

SECTION F : SOCIAL SCIENCES

F - 01

INFLUENCES ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT : A SRI LANKAN STUDY

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The aim of the study was to determine the relative importance of variables influencing academic achievement. With respect to developing countries, recent studies have shown relative less importance of socio-economic status (SES) in this regard, contrary to repeated findings with respect to industrialized countries.

In the present study, the academic achievement of 800 junior secondary children of 18 schools in the Kandy District was assessed in terms of Social Studies. The independent variables were SES, student attitude, school influence (e.g., teacher quality, physical facilities) and factors external to the school (e.g., peer group, mass communication). On the earlier finding with respect to developing countries, the present study hypothesised the emergence of school influence as the predominant factor influencing academic achievement. This hypotheses failed to receive support. The data gathered point to the following order of influence :

<i>Order</i>		<i>Variable</i>		<i>% of explained variance</i>
1	SES	62.31
2	School Influence	24.76
3	Student Attitude	10.70
4	Factors External to School	2.23
			Total ..	100.00