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**From a formal government school to Madrasa: a longitudinal case study**

S. A. Susilawathi<sup>1</sup> and G. Kodituwakku<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Distance Education Center, Hatton.*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Research and Development, National Institute of Education, Maharagama.*

The randomly selected Muslim student chosen for the present longitudinal case study was selected from a school located close to a vegetable and poultry farm in an environment full of flora that can withstand vagaries of weather in the area. The climate of the area is very cold and misty for a greater part of the day. To study the impact of the school, class, teacher, home and inherent characteristics of the student on participation to school education and competency development, data were collected by 16 instruments in grade 1, 2 and 5 along with researcher's observations in his home. Data were gathered through teacher perceptions, interviews, and document analysis and activities assigned to the student. Data were triangulated and analyzed to identify developmental patterns. The student had his schooling for four terms from grade one which was situated close to a railway station. The transport facilities in the area were minimal. The school had five acres of land, but only two acres had been utilized for students' use. The school had three single storey buildings and 204 students from different cultural backgrounds. Sinhala was the medium of instruction and only Buddhism was taught as a religion. A dearth of physical and human resources affected the student's competency development. The play yard for the primary children was neglected. The lack of success of the teacher who taught the student in grades 1 and 2 and the lack of opportunity to learn Islam made the student leave the school and seek admission to a Tamil medium Muslim school. This gave him the opportunity to learn in his mother tongue and his own religion. The new school was in a semi-modern area and had three buildings, a science laboratory, a play ground and a play yard. When the student was in grades 2, 3 and 4, there was no shortage of teachers. However, as a result of a dispute between the principal and the community, the teachers kept off teaching for five months when the student was in grade five. This had a detrimental impact on the student's competency development. The student participated more frequently in both curricular and co-curricular activities than in the previous school. The student did not pay attention and thus lacked understanding in grades 1 and 2, but he improved his listening skills when in grade 3, 4 and 5. Though, he couldn't write a simple Sinhala word correctly in grade 1, the child wrote Tamil letters, words and sentences when he was in grade 2, 3, 4 and 5. Being an ardent believer of Islam the student showed a great attraction to and faith in Islam. At the end of grade 5, the student left the formal government school and entered a Madrasa school with the intention of becoming a member of the Islam clergy.

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tuwakku@gmail.com

Tel: 0812491640