

# The present day syllabus in sri lanka education essay



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The history of Education in Sri Lanka dates back more than 2300 years. The constitution of the country has enclosed education as an fundamental right for all. Sri Lanka has one of the highest literacy rates in Asia. Hence, education plays a vital part in the life and culture of the country. The modern Sri Lankan education system began with the arrival of British colonial rulers in the 1800s, which gave education system which was based upon church's monopoly. However, in 1942 free education system was established with the patronage of Dr CWW Kannangara. The modern education system although based upon British system.

Several superficial changes took place under successive governments after post independence era; these changes included the medium of language and several revision of syllabus both at primary and secondary.

This paper uses a frame work designed to review a present day syllabus in respect of reproduction education and the quality of data and information given to adolescents and the cultural and value perspective held by both the adults and intellectuals in Sri Lanka.

Although the research was concentrated to a certain extend towards the analysis of the syllabus and cultural taboos, it was discovered the knowledge of reproduction education was at a low moderate level even though Sri Lankan literacy ranking holds one of the highest in the world.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

# **REPRODUCTION EDUCATION IN SRI LANKAN SCHOOLS**

### **Introduction**

Backdrop of sexual and reproduction: Knowledge, Extra curriculum and social justness are the main expected or the main ideology that have been tough or inculcate in the mind of students in traditional teaching practice in Sri Lankan school system. This includes so-called facts of life namely including nutrition, Childhood, puberty, function of sexual organs, conception and immortality as well as sexually transmitted diseases etc... how ever teachers rarely almost never explain or discuss of how babies are conceived. The cultural taboo of Sri Lanka has made the situation an unthinkable or unethical to educate or discuss with minors of the sex education and reproduction information.

The open economy and the globalization have converted the Sri Lankan traditional society a complicated and western oriented society. Due to this reasons it is imperative that minors or the puberty should be educated of sexuality and reproduction. Further garment industries have created a new breed of social environment, sexually arisen television programs, printed version of sexual fantasies, blue films and easy access internet, illegal abortion and sexual oriented crimes committed by criminals are in the rapid increase.

3 The well-known fact is that there is not a regular system in Sri Lanka or anywhere for that matter in most society to educate puberty of their sex

feelings and curiosity in young adults. Further, as a South Asian country Sri Lanka, consist of verity of social belief, speak different types of language, and captivate verity of values from different social groups. In this context, the tradition family parents and adults are either unwilling or embarrassed to educate their children on sexuality and sex education for that matter. It is found that the underestimate of its significance is found behind the tradition family structure in Sri Lanka.

Presently, it is found that most of the social problems are based upon sexuality and reproduction. This includes unplanned pregnancy, increase in the rate of mothers death giving birth, child deaths, suicides, sexually transmitted disease are significant. To avoid escalating this situation it is imperative that sexual education is given to young adult before it is too late.

Due to this reasons education on reproduction and sexuality is found to be significant. Meanwhile the importance of passing down information on sensitive subject of sexuality is found to be problematic due to the social taboo and traditional attitudes in Sri Lanka. Even though the school curriculum touches upon this topic, the wealth of knowledge the teachers poses is almost never discussed with students directly.

In this context, finding the reality of whether the school system gives adequate knowledge on reproduction and sexuality to puberties is studied in depth.

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## **Hypothesis**

6 Cultural taboos and traditional attitudes of teachers unwillingness to give necessary emphasis to sex education is resulting in an increase of teenage pregnancies and sexually communicated diseases

## **Problem statement:**

7 The age of puberty is an important stage of a young adult. It is said to be where a child crosses over to a young adult. In this stage a rapid growth in physical, mentally and social is clearly visible. Human growth can be categorized from the day of conceive in mother womb as quick, slow again quickly when approaches adulthood. It takes time by the puberty to understand the physical change in his or her body. Some are disturbed over these changes. The lack of scientific knowledge by the minors is found to be the main cause for this. The complex social environment that the young puberty has to grown up will supplement this situation.

8 In this context the school system in Sri Lanka has been introduced with verity of curriculum into the study of human body and its' splendour. Even though the schoolbooks has included with vital information about reproduction and human body the minors are faced with practically application of this knowledge, in the same time the knowledge given to them tend to be incorrect, likewise the system is faced with many difficulties. In this scenario carrying out a study with regard to reproduction education in Sri Lanka and degree of knowledge attain through the system is the purpose of this study.

**Definitions:**

9 The study is done to evaluate how much of knowledge is gain through the school curriculum in respect of reproduction education. Before going in to the subject matter is vital that we do have a clear picture of definition.

**Adolescent or puberty:**

10 According to Mr David Bacon the concept of puberty was began in the recent past. It is treated, as an important stage of a teen as they goes through a period were they show a rapid development in physically, sexually and mentally.

11 The concept surrounding adolescent or puberty changes among countries, geographically and culturally. Further, he states that adolescent is a direct result of the industrialization and urbanisation.

12 According to Mr Osubell adolescents is a period where teen changes their attitudes, responsibility, privileges surrounding him or her. In this context the changes that occurs this period of life is unavoidable.

13 Mr. Lands a psychologist state most primitive society's young transfers to adults directly where else in western countries young lives where no cultures exist.

14 There is dispute among many about the specific level for age for puberty. According to Hurlock the age limit begins from age 11 or 12 and expands up to 21 the new legally recognize age. Therefore for boy the age expand from 11-21 and for girls 10-21. According to Mr Jerslid and Mr Fleming age, 12-20



is considered as idle age for match this description. Nevertheless, Mr Mussen categorise age 11-18 as fit this description.

The puberty ages are categorized as follows according to Mr Stort

- i. Adolescent (10-13 Years)
- ii. Middle Adolescent (13-16 Years)
- iii. Post Adolescent (16-20 Years)

## **Reproduction education**

15 Reproduction education can define as follows. Reproduction education is not just about health care of reproduction organ but of understanding and recognizing the function of organs and health care of the same in order to achieve a healthy society.

16 Through this education it will provide information on nutrition, immunizing, child hood, Adolescent, function of reproduction organs, family planning, conception and immortality as well as sexually transmitted diseases, other diseases and safe sex etc... to achieve healthy life style.

## **Objectives**

To analyse the note book given to school minors in respect of reproduction.

To ascertain how much of knowledge is gain by puberty.

To ascertain the difficulties faced by teachers in educating on the subject.

## **Importance of the Study**

17 In the present context, the Sri Lankan education system should give more importance this phase of education; the ignorance will have detrimental effects on any society. The detrimental effects of ignorance can be seen almost every day by media, Murder, suicide based on control sexual desire among youth. This reproduction education will distinct human form beast. Humans are intelligent, philosophical animal not just sexual desired animal. This theory must be inculcated in minds of the adolescents from day one.

18 The teachers who are conducting this subject must be given special training to systematically approach the subject as any other topic. Although a mythology approach is presently available, both teachers and students have found difficult area that is hard to teach and understand. In the meantime, this education provided some comprehension; it is not been tough to make the use of knowledge to a more meaningful sex experience or sex life. Due to this, it is important to look in this area with more importance.

19 Further, more reasons to for study of the subject is found as follows; to a person further study of this topic, to person restarting the study of this subject, to a knowledge seeker this search would help immensely.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature review

20 The study or any research carried out in respect of reproduction education in school curriculum is almost rear to find. However, Mr Amerasinghe (2009) carried out a research, into contribution of school culture to the psychological requirement of adolescent. According to Mr Amerasinghe, it is important that adolescent are given preproduction education. Further, he states that the new generation seeks more knowledge on this topic than the previous generation, although Sri Lanka is traditional culture.

21 According to a research carried out recently in United States of America, about 85% of adolescent expect some sort of sexual education form class room. About 1500 middle class adolescent student was taken for this secrete research, of them about 98% them stated that adolescent need to be educated on sexual details and when ask on what details following areas were highlighted by the most.

Human physic and made

Female reproduction organs and function

Female menstruation cycle

Pre and post marriage ethics, philosophy and scientific knowledge

Family planning

Abortion

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Male female sexual behaviour

Masturbation

Homosexual behaviour

Virginity

Sexual impotency

Orgasm

22 Further, the researcher found that student have stressed that these topics must not be just included curriculum, but taught with great importance.

23 The research carried out by Mr Farell (1978) concluded that adolescents gain knowledge as following sources; 45% from friends, 35% from school, 12% from parents and the rest from media.

24 According to Mr Ivon and Mr Shorok (1974) due to lack of knowledge of the sexual maturity, adolescent tend to face with difficult question surrounding following areas.

The mental stress and tremor of adolescent about menstruation.

The erection, sexual impotency, ejaculation contributing to tremor which lead adolescent to wrong conclusions due unavailability of knowledge.

Masturbation, homosexuality, experimental sexual encounters would create mental tremor with the guilt feeling by the adolescent.

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Mental depression, tremor, embarrasses created by menstruation among adolescents.

25 Almost every county have concluded that adolescent must be given sexual education in classroom. In Sri Lanka Education ministry have made an effort through its text book on health science. In this book a quote from Mohandas Gandhi states, “ Through education it is vital those adolescents are given knowledge to control sexual desires”. The co-relation between sexual education and crimes committed of sexual nature can be defined as follows according to Gandhi’s vision.

26 What sort of priority should be given? Does reproductive education need priority in classroom? Reproductive education can be divided into two as follows.

Controlling sexual desires and winning them.

Rejuvenation of desires and accomplishment

“ In first context, it must be included in the education system and the later is harmful for adolescent therefore should be excluded from education. Almost every religion has interprets “ passion” as enemy, where anger and jealous as coming second”. (Gandhi, 1959. 40. 41)

27 The comment made by Gandhi on whether to adolescent should be given reproductive education in classroom as follows;

“ In the present context, adolescent obtain knowledge through various methods that would mislead them. Controlling sexual desire and achieving

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cannot be done through ignoring it. Therefore, adolescent should be given direction on reproductive education for them to use reproduction organs for correct use". ^Gandhi, 1959: 41)

28 Likewise, Gandhi has also commented the importance of training teachers are equal important on delivering this subject.

" By whom this subject should be taught? Someone who has ability to control his sexual desire should be able. Likewise, teachers trained to deliver advance science subjects, teachers who conduct reproductive education should be trained too. For example, some who can control sexual desire, some who studied about it, and some who is competent should be used for this subject". ^Gandhi, 1959: 42)

29 It is clear the above quotes are very much related to this research and to the reproductive education.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methodology**

1 The research will review the level of contribution of the note book and its contents given to adolescent on reproduction. To achieve this objective facts and data from notebook for reproductive education from grade 7 to grade 11 will considered when providing information.

2 Another objective of this research is to ascertain how much of knowledge gain by adolescent. To achieve this, two schools from both rural and urban are selected, twenty students from each school is selected and given the

questionnaire, the data and facts are presented using tables and charts for analysing purpose.

3 Likewise, another objective was to ascertain the difficulties faced by both teachers and educating on this subject and students in learning. To achieve this ten students and teachers was selected and interviews were conducted. The data and facts are used do for a qualitative analysis.

### **Population and Selection of a sample**

4 To ascertain data and facts for this research, Twenty students each 10 male and 10 female from Rajasinghe central college of Dehiowita educational division is selected.

5 Further, Twenty students each 10 male and 10 female from Magammna college of Dehiowita educational division is randomly selected.

6 Likewise, ten students from Dehiowita National College, Dehiowith educational division is also randomly selected for data and facts gathering. Finally, ten teachers who conduct science, health and physical studies from same division are selected to data gathering.

### **Methods used gathering of data from the sample**

#### **Tools and details**

7 A questionnaire was prepared to gather data. The twenty students from Rajasinghe central college are given the questionnaire. The students are given specific time limits to complete and same is analyzed.

8 Further, same questionnaire was given with time limitation to Magammna college of Dehiowita educational division.

9 Likewise, ten students from Dehiowita National College, Dehiowith educational division was given target question with interview method were used to gather data. The data from ten teachers whom conducting science, health and physical studies were extracted, interview method was used to gather data.

10 Further, information and data were gathered from textbooks and teachers' guild book of grade 7 to grade 11, moreover, magazines covering information on reproductive education was also referred, and internet and encyclopaedia were referred when gathering information.

## **Limitations and Constraints**

Following limitation and constraints were faced.

- i. Although this research should include data from all the schools only three schools were selected for the sampling.
- ii. The number of classes selected had to be demarcated when sampling.

The questionnaire had to be constrained based on the age limit, knowledge level and time limitation for the same.

Time constraint and limitation for collection of data.

Due to cultural taboos, both student and teachers were hesitant to come with their opinion on this topic.



Due to non-availability prior research on this topic, the data for Literature review were rare to find.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Data Analysis**

1 The proposed syllabus direction for new young teachers, and to discover the present knowledge of teachers on the reproductive health science through the provided handbook, the objective of collecting data/information to provide the awareness of reproductive health to school children using the selected main two subjects.

Health & Physical Education

Science

2 Therefore using health & physical Education subject the reproductive knowledge is provided through the grade 7 to 11 using the following methods in different stages.

Table No 4. 1

Subject: health & physical Education

**YEAR**

**LESSON No.**

**LESSON**

**SUBTOPIC**

7

8

9

Wonder of human Body & Healthy Life

Human Reproduction

i. Female reproduction Organs

ii. Male reproduction Organs

Responsibilities of children

Identifying Sexual assault and misconduct behaviours?

9

11

Securing Ethics

Sexual uniqueness

**The importance of sex education among the youth**

disadvantages of unwholesome sex

Responsibilities of sexual engagement

Gender Role for Social Existence

**10**

11

Wonder of Human body

Sexual transmitted diseases & prevention!

3 According to the above table 4. 1 Health & physical Education subject does not contain in year 7 syllabus & Human reproductive knowledge is given to students from year 8 class's, under the subject of Health & Physical Education, it is been presented in several subtopics, under the Lesson " Wonder of Human Body"

4 In Year 9 " Health & physical education" subject includes the Pride of Securing Ethics lessons been used to discussed the subtopics " Sexual uniqueness" The importance of sex education among the youth" disadvantages of unwholesome sex" Gender Role for Social Existence and the of these topics been discussed briefly.

5 Year 10-11 Health & physical Education Subject is not a compulsory subject and it is been presented as a selectable subject due to this reason importance of the subject is neglected

7 Year 7-11 Health & physical Education Syllabus direction and the hand book provided teachers and the detail containing the Human reproduction following findings was discovered.

8 Furthermore, under the science subject human reproduction knowledge is provided using the following modules from year 6 to 11

Table 4. 2

**Subject: Science**

**Year**

**LESSON No.**

**LESSON**

**SUB TOPIC**

**7**

**3**

Life Existence and Physical Associates”

Human reproductive Organs

**8**

**9**

**10**

**11**

Part 11 lesson 2

Bionic Reproduction

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Human reproduction

Male reproduction System

Male reproduction System function

Female Reproduction System

Female Reproduction System Function

Fertilization

Female reproductive period cycle

Sexually Transmitted diseases

Cell population

9 According to above table under science subject how far the human reproduction knowledge has been provided to student was investigate and found that it only included in year 7 & 11 syllabus under science subject.

10 Further, in year 7 textbooks it was limited  $\frac{3}{4}$  pages providing the male & female reproductive organ diagrams. Compared to the other Human body System which been described over the textbook, it give the impression that the room provided to this topic is limited.

11 Year 7, 11 on the exploration of year 7 teachers hand book following was discovered and it contained less information compared to Health & physical education teachers hand book , though more information details has been

provided to the year 11 teachers hand book which helps teachers to educate the student to greater extend

12 Finding of sexual knowledge among the schoolchildren: In order to analysis, it following questionnaire was developed to collect data in two schools containing 10 students from each school

### **Table 4. 3**

#### **School: 01**

Year 10

#### **Question**

##### **Male**

**(10)**

##### **Female**

**(10)**

- 1. Name two secondary sex characteristics (correct answers)**
- 2. Name 3 parts of Male reproduction System (correct answers)**
- 3. Sexually transmitted diseases (correct answers)**
- 4. Name the ways of HIV/ AIDS transmitted (correct answers)**
- 5. How to prevent from sexually transmitted diseases (correct answers)**

13 According to the above table 4. 3 the questionnaire given to student's the subsequent information was gathered, for the first question out of 20

children only 09 students has given the correct answers and for 2nd question only 7 also for 3rd only 5 and for the 5th Question only 4 has given the correct answers.

14 The majority of students in this group has failed to provide correct answers to the questions, nevertheless for the 4th question HIV/AIDS many has given the correct answers, this is due to the freely available information on media and other campaigns carried through the county regarding AIDS

15 On the other hand, the knowledge of this group seems like below the acceptable level.

### **Chart No 4. 1**

16 The above chart explore the education knowledge among the boys & girls about human reproductive knowledge, as per the chart it point out that knowledge of females students is less compared to boys, one reason for this would be since boys used talk about this subject among their friends than girls do, further since their been thought by a male teacher and it would have been a obstacle to seek additional information required.

17 The 2nd school was selected from the city and same questionnaire was provided to this group as well. The below 4. 4 chart it explore the knowledge of this group.

### **Table No 4. 4**

#### **School 2**

Year 10

**Question****No of boys****(10)****No of Girls****(10)**

- 1. Name two secondary sex characteristics (correct answers)**
- 2. Name 3 parts of Male reproduction System (correct answers)**
- 3. Sexually transmitted diseases (correct answers)**
- 4. Name the ways of HIV/ AIDS transmitted (correct answers)**
- 5. How to prevent from sexually transmitted disease (correct answers)**

19 In this group out of 20 students 11 has given correct answer to the 2nd Question and 12 students has given correct answer, for the 3rd Question. 13 has given correct answer, 4th question 16 and for the 5th 11 has given the correct answer, in this group each question has more than 50% correct answers compared with previous group it is clearly project that the knowledge level of city school higher compared rural schools.

20 As per above chart it project that answering levels of girls & boys almost equal however like in group 01 boys has more correct answers to compared to girls

21 Finding out the communication gaps between students & teachers was an another agenda in this analysis, here the intention was to gather the

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information by having open chat with the teachers & student in different forums and two groups were selected to collect data.

Ten (10) science / health education teachers

Ten (10) students

22 According to the first cluster (teachers) they also have faced many issues to make available the crucial information to the students, by looking at these problems that they have faced it was easy to find out the communication gaps between students and teachers

23 The above group was a consist of 3 Unmarried female teachers & 2 male teachers and the rest was married (2 females and 3 males), in this scenario the compliance to teach the subject was refused by the 3 unmarried female teachers and rest confirmed their willingness to teach without a doubt,

24 However, the three unmarried female teachers stated that they did not experience any difficulty in providing theory knowledge to student however they got embarrassed when the 10-11 students are questioning about practical related information from them.

25 Further, when it comes to year 7, 8, 9, order of lessons falls to line during the beginning of the year, and during year 11 the lesson is scheduled as the last lesson in text book in addition that during this period students are getting prepared to O/L exam and the teachers & student struggle to cover-up the syllabus during this time of the year, and gain knowledge appear to be difficult.

26 When inquiring about the subject knowledge of the teachers it was noticed that only two teachers satisfied with their knowledge, and four other male /female teaches admitted that they faced issues when teaching the subject, further the unmarried female teachers said that they are not fully aware about the subject.

27 When inquiring about the training & the provided hand book, the new teachers said that they have not received any training regarding the subject, and only two married female teachers has got the training who worked for many years.

28 In addition to above since there no proper channel within the school to educate the teachers regarding this new subject is also behind this issue.

29 In many instants teachers are using supporting tools to teach the students, however when it was put as question to the teachers only two members has been using images to explain lesson to the students e. g. Changes during the pregnancy has been explained by using Images, further all teachers said that the provided teaching tool are not up standard.

30 When teaching the science subject to explain the human body Systems such as biological systems, Circulatory System, Respiratory System, eye's, ears, nose, plastic models can be used.

31 However, teachers said that it is not possible to use plastic models to explain reproductive organs such as female/ male to student due to the non-availability of these models among schools. Due to these reasons, the teachers are faced with difficulties in teaching the lesson.

32 The above mentioned 2nd group, had 10 students girls/boys and the information gathered during the discussion discovered that learning the human reproductive system within the class rooms difficult and they have to face many issues, with these data it was fruitful the analysis

33 According to the students most of the teachers try to teach the lesson quickly and finish it soon, by doing that student's said that they are unable to clear out the doubt they have, and some said teachers try avoid answering question that they raise, also when the teaching is done by male teachers the girl student do not prefer, raise questions to clear out there doubt's

34 Further since the lesson is thought without any interaction with the students, due this they have no preference to subject , also since very rarely have images been used and it has been difficult them to absorb the out of the lesson.

35 Further girls said that due to question raised by male students sometimes the female teachers also face difficulties in answering them.

36 The student said that they prefer to learn human reproductive system through their friends and learning it from parents and teachers not sufficient to clear out the doubt that they have.

37 According the data analysis of above to groups, when teaching human reproductively system both teachers & student face difficulties and analysis was able identify the root caused.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Suggestions and Conclusions**

1 Written sources were used to find out the knowledge level of reproductive education which is to be given to the students of adolescence peer group according to the school syllabus and the text books. According to the information obta