IMPACT OF LEVEL OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: A CASE STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO VAVUNIYA DISTRICT

P. Elangkumaran,[*,1] Y. Atchuthan,[1] and S. A. Nirojith[2]

[1]Advanced Technological Institute of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka
[2]University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka
* elangkumaran@sliate.ac.lk

Abstract

Numerous studies indicate the relationship between teacher quality and students' performances in national examinations. Since the number of students who have failed in English language at GCE Ordinary Level Examination is 58% in 2019, this study aims to establish a degree of teacher education level which impact in students' performance at national examinations. Five schools in Vavuniya district were taken in random sampling method for this study and the data of five years which were collected using interview, focus group discussion and questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS data analysis tool. While the teacher education level was treated as independent variable, the performance of students in English at GCE Ordinary Level Examination have been considered as dependent variable in this study. The findings reveal that the teacher education level significantly impacts in the performance of students in English language at the national examinations. One of the key findings is the average level of teacher qualification is below HND level in the district and coefficient of determination indicates that 22.4% of students' performance depend on teacher education level. Once the education level of the teachers is increased, rather, when the teachers are appointed with higher education level, the success of achievement increases in this region. Therefore, this study recommends that the level of education that should be considered during the appointments of English language teachers in the region.

Keywords: English language, teacher education level, Vavuniya district

1. Introduction

Numerous research reports analyze the relationship between teacher characteristics and the volume of students' learning. The success of students' achievements depends on various factors of teachers (Sandya B, Atchuthan Y, 2017). A case study which was administered in Kenya among the secondary schools indicate certain disparities in their educational system which significantly affects the academic performance of the students at the national examinations. Therefore, addressing these disparities has been seen as a major responsibility of any nation in providing quality education. Negligence of these disparities result in many negative consequences. (Atchuthan Y. Elangkumaran P, 2021) in their research titled "A study on the performance of students in English language at GCE Ordinary Level Examinations using the "Fishbone Diagram" list down certain teacher related causes for the

problems the students face in their successful academic performance in English language at GCE Ordinary Level Examination in Vavuniya district, Sri Lanka. Therefore, this study aims to establish a relationship between the education level of teachers and the performance of students in English language at GCE Ordinary Level Examination in Vavuniya.

According to the performance of school candidates at GCE Ordinary Level Examination, in 2019, 67.70% of the candidates were qualified for GCE Advanced Level in Vavuniya district. However, the average pass rate in English language in the same examination was only 42% in the district; 58% of the school candidates have failed in English language. The previous year's failure rate also was 64.37% in 2018, 68.12% in 2017, 77.73% in 2016 and 72.76% in 2015 which is higher than the year 2019. Therefore, this is the burning issue in this region and discussion made with the relevant authorities. It is observed that the teacher education level and the non-availability of teachers are influence performance of the above students.

2. Methodology

The aim of the study is to identify the effects of teacher education level and the students' performance in the GCE O/L examinations. The level of teacher education is considered as the independent variable and the students' performance in GCE O/L is considered as the dependent variable in this study. The population of this study is the Government schools of the Vavuniya district. Random sampling method was used to select the sample from the population. Five schools were selected to represent the population from the south and north zones of Vavuniya district. The study period covers five years from 2015 to 2019. The study measured the primary data and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the schools and secondary data were collected from the reports of the Department of Examination, Sri Lanka. The level of teacher education was categized and scored any Degree holder-04, Higher National Diploma holder-03, National Diploma holder-02 and trainee teacher from any catergory-01 respectively for the purpose of analysis. The students' performance in GCE O/L scored as follows.

Table 1. Performance scale to the grades of GCE O/L

Grade	Percentage of marks scored	Scale to the grade
A	Above 75	5
B	65-74	4
C	50-64	3
S	35-49	2
W	0-34	1

The average value of the five-point scale is 3 and it was calculated as follows $[(5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1)/5]$ The decision rule for the dependent variable. The "μ" indicate the mean value of the score

$0 < \mu > 1$ –very poor students' performance

$1 < \mu > 2$ – poor students' performance

$2 < \mu > 3$ – moderate level of students' performance

$3 < \mu > 4$ – good students' performance

$4 < \mu > 5$ – very good students' performance

The descriptive analysis such as average, median, mode and standard deviation and Pearson product movement were employed to analyses the collected data.

Table 2. Details of teachers in the sample schools

Year	Degree holder	HND holder	ND holder	Trainee teacher
2015	08	00	05	02
2016	06	00	06	02
2017	06	00	06	03
2018	06	04	03	03
2019	08	02	03	03

3.   Results and Discussions

The above table shows that nearly 45% of the teachers are Degree Holders which is the highest percentage in terms of education level of the teachers while 30% of the teachers have obtained National Diploma in English, the second highest percentage. Nearly 8% of the teachers' education level is Higher National Diploma in English while 17% of Trainee Teachers from college of Education have contributed for the performance of the students in English during their internship training period during those five years. It is notable that the emergence of HNDE holders as English language teachers has been absence till 2017 in the region and their arrival in English language teaching arena indicates a shift in education level of the English language teachers in the region.

Table 3. Percentage of pass rate in the GCE O/L examination in Vavuniya district

Year	A	B	C	S	w	Total number of students
2015	0.01	3.57	5.35	17.41	72.76	224
2016	0.00	1.17	7.42	13.67	77.73	256
2017	1.16	2.04	7.01	21.63	68.12	342
2018	0.00	1.30	9.80	24.50	64.37	306
2019	1.36	4.10	15.41	26.36	52.73	292

The above table indicates the highest fail rate, nearly 73%, reported in English Language subject at the GCE ordinary level examination from the region. This fail rate is comparatively larger than the other grades the students obtained in the examinations held from 2015 to 2019. Other notable aspect of this table is that majority of the students have obtained 'S' and 'C' grades among the students who passed the examination. The percentage of candidates who obtained 'A' and 'B' are a few. On the whole, though there are improvements in the tendency of pass rate over the year, the highest fail rate remains a threat to this region. The above table clearly shows that the average level of teacher

Table 4. The summary of descriptive statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	St. Deviation
Level of Teacher Education	2.60	2.93	2.8	.14036
Student performance in GCE/OL	1.33	1.75	1.488	.15738

education is 2.8 and the standard deviation is also 0.1403. This clearly indicates that the average level of teacher qualification is below HND level. Further, the mean of the students' performance is 1.48

with the deviation of 0. 1573. This indicates that the average performance is in poor performance stage of the students in Vavuniya district.

Table 5. The summary of correlation and coefficient of determination

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Correlation R-Value	Coefficient of Determination R-Square
Level of Teacher Education	Students Performance in GCE/OL	0.473	0.224

The table shows that there is a moderate positive correlation between level of teacher education and students' performance in English language at GCE O/L examination. It is stated that once we increase the level of teacher education the students' performance also will increase and vice versa. Further, coefficient of determination indicates that 22.4% the level of teacher education can influence on the students' performance in the sample performance.

4. Conclusion

The aim of the study is to explore the relationship between level of teacher education and students' performance in GCE ordinary level examination. The results rivals that the average level of teacher education of Vavuniya district is below HND level. Further, study concluded that there is a moderate positive correlation between level of teacher education and students' performance in Vavuniya district. In addition to that, 22.4% of students' performance is determined by the level of teacher education. Even though number of variables determine the students' performance in the general examination, the study considered level of teacher education only the independent variable for the purpose of the study. This study recommends that the level of education that should be considered during the appointments of English language teachers in the region for the increasing the pass rate in the general examination.

References

Sandya, B. M. & Atchuthan, Y. (2017). Ways to be adapted to increase the pass rate in English language in the G.C.E. O/L Examination in Vanni Schools. *Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Linguistics in Sri Lanka, ICLSL 2017. Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.* p145.

Atchuthan, Y. & Elangkumaran, P. (2021). A Study on the performance of students in English Language at G.C.E O/L Examinations Using the "Fishbone Diagram". *Proceeding of Rajarata University International Symposium on English language Teaching RUISELT-2021.Rajarata University of Sri Lanka.* p36

G.C.E (O.L) Examination. (2019). Performance of the candidates. the Research and Development Branch, National Evaluating Testing Service, Department of Examination in Sri Lanka.