

STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN GRADE FIVE AND GRADE SIX MATHEMATICS: A CASE STUDY IN TRINCOMALEE EDUCATION ZONE

D.M.M. Niroshani^{1*} and W.D. Chandrasena^{1,2}

¹*Postgraduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Science Education Unit, Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

**madhushadissanayake@gmail.com*

Mathematics consists of many abstract concepts. Hence, it is crucial to the development of high order thinking skills in all of us. The logical and structured nature in mathematics help one to understand social and real-life phenomena, and answer related questions in a precise manner. Thus, the aim of the present study was to explore students' performance and perceptions of students' and teachers' in mathematics of Grades five and six to make suggestions to enhance students' mathematics achievement. The study sample consisted of 1,520 students and 42 teachers from the Trincomalee Education Zone. Data were collected using documents, questionnaires, and interview schedules, and they analyzed on descriptives, correlations and content. Grade five provincial model papers have a statistically significant impact on the results of Grade five scholarship examination ($r = 0.858, p < 0.05$). Thus, the study has revealed valuable information on the strength of the Grade five model examination that is conducted by the Provincial Department of Education. It has also revealed that the performance of students at Grade five scholarship examination has a significant impact on the performance of students at Grade six mathematics ($r = 0.807, p < 0.05$). Moreover, the results revealed that the teachers possess adequate teaching experience and knowledge in teaching mathematics, though they frequently use traditional methodologies. Grade six students show an interest to learn the subject mathematics than the Grade five students. Thus, the students' interest in mathematics has to be maintained and enhanced through appropriate ways in order to facilitate meaningful learning for a better future.

Keywords: Grade five model examination, Grade five scholarship examination, Grade six mathematics performance, Students' and teachers' perception