwined strands of general skills for personal excellence which follow a developmental course and have significant influence on teaching. Teaching being a unique human ability, there are no skills exclusively for teaching and no skills are excluded from teaching. Flexibility and adaptability enable the competent teachers to embrace any methods and employ any skills drawn from dozens of theories.

Teaching competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes (Blömeke et al., 2015) which facilitates drawing assumptions about learning (Olson & Bruner, 1996), defining goals and standards of the required change (Premack & Premack, 1996; Ziv, Solomon, & Frye,

2008), applying multiple teaching methods while adapting them to the learner, providing feedback (Premack & Premack, 1996) and making assessment. Further, as Hanifin and Appel (2000) believe, the job of a teacher is to transform unconscious thought into discourse. In essence, teaching means using the brain. It is an intentional intellectual activity employing personal and professional competences.

As an intellectual activity, teaching involves cognitive and affective elements. There is no thinking without feeling, and no feeling without thinking. Teaching is never a cognition alone as emotion is a basic form of decision making and a qualifier in motivation. Competent teachers are emotionally intelligent endowed with interpersonal skills. At the crux of teaching is a caring concern and the genuine intent to trigger off learning in someone else. Human pedagogy is exceptional in employing social skills to motivate the learner towards the curricular goals. Hence, a person's latent teaching abilities can be conceptualized broadly as a set of social and intellectual skills (Kunter et al., 2013) that are not exclusively pedagogical.

Teaching involves understanding, for, teachers know their subjects; as such, it is distinct from other skills to process information (Strauss & Ziv, 2012). Premack and Premack (1996) had underlined the skill for assessing the standard of the learner's performance and modulate the teaching accordingly. This is called contingent teaching which comprises addressing the dynamic nature of learning. As human life is dynamic, so is their learning; teachers have to adjust their approach based on the learner's response. If the learner has gained the knowledge taught, then,

the teacher can offer less support; if the learner is slow to learn, the teacher can provide more support (Rodriguez, & Fitzpatrick, 2014).

Strauss and Ziv (2012) refer to the contingent teaching as based on the teacher's ability to develop a theory of mind grounded on recognizing the "dynamic workings of pupils' minds when learning occurs." Human contingent teaching is founded on understanding the dynamism in the learners' mindset, whereas the animals' teaching almost surely rests on hard-wired behaviours that do not draw from Theory of the Mind (Premack, 2007).

Theory of Mind (TOM) is the cognitive capability of understanding another's mind (Premack & Woodruff, 1978). It postulates the possibility of "using one's own mind to simulate and predict the mental states of others" (Premack & Woodruff, 1978, p.1). Theory of Mind is a prerequisite for success in any discipline like trading, marriage, parenting, leadership, military etc. In teaching, it calls for an understanding of learners' mental states: teachers understand learners' knowledge, beliefs, desires and motives; they identify a knowledge gap in learners; then, they definitely set out to reduce that knowledge gap (Olson & Bruner, 1996; Strauss, 1993; Strauss & Shilony, 1994). In a nutshell, understanding the human mind is an important prerequisite for teaching (Strauss et al., 2002).

Empathetic understanding of the learners' feelings, insight into their cognition and appreciating their divergent perceptions call for maturity of the mind. A matured personality is the one having an authentic understanding on oneself. *Self-awareness* is the ability to look inward and

objectively understand oneself and to evaluate one's own personality (Goleman, 2012). These key understandings play a critical role in understanding others and thereby influence the judgements, decisions and interactions with them. Teachers can empathetically understand a student to the extent that they can understand themselves.

The latent teaching potentials comprise an array of generic skills and qualities that are characteristic of any mature individual qualified for any profession. When the teacher-self is awakened, all the 'weapons in the arsenals' are activated to the purpose of teaching.

### **Explicit Training**

Studies by Wood et al. (1995), Ziv et al. (2008), Wood & Middleton (1978), and Garbarino (1975) have emphasized that children are, by nature, capable of contingent teaching; they can understand their peer learners and adjust their teaching according to their level of learning. As children grow older, advanced they become in the understanding of the human mind. Even though this is a strong argument for the natural teachers, this also carries the seeds that support teacher training, for human beings do not grow naturally like calves and cubs, but they are brought up through training and teaching. The well-brought up children exhibit exceptional skills in any endeavour. Researchers have the opinion that in-born talent is not the determining factor in high levels of performance (Colvin, 2008; Gladwell, 2008; Shenk, 2010). The fifth question of the study emphasizing the explicit training for teacher development is addressed in the following section.

The ability to understand the learner's mind varies among teachers. Olson and Bruner (1996) affirm that the type of teaching reflects the teacher's understanding about the learner's mind. Average teachers regard learners as being capable of understanding and applying rules, and accordingly teach mainly by explaining rules. However, excellent teachers regard pupils as thinkers and engage them in innovations and promote dialogues to refine their views. This makes clear that the natural way of explanation, demonstration and direction takes a sophisticated level in expert teaching. Teaching is not only a way of interacting with learners, but it is also a process unto itself calling for higher mental order. This explains why adequate training and an awakened spirit is required to equip teachers for this process; a defined system of training and development can create a professional pipeline that allows teachers to grow and succeed.

Research in teacher education has delineated and recommended the habits and traits that make up effective teachers (Gagani, & Enoc, 2019; Amaro, 2018). Although personality cannot be taught, pertinent habits and traits can be obviously marked out and inculcated. When teachers are explicitly introduced to appropriate professional habits, they become aware of the need to strengthen and practice the habits (Dottin, 2010). Cognitive architecture, like all aspects of the phenotype from molars to memory circuits, is the joint product of genes and environment (Rodriguez, & Fitzpatrik, 2014). The rudimentary architecture of unversed teaching can be restructured for impactful classroom teaching. Dottin (2010) suggests that intelligent performance is not just an exercise of ability, rather it is more dispositional in nature which needs to be activated and set in motion. Like athletes and artists, teachers are born with talents; nonetheless, those talents need to be refined with career training and practice (Malikow, 2006).

The notion of natural teachers is smashed by the fact that teachers, especially in the lower classes, are expected to recognize and accommodate the needs of exceptional students. Knowledge and skills of how to identify and support the exceptional cases are not innate. Even otherwise, teachers have to understand and manage almost twenty-five to fifty heterogeneous individuals in a class while retaining the thread of instruction as well as motivation. Researchers have observed that in view of the complexity of the classroom situation teachers need to respond quickly, flexibly, and appropriately to situational demands while engaging goal-oriented teaching (Oser & Baeriswail, 2001). Hence, their internal rudimentary scripts need to be tuned for adaptability and flexibility. The ability to teach adaptively requires training (Schipper et al., 2023).

A teacher who stops growing is falling short of the potential of inspiring teaching. Rodriguez, and Fitzpatrik, (2014, p.146) point out that “a teacher’s development is based on his abilities as both a learner and a teacher”. Just as a learner moves back and forth between the Functional Level of understanding and Potential Level of understanding (Vygotsky, 1978), so too do teachers; they move from the latent to awakened state of competence which takes place systematically through practice. A latent teacher may awake to the situations, but an effective awakening requires competence explicitly accrued from training.

The sixth question placed in this study probes into the factors of the dilemmas in teacher education. Educational reformations have been mainly focusing on the approaches, methods and digital applications of teaching, and consequently, there have been periodical



recommendations and findings which mutually contradict, such as the examples cited by Freeman et al. (2014) and Martella et al. (2024). Similar enigmas in educational reforms are reported by Tessema (2007), Kennedy (2010) and Lieberman (2012). Experts opine that there is no panacea for academic problems, but teachers need to adopt approaches that are fit for the purpose (Fox, 2024). It means that knowing when to teach explicitly and when to promote open-ended or complex project-based tasks is critical for teacher effectiveness. This underscores the significance of latent teacher potential and the need for awakening the same, for, no method is above the teacher who uses it judiciously. Teaching is, essentially, a mind influencing another mind; and teacher development is, but the development of a teaching mind. Giving undue importance to methods, and the recurrent replacements of the same indicate nothing but failure of human effectiveness.

### **The Awakened Teacher**

Teacher training programmes usually follow linear, learner-based best practices and always firmly advocate the latest pedagogical methods that are empirically proved to be best. An average teacher is confined to such a single linear system; but the latent characteristics are too strong for some others to follow a rigid method. “Those who are successful in their work are people who bring certain constellation of desirable stable characteristics to their education and later career” (Kunter et al., 2013,p.64). Eventually, the fledgling understands that teaching approach is not a rigid flow from simple to complex, nor from known to unknown; it doesn’t switch from instruction to collaboration and replace rote learning with experiential; and it is neither exclusively learner-entered, nor teacher-centred. The teachers are awakened to the fact that teaching is not sternly

centred on anything or anyone; and that classroom is not a single system, rather, it involves certain dynamic, complex, and multiple interacting systems. Each system is each brain in action and interaction and undergoes transformation by the experiences (Menchén, 2018).

The awakened teachers recognize each learner as one system, themselves as another, and their interaction with the learner as a third system (Rodriguez & Fitzpatrik, 2014). Teaching, being a system of systems, teacher is a system thinker who recognizes the parts existing within a system, how the parts interact and how they affect one another. In other words, the proficient teacher is able to identify how different brains think and is able to develop a theory of mind for each student and also for the class as a whole.

Systems thinking helps them understand the unique cognitive, affective and neurological processes occurring when they teach; feel how system changes as they explore the content deeply and place it in a larger contextual framework; synchronize with students in higher human thoughts; gain insights into the effects of various inputs and determine the interventions that can ensure learning outcomes. There is a gradual shift from the latent to the awakened, from natural to exceptional, in the manifestation of a full-fledged whole teacher.

### **Summing up**

The review on research-based studies has effectively addressed the research questions presented in this study. Accordingly, there are empirical confirmations that a teacher is latent in every individual who exercises his/her generic skills specifically for teaching when the situation

demands. Researchers have acknowledged that the latent teacher develops naturally and non-consciously as the individual grows and matures. However, researchers are not unanimous on the question of implicit development of natural teachers against the explicitly trained expert teachers. The empirical weight of their respective arguments supports the fact that professional training can uplift the latent potential for sophisticated performance when the latent teacher is awakened to an active system thinker. The same fact unveils why periodical reformations cannot manage the dilemma in teacher education.

“Knowledge of methods alone will not suffice; there must be the desire, the will to employ them. This desire is an affair of personal disposition,” affirms John Dewey (1933,p.30). The power of a teacher is the power latent within, the personal disposition, that determines the efficacy of teaching, no matter which approach and what method are followed. The stalwarts of policies and programmes should cogitate on the fact that any educational reform ignoring the latent teacher potential is bound to fail.

#### **Author Bio**

Dr. Rages John is an Associate Professor specialized in Educational Psychology and Research Methodology, with 14 years of experience in Higher Education and 13 years in Higher Secondary Education. He had been a resource person for 65 academic programmes, and has produced 05 doctorates, and published 06 books and 27 research articles.

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## The Role of Collaborative Learning and Problem-based Learning in Character Development: A Review

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### Abstract

The purpose of higher education should focus on providing students opportunities to gain scientific knowledge of various disciplines and to improve skills, attitudes and right mindset that guide them to become successful professionals. Open and Distance Education provides flexible and open learning options for students to accomplish their educational goals. The use of diverse teaching-learning methods such as collaborative and problem-based learning may help students become 21st century learners who can apply their knowledge and skills to solve real world problems. The purpose of this review is to explore the role of collaborative and problem-based learning in Open and Distance Education in developing cognitive, social, emotional, decision making and problem-solving skills among learners. Particularly, it explores the benefits of both methods and how they help learners develop the kind of character necessary to succeed as professionals. A narrative review method was adopted in this study. The literature that examined how collaborative and problem-based learning affected the development of critical facets of learners' behaviour, including cognitive, emotional, social, motivational skills and personality was chosen for the review. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data and to identify the key themes in the data related to the two approaches. It is evident that both approaches increase opportunities to develop learners' cognitive, metacognitive, emotional, social and motivational skills necessary to succeed in their fields and maximize positive outcomes in social and professional settings. Accordingly, this will allow them to develop into mature professionals with well-rounded characters who can help communities grow.

**Keywords:** Collaborative learning, problem-based learning, higher education, Open and Distance Learning, character development

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## **Introduction**

Education is a key to future success, and it opens a variety of opportunities in one's life. The main purpose of education should be to build character. Hence, the purpose of higher education should focus on providing scientific knowledge and understanding of different disciplines, creating more opportunities for learners to improve skills and attitudes, and the developing right mindset that help them contribute to the development of the individual, community, nation and the whole world.

### **The purpose of higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Education is viewed as the foundation of one's development. A person who wishes to pursue an undergraduate degree in any field of study should be able to integrate and apply knowledge they have learned throughout academic life for the development and well-being of others in society. Hence, the purpose of higher education is to provide the scientific knowledge and understanding as well as to create opportunities for learners to acquire skills, attitudes and the right mindset that will enable them to contribute to the development of individuals, communities and nations.

Learning is viewed as a lifelong process which begins from birth and continues until the end of life. Learning can take different forms. In addition, it has different effects on one's life. It may vary from time-to-time and from one stage of life to another (Singh, 2013). In educational contexts, learning can be viewed as an outcome that indicates a change in the learner. Further, it changes the way learners understand, experience or conceptualize the world around them. Hence, learning can be characterized as both an external (something that results from an experience)

and internal process (something an individual does to understand the world) (Nagel & Scholes, 2016).

Rapid changes in socio-cultural structure, economy, industry and technology in societies and in the world due to new global challenges have placed a greater demand on higher educational institutions to train high quality professionals who can provide the services for individuals who experience various challenges to overcome their issues and to enhance their overall well-being. Hence, the main objective of higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should focus on developing prepared minds; preparing learners with knowledge and perspectives that can be utilized to comprehend and explain individual, societal and global challenges and to recommend appropriate strategies and interventions to address such concerns. In order to achieve this, learners should be able to process and integrate existing knowledge to create new knowledge that can be applied to address ongoing and emerging societal, regional and global challenges. In this effort, the higher educational institutions should expand opportunities for learners with more choice and control over the learning materials and instructional methods and introduce teaching-learning activities that provide learners opportunities to develop a broader understanding and perspectives, to gain insight and to look far beyond the present.

### **Open and Distance Education**

Open and Distance Education, a non-traditional approach to teaching and learning which provides any person, anywhere, at any time, with flexible and open learning options to achieve their academic goals, has significantly influenced educational delivery methods (Bradley & Yates, 2000;

Maxwell, 1995). It has greatly expanded the opportunities for students to engage in educational activities without being constrained by time, place and stringent programme entry requirements (Sivalogathan, 2019). The concept of Open and Distance Learning was introduced to offer flexible learning opportunities for learners, particularly when both learners and instructors were not able to physically meet with each other in teaching and learning activities (Ghosh et al., 2012).

Open Learning and Distance Education are identified as two different concepts. Distance Education is a mode of educational delivery for students who may not regularly be present physically in an educational setting to gain knowledge. Distance learning differs from traditional computer-based learning. Open Learning, on the other hand, focuses on expanding opportunities for students with more choice and control as possible over the course material and instructional methods (Maxwell, 1995).

Open and Distance Learning together creates more opportunities, particularly for individuals who do not have access to traditional educational institutions, to achieve their educational goals and obtain educational qualifications through the alternative teaching-learning activities (Rahila & Babe, 2016, as cited in Sarkar et al., 2024). Distance learning has developed increasingly faster and become more common as a result of the widespread availability and accessibility of computer technology (Kumar, 2016, as cited in Sarkar et al., 2024). Hence, Distance Education provides alternative and flexible learning opportunities for individuals of all ages to achieve their academic goals (Sudalai, 2016, as cited in Sarkar et al., 2024).

Modern technology has enormously impacted various aspects of individuals' lives in the new millennium. The technology revolution presents various challenges, especially for educators to re-evaluate their core beliefs and search for innovative methods to incorporate technology in a creative way in teaching-learning activities (Behera, 2013). Online learning has the potential to give many benefits for various groups including students, instructors, administrators and service providers (Thanji & Vasantha, 2018). Given the growing significance of online educational programmes, it is important to understand both the advantages and limitations identified by learners and to focus on the areas that require improvement for the online teaching and learning activities to become fruitful (Sarkar et al, 2024; Thanji & Vasantha, 2018).

The use of different teaching-learning modalities that create more opportunities for learners to gain knowledge and understanding and to improve their skills, attitudes and mindset will benefit them in both personal and professional development, particularly in Open and Distance Learning. In this effort, collaborative learning and problem-based learning can be identified as effective learning strategies that can be used to prepare students to become the 21<sup>st</sup>-century learners who can apply their knowledge and perspectives, and use skills, attitudes and mindset to address real-world problems as well as to find better solutions collaboratively.

The student body in Open Universities is different compared to other conventional universities. This diverse community ranges from school leavers to adult learners who represent different cohorts and have experienced various sociocultural, historical and contextual influences in life. Using teaching-learning activities that create opportunities for learners to interact with more



experienced and skilled individuals within their student community and to share their knowledge and experience, will motivate young learners to create new knowledge, develop broader perspectives, improve cognitive, emotional, motivational, personality and social skills, and look far beyond the present in finding solutions for ongoing and emerging challenges in the real world. In this endeavour, the selection of more appropriate teaching and learning strategies such as collaborative learning and problem-based learning, particularly in Open and Distance Learning, is significantly important for learners to achieve the expected outcomes.

### **Collaborative learning in teaching-learning activities in Open and Distance Education**

In collaborative learning, learners with different perspectives and abilities have the opportunity to work together and to interact on both the similar and different characteristics of a given task to accomplish a shared learning outcomes (Dewi et al., 2021; Hadwin et al., 2018; Strijbos, 2016; Warsah et al., 2021). Collaborative learning helps them develop various skills such as cognitive, socio-emotional, motivational and interpersonal skills that are important for their development. In this learning method, students have the opportunity to understand different perspectives, to work collaboratively (Dewi et al., 2021; Hadwin et al., 2018; Warsah et al., 2021).

In the process of collaborative learning, students feel more comfortable in generating ideas. It encourages students to interact among themselves by sharing their knowledge to gain a better understanding, mutually dependent on constructing a shared task and to find better solutions for problems (Azar et al., 2021; Koretsky et al., 2021; Warsah et al., 2021; Linder & Hayes, 2018). In addition, when students collaborate to complete a given task, it becomes more interesting and

meaningful (Azar et al., 2021). The collaborative learning experience helps them gain a deeper understanding of their course materials (McHugh et al., 2020) and provides greater educational benefits, particularly for students who are behind in their studies to improve their academic performance with the support of group members (Warsah et al., 2021). Hence, collaborative learning can be identified as an appropriate and more effective method to train students to become the 21<sup>st</sup>-century learners who are able to apply their knowledge and skills to solve a problem, complete a given task or create an invention (Azar et al., 2021).

### **Problem-based learning in teaching-learning activities in Open and Distance Education**

Problem-based learning intends to present the reality of the world (Pawson et. al., 2006). It helps learners develop various skills such as cognitive skills, problem solving skills, socio-emotional skills, teamwork, motivation, etc. (Norman & Schmidt, 1992; Grabinger et al., 1997). It was developed in order to accomplish several learning outcomes including, helping students to create an extensive and flexible knowledge base, improve effective problem-solving skills, become effective teammates, become intrinsically motivated to learn and enhance self-directed learning skills (Barrows, 1985, 1986; Norman & Schmidt, 1992).

Problem-based learning requires skills such as critical thinking, questioning and reflection (Barrows & Kelson, 1995). Additionally, it encourages students to actively engage in the learning process (Grabinger et al., 1997) and offers opportunities for them to replicate the processes to address the real-world problems (Dunlap, 2005). Problem-based learning motivates the creation of knowledge rather than the transmission of knowledge. Hence, it blends with the Constructivist

paradigm of learning (Jonassen, 1991). It has the potential to influence the development of a rich environment for active learning (Dunlap, 1996). Also, problem-based learning may contribute to the development of self-management, autonomy and personality.

Problem-based learning challenges the traditional teacher-centered, knowledge-transfer paradigm of teaching and learning. Further, it encourages instructors to explore alternative methods of assessment (Pretorius, 2010). In Open and Distance Learning, problem-based learning presents distinct challenges where learners and instructors are separated not only by time and space (Wang et al., 2008) but also by the number of delivery modes compared to traditional on-campus learning environment (Dibiase, 2000).

## **Aim and Objectives**

The main aim of this review is to explore the role of collaborative learning and problem-based learning in Open and Distance Education in developing cognitive, social, emotional, motivational skills and decision-making and problem-solving skills among learners. Particularly, it focuses on identifying the benefits of collaborative learning in improving these skills. Additionally, it seeks to explore the advantages of problem-based learning in enhancing these skills among learners. Finally, it intends to explore how collaborative learning as well as problem-based learning help learners develop the kind of character necessary to succeed as professionals.

## **Methodology**

A narrative review method was adopted in this study. The review was limited to journal articles that are related to collaborative learning and problem-based learning, and Open and Distance Learning published in the period 2000 -2024. The main search for this review was conducted using electronic databases, and Google Scholar. The literature that focused on effects of collaborative learning and problem-based learning on developing important aspects of individuals' behaviour including cognitive, social, emotional, motivational skills and personality were selected for the review, and the thematic analysis method was used for the data analysis and to identify the key themes emerged related to the two approaches. The significance of collaborative learning as well as problem-based learning, particularly in the Open and Distance Learning context are discussed in relation to the development of learners' cognitive, metacognitive, social, emotional, motivational, decision making and problem-solving skills, and their character.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Benefits of collaborative learning in developing skills and character**

#### ***Developing cognitive skills***

Collaborative learning helps students improve their behaviour in relation to the main domains of human behaviour namely, cognition, emotion, motivation, personality and social interaction. It provides opportunities for students to improve their cognitive skills such as thinking and learning, conceptual understanding, critical thinking, logical argument, decision making and creativity, higher-order metacognitive and problem-solving skills. Collaborative learning has an effect on the students' cognitive learning processes (Warsah et al., 2021). It creates the environments for

students to engage in thinking and learning collaboratively and helps students improve conceptual understanding (Lyons et al., 2021).

Collaborative learning has positive effects on improving critical thinking skills in students (Han & Ellis, 2021; Kurniasih, et al., 2016). Critical thinking can be described as one's ability to question, evaluate, interpret, reflect, reason and make informed judgments and decisions (Warsah et al., 2021). Critical thinking process involves using one's knowledge, judgments and reflective experiences (Howard et al., 2015). In the collaborative learning process, students engage in logical argument and negotiation (Han & Ellis, 2021; Linder & Hayes, 2018). Critical thinking skills are essential in finding appropriate solutions for real world problems.

### ***Developing metacognitive skills***

Collaborative learning facilitates students developing metacognitive skills. Metacognition can be described as one's ability to develop awareness of the learning process and take responsibility of applying appropriate methods to manage the learning process (Garrison, 2022). Prior research has suggested that self-regulation is related to metacognition (De Backer et al., 2022; Garrison, 2022). Self-regulated learning, one's ability to comprehend and control his or her goal setting, self-monitoring, self-instruction and self-reinforcement are crucial particularly, in the context of online learning (De Backer et al., 2022). According to Garrison (2022), shared metacognition is an understanding of one's learning in the processes of creating meaning and developing understanding related to self with others. In collaborative learning, it is important to initiate regulation methods by different group members who collaboratively participate in monitoring

and regulating the learning process of the group at the cognitive, contextual, motivational and behavioural level (De Backer et al., 2022; Zhao & Ye, 2020). This is known as socially shared regulation (Hadwin et al., 2018).

### ***Developing decision making and problem-solving skills***

In addition, collaborative learning assists students to develop other cognitive skills such as decision-making and problem-solving skills. When the students have the opportunity to collaborate, they use their reasoning and metacognitive skills and work together to solve problems during the learning process (Warsah et al., 2021). Further, in collaborative learning, students improve creative problem-solving skills (Lyon et al., 2021). These skills promote positive attitudes among students and their motivation in learning, enhanced student participation and deeper learning, and thereby improving their academic performance (Han & Ellis, 2021).

### ***Developing social skills***

Collaborative learning has an effect on social and emotional functions of learners. The main feature of collaborative learning is the learners' connectedness that motivates understanding and innovative thinking through critical discourse (Busch et al., 2021; Warsah et al., 2021). Collaborative learning provides opportunities for learners to improve their social skills because of mutual engagement (Azar et al., 2021). It guides them to improve active participation, socialization and skill development (Lyon et al., 2021). Further, it encourages learners to be more responsible for learning and strengthen them by motivating them to learn, developing their positive mindsets towards learning, enhancing their awareness to learning and motivating them

to learn without any interruptions. Consequently, students' learning outcomes are improved, and their academic achievements are increased (Han & Ellis, 2021; Lyon et al., 2021; Warsah et al., 2021).

Moreover, collaborative learning provides opportunities for peer interactions and active participation in the learning process. Active learning occurs when learners are actively involved in knowledge construction compared to passively receiving knowledge given by the instructor. An active interaction among learners is important to enhance the process of knowledge creation for an individual learner. In the process of collaborative learning, students actively interact through questioning, discussing, debating, explaining to each other and actively engaging in creating new knowledge (Sumadyo et al., 2021). As a result, learners develop and improve important interpersonal and communication skills that help students transition into their professions and to develop their professional life (Lu & Smiles, 2022).

### ***Developing emotional skills***

When learners work together to complete their academic activities, it becomes more interesting and meaningful (Azar et al., 2021). Collaborative learning provides an opportunity for them to share their views, thoughts and feelings. A positive emotional environment within the group can enable learners to collaborate to make more effort in learning and to focus more on performing their tasks (Järvela et al., 2016; 2021). Social-emotional interactions developed in collaborative learning can influence not only the learners' cognitive processes but their satisfaction and positive learning outcomes (Huang & Lajoie, 2023). Also, Collaborative learning promotes emotional

intelligence by improving their emotion regulation, understanding others' emotional state and learning to select appropriate responses to others' emotionality. Hence, these skills will benefit their emotional well-being and personality development.

In the collaborative learning process, students tend to engage in both cognitive interactions and socioemotional interactions. Cognitive interactions can be defined as the circumstance that students are actively engaged in the processes of thinking, reasoning analyzing and elaborating to deepen their understanding of the materials they learned (Isohätälä et al., 2020). Socioemotional interactions, on the other hand, serve as a source of motivations for learners in the group and support them to be connected with one another, be compassionate and sense the spirit of their collaborations with each other (Isohätälä et al., 2020; Järvenoja et al., 2020). Subsequently, these interactions affect one another and the overall performance of the group (McHugh et al., 2020; Isohätälä et al., 2020).

### ***Personality development***

Collaborative learning provides opportunities for students to learn the value of each individual contribution to the group tasks (Han & Ellis, 2021; Linder & Hayes, 2018). Each individual has a unique personality which is shaped by genetics, social environment and their personal experiences. When students with different personalities collaborate to accomplish a given task, each individual may use his or her capabilities and unique personality characteristics or traits to get the best outcome. It provides greater educational benefits particularly, for students who are behind in their studies to improve their performance with the support of the group (Warsah et



al., 2021) and to improve the learners' social skills because of mutual engagement (Azar et al., 2021). Also, it enables them to learn from each other and understand human qualities that are important in developing their character.

## **Benefits of problem-based learning in developing skills and character**

### ***Developing cognitive skills***

Problem-based learning in a group creates an environment for learners to activate past knowledge they acquired, facilitate their ability to explain and improve their retention. Also, students who are engaged in problem-based learning are more likely to remember more of what they learned compared to others (Loyens, 2011). This suggests that they are better able to organize what they learned. Further, students who are engaged in problem-based learning significantly improve their critical thinking skills such as analytical ability, keenness and comprehensive interpretation and evaluation, compared to those who followed lecture-based learning (Şendag & Odabaşı, 2009; Tiwari, et al., 2006). Compared to other teaching-learning activities, problem-based learning seems to be an effective method to gain positive outcomes for improving clinical knowledge and skills. Research has revealed that, compared to the students who follow traditional learning method, students who engage in problem-based learning perform better (Gijbels et al., 2005).

### ***Developing student motivation***

A problem-based environment, compared to traditional lecture-based education, influences motivation of the learner. Research finds that there are some students' motivational and cognitive

characteristics that influence problem-based learning experience (Araz & Sungur, 2007). Accordingly, in problem-based learning, students are intrinsically motivated to engage in learning (Loyens, 2011). In problem-based learning, students have the opportunity to integrate their knowledge when they apply it to real-world situations. It is evident that they tend to value their ability to integrate knowledge that they gain with their practice (Coleman, Collins, & Baylis, 2007; Smith & Coleman, 2008). Research has further suggested that students tend to value the responsibility that problem-based learning requires, and are more intrinsically motivated to learn (White, 2007).

### ***Developing social skills***

Changes in problem-based learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the use of technology have provided more opportunities for students to improve their skills. For example, a blended problem-based learning environment with a virtual learning environment connected with face-to-face tutorial meetings, has helped students improve their communication among team members. The students have reported that they preferred a blended problem-based learning environment over a regular problem-based learning environment (Woltering et al., 2009). In addition, students reported that they are more satisfied with the opportunity given for formal and informal interactions with their instructors and formal interactions with their peers in problem-based learning. Further, in problem-based learning, students gain a better understanding on how to become good collaborators to learn to engage in open discussion, come to an agreement about their solutions and other issues and resolve contradictions in their findings by collaboratively working in a group (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Prior research has also revealed that undergraduates

who engaged in problem-based learning reported that they improved their communication skills (Cohen-Schotanus, et al., 2008; Schmidt et al., 2009) and interpersonal skills (Schmidt, et al., 2006). Accordingly, blended problem-based learning facilitates students to improve their social skills such as mutual engagement, social interactions and communication skills.

### ***Personality development***

The student plays the main role in problem-based learning. In this process, the student initiates the learning. Hence, problem-based learning becomes self-directed learning. The problem-based learning environment, therefore, provides an opportunity for learners to develop autonomy (Loyens et al., 2008). In problem-based learning, students take responsibility for their own learning. They tend to be open-minded, take decisions and create innovative solutions. Previous research has suggested that students who are more advanced tend to desire more learning, more self-management and more self-control compared to other students (Kocaman et al., 2009). Accordingly, problem-based learning contributes to their personality development.

### **Conclusions**

It is evident that both collaborative learning and problem-based learning have beneficial effects not only on student learning outcomes but their character development. According to prior research evidence, collaborative learning allows students improve their cognitive, metacognitive, socio-emotional, motivational skills, decision making and problem-solving skills and personality. Problem-based learning also contributes to the development of cognitive, motivational and social skills, and personality. Accordingly, both learning methods expand opportunities for learners to

improve their cognitive, metacognitive, emotional, social and motivational skills that help them function effectively in their relevant fields and to optimize positive outcomes in social, professional and work environments. Finally, it will enable them to become mature professionals with well-rounded characters who can contribute to the development of individuals and community.

## **Recommendations**

Higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century aims to develop prepared minds; equip students who can apply their knowledge and understanding to address individual, societal and global issues and to recommend appropriate strategies and interventions to overcome them. It is evident that both collaborative learning and problem-based learning in Open and Distance Education help learners develop various skills that contribute to their character development. Therefore, it is important to expand opportunities to use more effective teaching-learning methods such as collaborative learning and problem-based learning, particularly in Open and Distance Learning to train students to become 21<sup>st</sup> century learners and to develop their personality to become successful professionals in their own fields of expertise. It will enable them to be equipped with knowledge, skills, attitudes and the right mindset to find appropriate solutions for real world problems and to develop with well-rounded characters who can serve for the betterment of individuals and communities.

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## Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Inclusive Education in Plantation Sector Schools of Sri Lanka

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### Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate the challenges and opportunities and search for pathways to implement inclusive education in plantation sector schools of Sri Lanka by developing an inclusive education framework that suits children with disabilities. This study employed an exploratory research design, which is a qualitative research approach. Focused on Tamil-medium schools in the Hatton Education Zone, the participants including principals, teachers, parents, and students were selected for the study using purposive sampling. It utilized participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group interviews as data collection methods, and content analysis was used for the data analysis. Key challenges identified include insufficient teachers and specialized training for teachers, poor infrastructure and lack of awareness of inclusive education among the society. Nevertheless, there are opportunities such as strong community support, a positive attitude of school society and the existing policy framework of the National Education Commission (NEC) and the Ministry of Education (MOE). The study introduced a proposed inclusive education framework designed specifically for the unique needs of schools in the plantation sector. This framework highlights the importance of improved teacher training, upgraded infrastructure and collaborative efforts among plantation management, educators, and the community to guarantee equal educational opportunities for all children in plantation sector schools.

**Keywords:** *Inclusive education, plantation sector schools, children with disabilities, special educational needs, educational framework*

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## **Introduction**

### **Background**

Inclusive education is an approach in which students with many different kinds of disabilities and learning needs are educated in classes with non-disabled students. In an inclusive arrangement, students who need additional support spend most of their time with their non-disabled peers rather than in separate classrooms or schools (Kirschner, 2015). Unlike special education, inclusive education integrates all learners, addressing diversity and reducing exclusion based on disability, race, or other factors (Reddy et al., 2000).

Sri Lanka has promoted inclusive education along with the Universal Free Education Policy in 1945 and the Compulsory Education Policy in 1998. Despite high enrollment rates, children with disabilities still face challenges in access and participation due to factors like inadequate teacher training and infrastructure. In Sri Lanka, the education of children with disabilities in Tamil-medium schools is behind Sinhala-medium schools due to the lack of formal teacher training in Tamil-medium, which began only in the 2000s (Furuta, 2007).

The plantation sector in Sri Lanka concentrated mainly on the Central, Uva and Sabragamuwa Provinces, and to a smaller extent, on the Southern Province and some parts of the Western Province which have historically been marginalized areas with significant educational disadvantages. Special education in the plantation sector began in 2000 with the establishment of special education units in the Hatton education zone, offering services that bridge children with disabilities with the mainstream education system. However, the overall enrolment of children



with disabilities remains low, and schools often fail to provide suitable educational support (Furuta, 2007). The commencement of a few special education units in Tamil-medium schools in 2001 paved the way for getting school enrolments of children with disabilities from their restricted line room life and this has gradually led to the adoption of inclusive education approaches, though the progress has been slow and uneven.

### **Problem Statement**

The current global debate surrounding special education centers around the inclusion of children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools, a movement that gained traction following the 1994 UNESCO Salamanca Conference on Special Needs Education. In Sri Lanka, particularly in the tea-growing plantation areas, educational achievements lag behind national averages, although progress has been made due to legislation mandating free education and government prioritization of primary education (Little, 2003).

Despite the advancements in Tamil medium schools and the establishment of special education units in the 2000s, many children with disabilities still do not receive adequate educational support, often resulting in continued exclusion of them from formal education (Furuta, 2007). Due to the lack of responsible teachers, most schools have not paid attention to children with disabilities staying out of school. Few schools with special education units enroll children with disabilities according to the stipulated special education teacher-student ratio. The SEN student number is high in such schools. Although the legislation now enables enrollment of children with SEN in regular schools, the effectiveness of inclusive education remains a question. Many such

students are enrolled without proper support, leading to high dropout rates and societal issues such as child labour and marginalization. This research aims to assess current inclusive education practices in these communities and propose strategies for creating an inclusive school culture that aligns with the principles of inclusive education and equal educational opportunities for children with disabilities in plantation sector Tamil schools.

### **Aim and Objectives**

This study aimed to investigate the challenges and opportunities in implementing inclusive education in plantation sector schools of Sri Lanka, with a focus on developing an inclusive education framework that supports children with disabilities. To achieve this aim, the following three specific objectives were formed:

- To explore the current situation of education of children with disabilities in plantation sector schools
- To identify the gap between the current education practices of children with disabilities and the inclusive education policies and legislation
- To develop an inclusive education framework for children with disabilities in plantation schools

Based on the above three specific objectives, the following seven key research questions were formed.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the categories of disabilities found in plantation sector schools?

2. What are the strategies implemented in the plantation schools to support children with disabilities?
3. How do the parents and the community contribute to the education support of children with disabilities?
4. Do the schools have appropriate human, physical and infrastructure to support the children with disabilities?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the education practices implemented?
6. Is there any gap between the practices of inclusive education and legislation with current practices?
7. What is a suitable inclusive education framework for plantation sector schools within the existing opportunities?

## **Review of Literature**

Many qualitative research have been conducted to study the inclusive education practices for children with disabilities in Sri Lanka. However, research related to such practices in plantation schools seems scarce. With hopes of filling this gap, this research explores answers for the above-mentioned research questions.

### **Inclusive education and children with disabilities**

Inclusive education is a strategy aimed at addressing the diverse needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning. It involves integrating children with disabilities into

mainstream education with their peers, thus fostering inclusion rather than segregation (Losert, 2010). Inclusive education is distinct from special education. It refers to a model where disabled and non-disabled children learn together in mainstream schools with the appropriate support. This is an evolution from special education towards quality education for all children, addressing their specific needs in mainstream classrooms (Chavuta et al., 2008). The 'Individuals with Disabilities Education Act' (IDEA) ensures that students with disabilities are entitled to free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment (Walls, 2010).

### **Policy proposals and recommended strategic activities in Sri Lanka**

Through a comprehensive status review, policy planners have identified special and inclusive education sector-specific 10 core areas and elements accompanying directive principles based on the guidelines elaborated in Part III of the National Education Policy Framework (NEPF) - 2020-2030 (National Education Commission, 2022). This approach is taken to ensure that the policy planning process gives comprehensive coverage across the sub-sector-specific core areas and elements while giving due consideration to issues and gaps highlighted in the status review that are lingering the progressive developments of the special and inclusive education sector. The specific ten (10) core areas are i) Access for children with special education needs to early childhood care and education; ii) Access for children with special education needs to regular education system; iii) Learners and learning environment; iv) Curriculum and teaching-learning process; v) Quality of human resources; vi) Quality of physical resources; vii) Financing of special and inclusive education; viii) Regulation, governance and management; ix) Quality assurance, and x) Data management and research (National Education Commission, 2022).

### **What is inclusive practice in education?**

Inclusive education is when a school or college educates children of all abilities and backgrounds. It means that children with additional learning needs and special educational requirements are educated within a mainstream learning environment, rather than a specialist school (Kirschner, 2015). Inclusive practice in education can be described as attitudes and methods that ensure access to learning for all learners, to make sure that all learners feel welcomed and valued and get the right support to help them develop their individual talents and achieve their goals (Lee, 2023). When education is truly inclusive, it not only benefits learners but also the staff, school and wider community. Non-inclusive practices include preserving school cultures, policies and practices that are non-responsive to the diversity of learners and perpetuate inequalities, segregated schooling for disabled learners, valuing some learners more than others, maintaining barriers to some learners' participation in learning, thinking that inclusion mostly concerns disabled learners, viewing differences between learners as problems to be overcome, identifying academic achievement as the main aim of schooling at the expense of personal and moral development, and perceiving inclusion in education as a separate issue from inclusion in society (Lee, 2023).

### **Global situation of inclusive education**

In recent years, inclusive education has become the subject of extensive global debate and discussion. Over 160 volumes containing the phrase “inclusive education” are listed in the library catalogue of the Institute of Education in London. Several international journals are now

exclusively devoted to the subject, and it is regularly selected as the theme for national and international conferences. Outside the academia, the promotion of inclusive education has provided the rationale for numerous international development programmes and the focus for international agreements such as the Salamanca Statement (1994) and Dakar Framework for Action (2000) (Fanu, 2022).

### **Implementation of inclusive education in the Sri Lankan context**

The MOE in Sri Lanka has been actively involved in promoting inclusive education through a series of circulars aimed at decentralizing policies and enhancing the educational framework for students with disabilities, as evident in their recent initiatives. For instance, recent guidelines, such as Circular 37/2020, provide comprehensive strategies for implementing inclusive education in schools, detailing the responsibilities of educators and the support services available for students with disabilities (MOE, 2022). Further, Circular 33/2022 specifies the institutions responsible for special education assessments, including the Zonal Education Assessment Centers and the Inclusive Education Department of the National Institute of Education (NIE) (MOE, 2022).

## **Methodology**

This study adopted an exploratory design under the qualitative research approach. It employed participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group interviews as data collection methods to gain comprehensive and significant insight into the research problem. For data analysis, a content analysis method was utilized to systematically interpret and derive themes and patterns from the collected qualitative data. This design ensured a rich, detailed understanding of the contextual and lived experiences of stakeholders involved in inclusive education in the plantation sector.

Participant observation allowed the researcher to observe the real-time dynamics of inclusive education practices within classrooms and schools. Under in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and survey interviews were used. The former was conducted with teachers, administrators, and students to gain deeper insight into their challenges and experiences, while the latter facilitated broader data collection with a mix of qualitative and quantitative elements. The focus group interviews were held with primary class teachers and parents.

The Hatton education zone in the Nuwara Eliya District was chosen as the study area due to its high concentration of Tamil-medium plantation schools (MOE, 2021). All the Tamil medium schools (112) situated in this zone were initially selected for the survey interview. The key focus was on six (06) schools with special education units from the three Tamil medium divisions of the particular zone (two schools from each division). Six (06) principals (one from each school), thirty

(30) primary teachers (five teachers from each school), six (06) Special Education teachers (one from each school), five (05) children with disabilities, five (05) children without disabilities, five (05) parents of children with disabilities and five (05) parents of children without disabilities from each school were purposively selected as participants of the study to provide wider perspective to this research.

Content analysis method was adopted for analyzing and interpreting the qualitative data (Powell & Renner, 2003). The following steps were used in data analysis: Getting to know about the data, focusing on the analysis, categorizing information, identifying patterns and connections within and between categories and interpretation. Two content analysis approaches were used: a) Focus with questions or topics, and b) Classical content analysis (Bauer, n.d). Using classical content analysis approach with data obtained from interview schedules and observation sheets, answers were searched for research questions No 01: What are the categories of disabilities found in Tamil medium plantation sector schools? No 04: Do schools have appropriate human, physical and infrastructure to support children with disabilities? No 05: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the education practices Implemented? and No 06: Is there any gap between the inclusive education legislations and policies with current practices? The 'Focus with questions' analysis approach sought answers for research questions No 02: What are the strategies implemented in the plantation schools to support children with disabilities? No 03: How do parents and community contribute to the educational support of children with disabilities? and No 07: How to develop an inclusive education framework for plantation sector Schools?



## **Findings and Discussion**

### **Categories of disabilities found in the school sector**

The key categories of disabilities found in the school sector were intellectual disability, learning disability, hearing impairment, autistic spectrum disorder, visual impairment, speech impairment, health impairment, and multiple disabilities. The number of male students with disabilities was found to be higher than the number of female students with disabilities. Furthermore, children with learning disabilities and children with intellectual disabilities were higher in number.

### **Strategies implemented in plantation sector schools to support children with disabilities**

Among the responded schools, about 25% function special education units and they enrol children with disabilities while other schools enrol these children in the mainstream classes. Children who are studying in special education units, after reaching a capable level, are sent for integration education. Children with mild disabilities are sent for general education and they get help from special education teachers. Identification and the assessment and evaluation are initiated only by special education teachers. These special education classrooms are also supplied with teaching-learning materials.

### **Parents and the community support provided**

It has been identified that parents take care of their children according to their capacity. They request school admission for their children following the normal procedure and send them to school regularly; accompany them to co-curricular activities and routine medical clinics; buy learning materials for their children; and obey all school rules and regulations. Sometimes, these parents' economic status affects this process. Parents hope that their children are promoted from special education to the Integration Education or Inclusive Education set up. At times, these children receive educational equipment and medical help from well-wishers, medical personnel social and religious organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, the assistance received by plantation sector schools is less than the ones in urban areas. Yet, these students are accepted and loved by their parents and their society.

### **The level of human, physical and infrastructure facilities provided**

Out of the responded schools, 49% have no human resource facilities to look after children with disabilities. Also, it was observed that appropriate equipment are not provided for these students. The special education classes in the schools were the same as the normal classrooms and physical accessibility was not provided according to the special needs of the children. Most of the special education classrooms were not at a satisfactory level in providing relevant human, physical and infrastructure facilities.

### **Strengths and weaknesses of the education practices implemented**

As for the strengths, certain schools have enrolled children with SEN and the relevant authorities have identified their disabilities and diverse needs. In some schools, a small percentage of special education teachers have been appointed by forming special education units while a few schools have integrated children into mainstream classes. The positive attitude of special education teachers and primary teachers towards inclusive education is highly respected. The respondent primary teachers expressed their willingness to help all children, and principals mentioned the possibility of including SEN students in mainstreaming classes creating equal opportunities. Meanwhile, the Zonal authorities have undertaken supervision of special education programmes, in-service training for special education teachers and student developmental programmes even with limited allocations.

There are certain weaknesses identified as well. Though most schools have enrolled children with disabilities, they were not provided with relevant facilities. For instance, some schools have no one in charge of these children, and the special education classrooms are not equipped properly and adequately. The majority of mainstream teachers were not aware of inclusive education policies, legislation, practices and appropriate teaching techniques. Though the student-teacher ratio for special education is approved as 5:1 by the Government circular, it was revealed that more such students are found in these classrooms.

### **The gap between the practices of inclusive education and legislations with current practice**

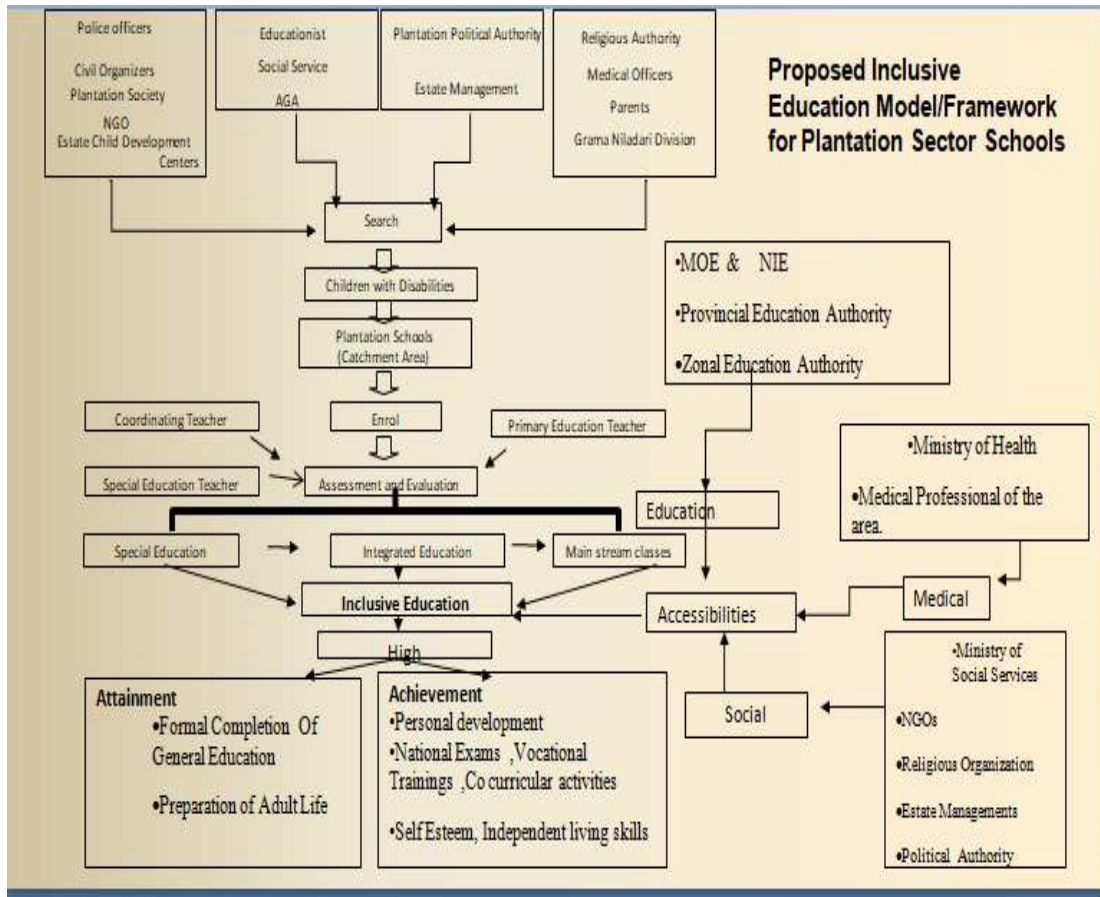
A wide gap is identified in teacher training. Both special education and primary education teachers have a lack awareness of inclusive education practices including appropriate teaching techniques that cater to different types of disabilities, finding accessibility and promoting inclusive education policies among children with disabilities. Accordingly, the participation of children with SEN in learning was not at a satisfactory level. Also, schools with special education units have enrolled a greater number of students exceeding the approved student-teacher ratio.

### **Suitable inclusive education framework for plantation sector schools**

Based on the findings of the study, opportunities identified, and recommendations made for the development of inclusive education for children with disabilities in plantation sector schools, the following framework is recommended for effective implementation (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Proposed Inclusive Education Framework for plantation sector schools



Conclusion and Recommendations

This study underscores significant challenges impeding the effective implementation of inclusive education in plantation sector schools in Sri Lanka, including teacher shortages, lack of teacher training, inadequate infrastructure, special equipment and lack of awareness of inclusive education among the society. However, these obstacles are counterbalanced by promising opportunities such as growing community support, positive attitudes within school communities

and existing legislative frameworks. Prioritizing the above efforts will ensure that children with disabilities can access quality education alongside their peers, fostering equality and inclusivity in education.

This study recommends further research to be conducted in more plantation districts. Also, comparison studies are recommended at national and international levels to search policy implications, infrastructure design, assistive technology, curriculum, physical and environmental accessibility, and related services etc.

Increasing awareness of disability rights and inclusive education within school communities is vital. Annual awareness programmes should be organized by zonal-level administrators for school leaders, in-service advisors, teachers, and local communities. Teacher training is equally critical. Mainstream teachers must be provided training on identifying and supporting children with disabilities, and while special education teachers should receive specialized training for effective teaching strategies to different types of disabilities.

Schools must prioritize enrolling children with disabilities and adapt both curricula and physical infrastructure accordingly. Local committees comprising various stakeholders should be established to monitor enrolment and address accessibility barriers. To solve the shortage of special education teachers, schools with at least five students with special educational needs (SEN) should recruit specialized staff. Coordinating teachers can bridge the gap between mainstream education and SEN requirements. The NIE and other training colleges should

introduce Tamil medium courses in special education and IE, focusing on developing competencies for supporting children with disabilities in the plantation sector.

Collaboration with local government, social service organizations, and plantation management is necessary to provide essential related services, such as medical services, special equipment and transportation. Educational institutions must ensure adequate resources and infrastructure for both special education units and mainstream classrooms. A multifaceted educational approach combining special education, integrated education, and inclusive education is recommended. Strengthening special education units can facilitate smoother transitions for children with disabilities into mainstream settings.

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