



Section F

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Impact of family background on the educational achievement of the secondary school children: A study based on three districts in Sri Lanka

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Although the structure of the family has changed due to various reasons and such changes have influenced the education, there is a research gap on the theme in Sri Lanka. Hence the research was conducted to examine the relationship between the changed family environment and the achievements. Specific objectives were to review the family related factors of the students & nature of their achievement, to examine the relationship between the family environment & achievement and to identify issues emerging from the nature of the relationship. The impact of 13 independent variables on the dependent variable of achievement was examined using Survey research method. A sample of Grade 11 students (n=450) was randomly selected from 9 schools in 3 districts (Colombo, Hambantota, Matara) and data were collected through a questionnaire. Interviews were conducted with a sub sample of students (n=45), teachers (n=45), and parents (n=45). Test marks of Sinhala Language, Mathematics, History, and Science were collected from term end tests. Quantitative test marks and responses to questionnaire were analyzed using Chi Squire Test, frequency polygon means, and analysis of variance.

Independent variables of family vocational-economic background, educational levels of family members, physical environment, educational resources of the home, parental motivation on the education of their children, cultural-social capital of the family, number of members of the family, location of the student, future job expectations of children had significant relationship with the dependent variable of achievement at $\alpha .01$ level. Parents being alive and nature of the family did not have a relationship. Based on the questionnaire and interview data, student counseling by expert teachers is suggested. Specific mental remedial programmes and economic support are necessary for single parent families. Implementing effective internal supervision mechanism and remedial programmes for low achievers, continuous dialog between parents and teachers on the strengths and weaknesses of children, implementing district-wise specific remedial intervention projects, and creating a child friendly school environments are also suggested.

Keywords: Family background, single parent family, achievement, secondary school