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A STUDY  
 OF  
 STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN SOCIAL STUDIES  
 AT  
 THE NATIONAL CERTIFICATE OF GENERAL EDUCATION  
 EXAMINATION (1975)  
 IN THE  
 COLOMBO SOUTH EDUCATION DISTRICT.

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A DISSERTATION  
 FOR  
 THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION  
 (1976-1979)

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## ABSTRACT

The study is based on the teaching of Social Studies, a subject which was ushered into the school curriculum in 1972. With its integrated approach, both in content and method, there emerged the necessity of investigating into the different aspects of teaching of Social Studies. This study is an attempt to evaluate one aspect, namely, student performance in Social Studies at the culmination of the four-year course in Grade Nine, particularly at the N.C.G.E. Examination held in 1975. For this purpose, a stratified random sample of schools from the Colcoo South Education District was chosen. The three categories of schools were symbolised as A, B and C with A representing the best schools, B the next best and C the poor. The probable factors that may have influenced the performance levels were also probed into. The problem was posed in the form of five null hypotheses which were tested by means of statistical tests of significance.

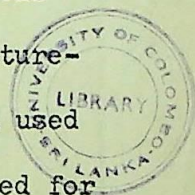
The results of the investigation revealed that A schools have performed better than B and C schools. Under the urban-suburban sub-stratification, there was no significant difference except in the case of A category schools. Hypothesis three which assumed that there is no significant difference in performance between the sexes, revealed that there is no such difference. As regards performance in the



two examination papers, it was discovered that in all categories of schools, students performed better in Paper I than in Paper II. Regarding performance in the Field Book, there emerged a significant difference among all categories of schools.

Probing into the probable factors that may have influenced such levels of performance, two factors have been identified namely, school factors and examination factors. Of the school factors, teacher-availability and teacher-qualification did not emerge as factors affecting performance. Physical amenities in the school was a major factor affecting student performance. Non-availability of text-books and non-completion of syllabuses may have affected performance in the majority of schools. Regarding the Field Book, the impact of parental socio-economic status was evident. Methods of instruction used in the schools were almost uniform with a clear bias towards the lecture-method and dictation of notes. Methods of evaluation used were also far from satisfactory and it may be accounted for the poor levels of performance.

Probing into the examination factors, several weak points such as the unwieldly nature of the syllabus, lack of content validity in the question papers, lack of cohesion in the schemes of marking were identified as some of the factors that may have affected performance.





On the whole, the findings of the study leaves no room for satisfaction because the level of performance of the majority of students was very low. This implicates that in the schools set up as well as in the examination scene, steps have to be taken to reduce differences in performance among schools and also raise the general standard of performance in Social Studies.

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