

Reflective journal

In the present as Sri Lankans, we have a free education system. The general education system provides 13 years of education program in three cycles. Children from age 5-10 attend primary school (Grade 1-5), from age 11-14 junior secondary school (Grade 6-9), from age 15-16 senior secondary (for General Certificate Examination/Ordinary Level- A/L (Grade 12-13_). In Sri Lanka, schooling is compulsory for children from 5 to 14 years of age. In the Ordinary Level exam syllabus, there are many compulsory subjects. Students should take 9 subjects for the GCE O/L examination and continue for the GCE A/L class one should at least pass 6 subjects (with the minimum, 3 C passes for compulsory subjects) including mother tongue, math, and science. In the A/L students are free to select one mainstream out of the subject stream. Such as Art, commerce, physical science, Biological science. However, once students select his/her field he or she has to study three main relevant subjects. And also, they have to study General English and General Knowledge. And the other thing is the university entrance is based on the results of the GCE A/L Examination. But it was a very stressful period for all the A/L students in Sri Lanka. Because students have to score a high Z score for entering the government university in Sri Lanka. Especially this situation happens for students who choose Biological science and physical science field for their A/L subjects. Because they have to be very stressed during their A/L periods. In Sri Lanka, if the student has to become a Doctor, he or she has to work hard, and sometimes he or she has to attend 3 times the A/L examination to score the relevant Z score. Therefore, when they are entering the university, they are getting too old. And also, they have to face many challenges during the A/L examination. This situation is the same for the physical science stream students also. This is a very bad situation for our Sri Lankan Education system.

But in the foreign countries, as I heard before, they are not facing this type of issue during their higher education system. In some countries, students complete their higher education at about 17 years old and they find a job. But in Sri Lanka students are doing the A/L examination when they become at least 22 Years old. And after that, if they go to the university, the degree program continues for at least 5 years in the Sri Lankan government university. Therefore, sometimes it is late to achieve the goals in the student's mind. Sometimes I feel that how much I am unlucky to be born in this type of country. I think that there is a fair reason to go to another country from this poor country. I felt that during my A/L examination period. And also, during the A/L period students have to face many financial difficulties. Because until now, we define Sri Lanka as a developing country. All the people are not in the same financial stages. Parents have to face many financial difficulties when their children are attending tuition classes during the A/L period. Some parents are applying for bank loans for paying their children. That is a very sad situation in our country.

But this situation must change. If this situation will not change, we have to say "Sri Lanka is a developing country" every day. A/L examination pattern must be changed. All the exams must have become easier. Otherwise, students have not been able to develop their life and they will not be able to achieve their goals at early ages. Today, in the world people are living at about

60 or 70 years during their life time. But the study is at least 25 years from that 60 years. It emphasizes that half of their lifetime they dedicate their time to study. And if the student wants to complete MSc or MBA degree for their higher education in Sri Lankan university, they have to study at least they are 30 years old. That is a very critical situation in Sri Lanka. That is why some people are going to foreign countries to complete their higher education.

At the present, most of the children are trying to attend private universities to complete their higher education instead of going to government universities in Sri Lanka. I also did this after doing my A/L examination. Because, private universities have not picketed, arguments among the students. If the student is having dedication, he or she can complete their degree in about 4 years. That is a good situation in Sri Lankan private universities. But students have to pay some amount of money to attend that university. If the student is having a stable financial situation in their family, they can join the private campus easily. But I think the government has to pay attention to that and they must introduce a student loan system for that. If so, students who have financial difficulties also can complete a degree at a private university in Sri Lanka.

In my point of view, the Sri Lankan education system must be changed soon. Otherwise, we have to study for half of our lifetime. And we have to get old inside a Sri Lankan university. Government must take action to change this situation. If so, at least the new generation could succeed in their life.