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UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO

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A STUDY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS
RELATED TO INTELLIGENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT OF G.C.E. (O.L.)
STUDENTS IN CERTAIN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE
JAFFNA DISTRICT.

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

It is vitally important that all children should have equal opportunity to realise their potential abilities to the full. Discrepancies in school achievement have been accounted for by differences in innate ability, by the variation in socio-economic factors of the home environment of students and in more recent years by personality differences among them. An understanding of the processes at work that differentiate students in ability and school attainment would be useful when strategies are planned and implemented in order that the gaps in school attainment may be narrowed, if not bridged.

This study examines the relationship of socio-economic and motivational factors to students' intelligence and achievement. Since intelligence greatly determines achievement, the study of the differential relationship of these factors to intelligence and achievement will prove useful in assessing their contribution to achievement over and above their relationship to intelligence.

Using the questionnaire method, data were collected from a stratified cluster sample of 150 children in the G.C.E. (O.L.) classes from 4 schools selected from urban and semi-urban regions which together are representative of the full range of SES to be found in the school population in the Jaffna district. The children did not exceed sixteen

(III)

years in December 1978 when they sat the G.C.E. examination in their first attempt. The criterion for achievement was the performance of children at the public G.C.E. (O.L.) examination and students' intelligence was assessed on their scores in a standardised verbal test prepared by the National Education Society of Ceylon. The data were subjected to different statistical techniques such as correlation analysis, partial correlation and study of means. The choice of the techniques employed depended on the nature of the data and the extent to which the analysis was thought useful.

The study revealed that while socio-economic and motivational factors are significantly related to intelligence, they bear a closer association with achievement. Students' academic motivation proved to be a better predictor of both their intelligence and achievement than parents' socio-economic status. There was evidence however of adolescent children's attitudinal orientations being determined by the family structure, revealing not only the importance of the home background on school achievement but also giving evidence of an enhancing home environment. The study showed clearly that school outcome was greatly influenced by intervening variables that mediated the effect of the home environment on achievement.

An analysis of the problem is given in chapter 1, followed in chapter 2 by a survey of pertinent literature. The design of the investigation is outlined and the hypotheses to be tested included in chapter 3. Analysis of data

and interpretation and discussion of findings are given in chapters 4 and 5 respectively. In chapter 6 the implications of the study and suggestions for further research in this field are given, and the final chapter gives a summary of the conclusions.

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