

**STUDENT DROP OUT OF GOVERNMENT SECONDARY
SCHOOLS: BADULLA EDUCATIONAL ZONE, SRI LANKA**



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**STUDENT DROP OUT OF GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS:
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors towards student drop out of the government secondary schools in Badulla educational zone, Sri Lanka, as well as to compare significant differences on student drop out by not drop out and drop out students in relation to their family, student, school, and social factors. The sample size was 362 grade ten not drop out students and 31 drop out students. Interviews were held with ten drop out students. The data were collected by a descriptive questionnaire and analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and independent sample t- test.

The findings of the study revealed that family factors, student factors, and school factors were affected by student drop out with a high influenced on economic status, grade retention, and difficulty to access to schools. It was also found that there was a significant difference of perception level between not drop out and drop out students on factors affecting student drop.

It is recommended for educational authorities and parents to pay more attention on completing compulsory education of children between the age of 5-14 years. From the findings of the study it is recommended for educational authorities to provide provincial level assistance service to students who were faced with crucial economic problems. Also zonal educational officers need to conduct more counseling and psychosocial intervention programs for the parents.

**KEY WORDS: DROP OUT/ FAMILY FACTORS/ STUDENT FACTORS/ SCHOOL
FACTORS/ SOCIAL FACTORS/ SRI LANKA**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS



ADB	Asian Development Bank
BC	Before Christ
DIFD	Department for International Development
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESDFP	Educational sector wide development frameworks and program
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
SCT	Social Cognitive Theory
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Significance of the problem

Education is very important for an individual's success in life and provides pupils teaching skills that prepare them physically, mentally and socially for the world of work in later life. Education is generally seen as the foundation of society which brings economic wealth, social prosperity and political stability. Higher education helps in maintaining a healthy society which prepares health care professionals, educated health care consumers and maintaining healthy population. Education is major aspect of development of any modern country since if there is a deficit of educated people then country will stop its further progress. Education is the best investment for the people because well educated people have more opportunities to get a job which gives them satisfaction (Learning city, 2010).

All over the world, many students drop out from the school every day. UNICEF (2008) estimated that 101 million children of primary school age were not in school in 2007. Of these children, there were 53 million girls and 48 million boys. In America every school day around seven thousand students became drop outs. Annually that adds up to about 1.2 million students, who will not complete their education with the educational systems scheduled (Choices, 2010). Thus, the problem of student drop out (or low survival rate) is a global educational issue in the education system. Therefore, United Nation's Millennium Development goals (MDGs) also mentioned that achieving a universal primary education is more important factor and to reach sustainable development of a country and it is essential.

To identify the reasons for the students drop out is extremely difficult task. It is influenced by an array of factors relating to academic background, individual students and their socio economic status. Many researchers illustrated this complicated student drop out phenomenon in a variety of ways according to their perspectives and hypotheses. (Drummic, 1965) Thus Brazil reached almost universal enrollment in

primary education, grade repetition and school drop and push out were common. As a result, completion rates were substantially lower than enrollment, and many children abandoned school with relatively low levels of completed education. The problem was particularly acute in poorer neighborhoods. Lower chances of finding a good job and poverty were some of the consequences of low educational attainment. (Cardoso, 2006).

Asian Development Bank (1998) report mentioned that student drop out and student's repetitions were widely spreading in South Asian countries. Only 40-50%; of students enrolled in schools, complete primary school or six grades in expected time.

Even though, most of the countries in the world tried to reach the universal primary education, grade repetition and students drop out are common in Sri Lankan education system. As a result there was a gap between completion of the education and enrollment to the education. Some considerable amount of students leave from the school with relatively low levels of completing primary grades and the problem is crucial in places where having uneducated parents, extreme poverty neighborhoods.

Arunathilake (2008) cited that despite committing to provide ten to twelve years of education to all since 1990, only 93% of children in the 5- 14 years old age group were in school in Sri Lanka in the year 2000. Arunathilake found that moreover, when decomposed in to different socio-economic groups the educational participation rates were not equitable across the country. That study examined that the determinants of school non – participation of 5-14 year olds in Sri Lanka using household, community and school level information obtained from an island-wide. The study found that demand side problems such as poverty, direct and indirect cost of schooling and cultural factors as well as supply side shortcoming such as quality of education seem to affect schooling behavior of children. Policies facilitating compulsory education in the country at the present give prominence to awareness building, monitoring and improvements in education delivery. The results of the research showed that these effort need to be complemented by other supply side improvements and income transfer measures , especially for the poorest, to achieve universal school attendance.

One of provincial level study (Uva province) revealed that there were about 245 and 255 school drop outs in 2008 and 2009 respectively of Badulla educational zone in Sri Lanka (ESDFP report,2010). When comparing this level of dropouts with present student population and student enrollment of the zone, was significantly acceptable. The same survey discovered that most of the drop out students was reported from. Kandaketiya and Meegahakula divisions in Badulla zone.

Badulla district in Uva province of Sri Lanka is located in central up country. There are 25 administrative districts in Sri Lanka, and Badulla is the 22nd administrative district among them. The Uva province consists 8 educational zones such as, Mahiyanganaya, Passara, Bibila Monaragala Wellawaya Welimada, Bandarawela and Badulla. Badulla educational zone is the largest and complex zone in Uva province. It is consisted of five divisional educational offices, named Badulla, Hali-ela,Soranathota,Kandaketiya and Meegahakula.

Among these 5 divisions in Badulla zone (Uva province) students drop out problem is crucial in Kandaketiya and Meegahakula (cited in finance commission report,2009).According to that report there were 255 drop out students in Badulla educational zone and out of them 145 drop out students reported from these two divisions. According to the poverty index Sri Lanka Meegahakula was the 2nd poorest division and kandaketiya was the seventh divisional secretariat divisions. There were considerable amount of estate schools also under Badulla educational zone.

Most of the parents in Badulla educational zone living under the poverty line and income were very low and uncertain. Main income sources of those parents were farming and only little percentage of people were having permanent occupation. The trend of student dropout phenomenon in the Badulla educational zone was increasing but underlying reasons for the problem have not been thoroughly explored. There was no previous study to explore the factors affecting to the student drop out in Badulla educational zone. As a result, it would be worthwhile to investigate the factors behind the student dropout problem.

1.2 Research questions

1.2.1 What are the causes of the students drop out of government secondary schools in Badulla educational zone?

1.2.2 Are there significant differences on factors between drop out students and not drop out students?

1.3 Research objectives

1.3.1 To study factors for the students drop out of government secondary schools in the Badulla educational zone.

1.3.2 To compare the differences of factors between drop out students and not drop out students.

1.4 Research hypotheses

The researcher supposed that there is a significant problem on student drop out in Badulla educational zone and based on the perception of student's especially researcher decided the hypotheses for this study as follows:

1.4.1 There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their family factors.

1.4.2 There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their student factors.

1.4.3 There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their school factors.

1.4.4 There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their social factors.

1.5 Scope of the study

This study was focused on finding the factors affecting to the students drop out. Population of the study will be 3,802 grade 10 students of secondary schools in Badulla educational zone and the sample size was 362 grade 10 students of secondary schools in Kandaketiya and Meegahakula divisions. In addition to that 31 dropped out students were selected.

1.6 Research contributions

1.6.1 The result of study will contribute to the school principals and teachers in putting forwards suitable arrangements for reducing the number of school drop outs.

1.6.2 To provide useful information to the provincial level policy makers in driving possible remedial measures to reduce the number of school drop outs in Uva province.

1.6.3 To raise awareness of the parents on the arranging socio economic background to prevent the students drop outs.

1.7 Limitations of the study

1.7.1 Due to time constraint, the study was limited to Meegahakula and Kandaketiya divisions out of 5 divisions of Badulla educational zone where the problem was crucial.

1.7.2 The study was about students drop out, a sensitive issue especially in some areas, so it is necessary for the researcher to explain the purpose of the study and the details of the questionnaires to the respondent.

1.8 Definitions of terms.

Not drop out students are defined as number of students successfully completing (or graduating from) the last year of compulsory education.

Drop out students are defined as those students who leave the specified level in the educational system without obtaining a first qualification.

Economic status: It refers to the parent's monthly income level.

Education level of parents: It refers to parent's school education level.

Sibling has dropped out: It refers to student's brothers or sisters who left school before complete elementary education.

Attendance: This means the average number of school attending days which is less than 80%.

Achievement: This means the average marks students get their term tests which below 50%.

Grade retention: This refers to students who retained in the same class more than one year time period.

Lack of teachers: This means the fact that there are no enough qualified teachers according to approved number of carders for a school.

Difficult to access: This refers to the difficulties to reach the school: geographical difficulties, transport difficulties.

Traditional teaching methods: This refers to typical teaching methods which teacher centered and no innovation.

High risk peer group: This refers the colleagues associated who have mal disciplinary.

High risk social behavior: This refers to risky social trends: drug abuse, child labor, affect of mass media.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework followed the objectives of the study and developed by some relevant theories (Social cognitive theory, Self –efficacy theory, Human capital theory), concepts (Education For all, Universal primary education) and related researches. Variables of the study were developed based on previous research; risk factors and exemplary programs (Hammond, 2007).

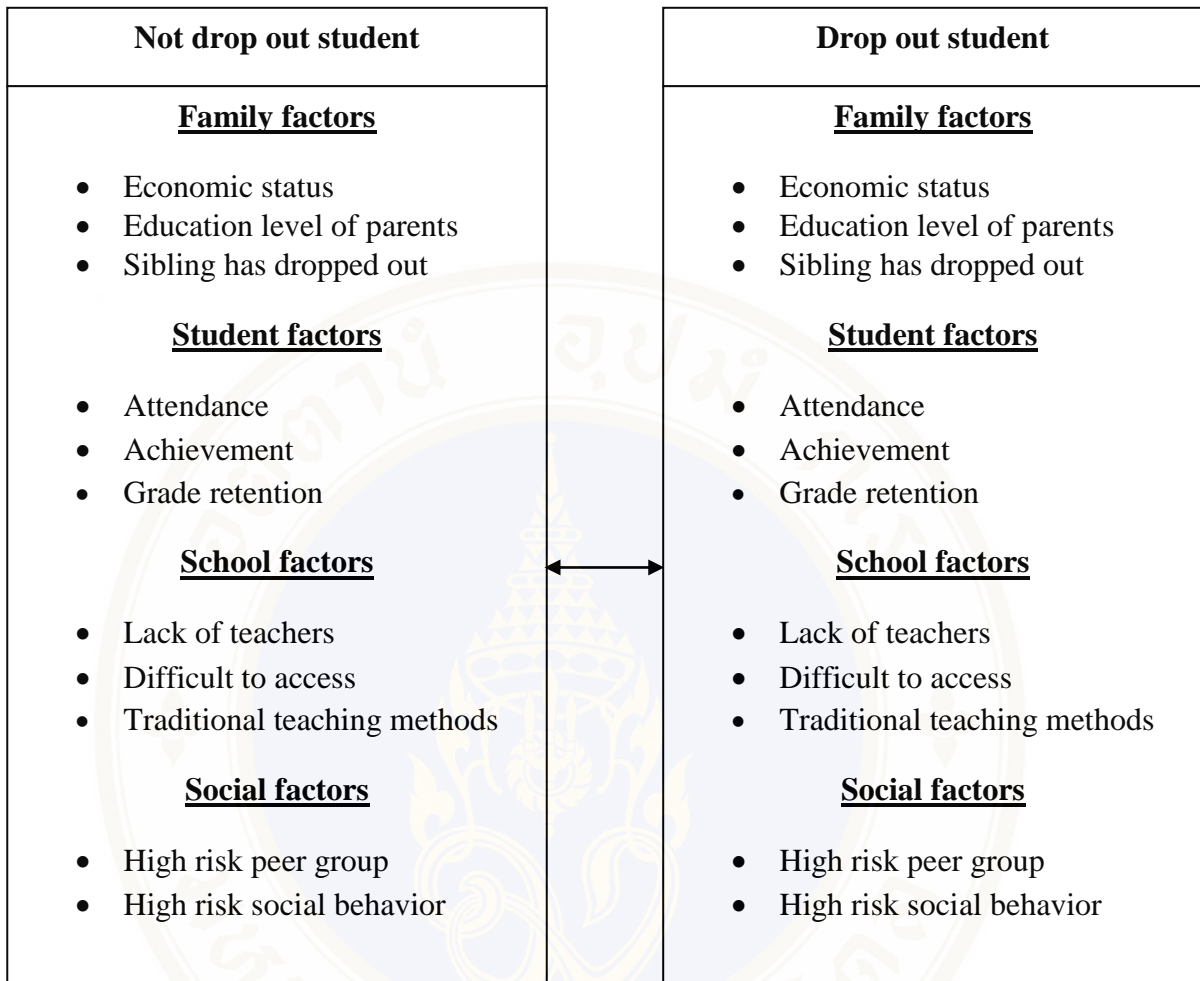


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the various contents, theories and related researches on student drop out, the researcher presents the chapter in the following details,

2.1 Background Study

2.1.1 Sri Lankan education system

2.1.2 Badulla educational zone

2.1.3 School dropout problem in Sri Lanka

2.2 Definitions and concepts of student drop out

2.2.1 Definitions of students drop out

2.2.2 Concepts of students drop out

2.3 Theories relating to student drop out

2.3.1 Social cognitive theory

2.3.2 Self -efficacy theory

2.3.3 Human capital theory

2.4 Factors associated with student drop out

2.4.1 Family factors

2.4.2 Student factors

2.4.3 School factors

2.4.4 Social factors

2.5 Related researches

2.5.1 Related Factors for School Student Dropout in Asian Countries

2.5.2 School Dropout Problem in South East Asia.

2.1 Background Study

2.1.1 Sri Lankan education system

Education in Sri Lanka has a long history dating back to 300 BC. Western education became ingrained into Sri Lankan society with the integration of Sri Lanka into the British Empire. Education in Sri Lanka falls under the control of both the Central Government and the Provincial Councils, with some responsibilities lying with the Central Government and the Provincial Council having autonomy for others. The Constitution of Sri Lanka provides for education as a fundamental right. Sri Lanka's population has a literacy rate of 92%, higher than that expected for a third world country and it has the highest literacy rate in South Asia and overall, one of the highest literacy rates in Asia.

The two main types of schools in Sri Lanka are governmental schools and non-governmental schools. Most of these schools provide primary and secondary education.

Governmental schools are categorized into two main types: national schools and provincial schools. The former are controlled by the Ministry of Education of the central government and follow the local curricula and languages of Sinhala, Tamil and in a few schools English, and the latter are controlled by provincial councils.

Non-governmental schools are also categorized into two types: private schools and international schools. Private schools are not directly controlled by the government but follow regulations and the local curricula set up by the Ministry of Education in the languages of Sinhala, Tamil and English.

International schools are schools which have English as the primary language of instruction and mostly follow a foreign curriculum, with a very few non-international schools opting to have both local and foreign curricula. A unique feature is that, unlike the private schools governed by regulations of the Ministry of Education, international and other non-international schools are listed under the Board of Investment (BOI) and not under the ministry of education. Colleges in Sri Lanka are not tertiary level educational institutes, but primary and secondary level schools.

All of the elite colleges were established in the colonial era while others have been established in later years.

Sri Lanka is divided into 9 provinces and 25 administrative districts. Each province is administrated by a directly elected provincial council. The table 2.1 shows province of the Sri Lanka.

Table 2.1 Provinces in Sri Lanka

Province	Capital	Area (square Km)	Population
1. Central	Kandy	5,674	2,423,966
2. Eastern	Trincomalee	9,996	1,460,939
3. North Central	Anuradhapura	10,714	1,104,664
4. Northern	Jaffna	8,884	1,311,776
5. North Western	Kurunegala	7,812	2,169,892
6. Sabaragamuwa	Rathnapura	4,902	1,801,331
7. Southern	Galle	5,559	2,278,271
8. Uva	Badulla	8,488	1,177,358
9. Western	Colombo	3,709	5,361,200

Source: Finance commission (2010)

The districts are further sub divided into divisional secretariats and these in turn to *Grama sewaka* division for the administrative convenience.

Economy of the country; from ancient times subsistence farming has traditionally been the main occupation of Sri Lankan people. With the British occupation in the 19th century, plantation crops were introduced. First coffee and later tea and rubber. The export oriented plantation economy was based on the tea rubber and later coconut. After independent in 1948, Sri Lanka adapted an open economic policy in 1977. The open economy policies transformed the traditional agro-based economy to one dependant on service and manufacture. The agricultural sector which contributed 44% to the GDP in 1963, had been halved by 1998 to 21% furthermore, by

2004 the contribution of the agriculture sector declined to 18% while the Services contributed 56% and the industrial sector 26%. Tourism has been significant contributor in the services though its growth had been erratic during periods of insecurity due to the conflict. Over the years the structural transformation in the economy has taken place. Thus Sri Lanka has recorded a steady growth during the last half of the century, with the approximate GDP growth rate of 5.5%. The per capita income has risen from 150 American dollars in 1960 to 1335 American dollar in 2006. But according to government estimates 22% of the population live below the poverty line. More urbanized western province has lower level of poverty than the predominantly rural province such as Uva, North Western, North Central and Sabaragamuwa.

2.1.2 Badulla educational zone

Badulla education zone is the largest and complex education zone in the Uva province. The zone consists of five divisional offices having 172 schools. There are 118 sinhala medium schools and 54 Tamil medium schools functioning in the zone. The school statistics of Badulla educational zone show as this table.

Table 2.2 School statistics of Badulla educational zone.

No	Division	School type				Total	Number of Teachers	Number of students
		1 AB	1 C	Type 2	Type 3			
1	Badulla	6	21	9	3	39	1,359	25,653
2	Hali ela	2	21	33	11	67	1,123	10,756
3	Soranathota	1	4	12	6	23	587	4,877
4	Kandaketiya	1	6	8	6	21	386	5,468
5	Meegahakula	1	3	5	13	22	310	4,451
Total		11	55	67	39	172	3,765	51,205

Source: ESDFP Annual Report (2010)

There are many difficult schools in Badulla education zone and most of them are situated in Meegahakiwla and Kandakatiya education divisions. In these divisions there are common problems can be seen as the lack of teachers, decreasing survival rate and low performance of student achievement.

2.1.3 School dropout problem in Sri Lanka

Increasing survival rates and reducing out of school children

The government has shown steady and strong progress in reducing the number of out-of-school children in the compulsory schooling age cycle 5-14 years (grades 1-9). The project target for 2006 - 2010 was to reduce the number of out-of-school children by 50,000. During this period, 63,744 out-of-school children had enrolled either in schools or in literacy centers, so that the proportion of the target achieved exceeded 127% (see Table 1). During the first quarter of the year 2010, 6,720 out-of-school children had been enrolled in formal and non-formal education centers/literacy centers. This number is expected to double towards the end of the year

The performance of all Provinces, despite having less than the required number of NFE project assistants is to be commended. The range of demand-side initiatives to promote school enrolment and attendance, such as free primary and secondary education, free textbooks for grades 1-11 and free school uniforms, has been maintained. During the schools visits, the mission noted that the provision of a mid-morning meal for children in grades 1 to 5 (students in primary classes) in a disadvantaged area has had a high impact on the school attendance of children especially from poor families (Finance commission, 2010).

The table 2.3 shows the reduction in the number of Out-of-School Children, by Province. But we can see the out of all provinces Uva province achieves the lowest percentage of reduction of drop out. That meant there was considerable amount of dropped out students in the Uva province

Table 2.3 Reduction of drop out student by province

Province	Number of out of school children reduce					Project Target By 2010	Percentage of target achieved
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010		
1.Western	2,452	1,552	2,066	2,598	1,469	8,472	120
2.Central	1,390	1,290	1,056	1,117	352	6,156	85
3.Southern	2,108	1,764	2,332	2,252	340	4,704	187
4.North Western	574	880	1,574	1,381	314	5,662	83
5.Northern	693	674	1,799	1,696	804	6,063	93
6.Eastern	693	3,966	4,778	4,521	1,864	6,064	261
7.North Central	432	285	1,132	615	588	2,988	102
8.Uva	1,336	861	1,137	938	208	5,034	82
9.Sabaragamuwa	1,556	1,560	1,059	900	781	4,857	121

Source: Finance commission (2010)

Once a cohort of children is enrolled in the school system, it is essential to monitor their progress until they complete the basic education cycle. To improve survival rates, especially in the junior secondary cycle, the Provincial educational authorities have been requested to implement mechanisms to monitor attendance regularly throughout the year at school level.

The school census data indicate that, at the beginning of the project, the estimated survival rate for the compulsory education cycle was 88%. The latest information captured through the school census data indicates that at the end of 2009, the survival rate had increased to 91%. Compared to girls, boys show a 4% less survival rate in completing the compulsory education cycle. While all provinces show high

performance exceeding provincial targets, the worst performance is seen in the Northern Province followed by the Eastern Province. The survival rates in the Eastern and Northern Provinces are respectively 6% and 12% lower than the national average. Compared to 2008 survival rates, a sudden set-back with 9% reduction in the overall survival rates is seen in the Northern Province caused by the conflicts during the first half of 2009. Due to non-availability of data, when computing the survival rates for the Northern Province, data from the 2008 school census have been used for the Killinochchi and Mulativu districts. Thus, the actual reduction in survival rates in the Northern Province could be much higher than the reported numbers. This needs to be investigated the 2010 school survey. (Finance commission, 2010).

According to the below table (Table 2.4: Net survival rates in the compulsory education cycle, by province) the third lowest survival rate occur in Uva province. If survival rate is 89.3 % the rate of drop out will be 10.7%. That means there are considerable number of students dropping out every year. So in especially we have to pay more attention on student drop out problem in Uva province.

Table 2.4 Net survival rate in the compulsory education cycle, by province

Province	Net survival rates through grade 1-19				
	Total 2008	Male 2009	Female 2009	Total 2009	Change 2008- 2009
1. Western	93.4	92.3	95.9	94.1	+ 0.7
2. Central	93.6	91.0	95.5	93.2	- 0.4
3. Southern	93.7	91.7	96.5	94.0	+0.3
4. North Western	91.9	90.2	93.1	91.9	0
5. Northern	87.9	76.6	81.8	79.2	- 8.7
6. Eastern	82.9	82.7	86.0	84.3	+1.4
7. North Central	93.6	92.2	97.5	94.7	+1.1
8. Uva	90.7	86.6	92.6	89.9	- 1.4
9. Sabaragamuwa	91.3	87.2	92.6	89.9	- 0.6

Source: Finance commission (2010)

2.2 Definitions and Concepts of students drop out

2.2.1 Definitions of students drop out

No universally accepted definition of dropout exists. Dropouts are typically defined as students who leave school (not including transfers) before they graduate from secondary school with a regular achievements. Some students leave school before entering ninth grade, but most the students drop out during their secondary school (Shannon, 2003). Under the federal definition, if a student moves out of the district and no transcript is requested, the student has an “unknown” status and is considered a dropout. Some mistakenly consider students who do not graduate on time (within the traditional four - year period) as dropouts, even though they may still be in school beyond the typical graduation period. (Shannon, 2003). Historically, leaving school at some point before high school graduation was the norm.

A drop out has been defined as - Students who prior to his graduation, has withdrawn from the school system (Drummic, 1965).In this study researcher investigate about variables of dropped out students such as school factors, family factors, and individual factors.

The definition of "dropout" varies among school districts, and the mobility of students makes counting dropouts accurately nearly impossible. It is, however, important for all dropout figures to be based on the same set of criteria so an accurate national dropout rate can be determined, and comparisons can be made among different districts in the country. These comparisons allow for the identification of effective dropout programs that can be replicated elsewhere. The following core concept can be used by all school districts to define a dropout: A pupil who leaves school, for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without transferring to another school or institution (Carol, 1987).

Drop outs are defined as those students who leave the specified level in the educational system without obtaining a first qualification. A number of drop out students are increasing. Student drop out has a serious negative impact on the societies. Early dropout from the education system leading into low qualification and most often to unemployment and other social problem is the causes for an increasing education divide in many countries (UNICEF, 2008).

There is a definition on students drop out from UNESCO (2009) dropping out or early school leaving is understood as leaving school education without completing the started cycle or program.

Morrow's (1987) definition on students drop out was a drop out is any student previously enrolled in a school, who is no longer actively enrolled as indicated by 15 days of consecutive unexcused absences, who has not satisfied local standards for graduation, and for whom a formal request has been received signifying enrollment in another state licensed educational institutions. A student death is not tallied as a dropout.

There was an another kind of drop out that is called Hidden dropouts that mean children who attend school regularly, but are neglected in the classroom and then fail (Stephanie, 2008).

According to above definitions student drop out phenomenon defined in many ways, but the core idea is very similar. So any student quitting school before him or her graduates we can refer as student drop out.

2.2.2 Concepts of students drop out

School dropout phenomenon is a crucial problem in education all around the world. Thus most of the countries and organizations related to education, formulate number of concepts and policies to minimize this problem. There were some concepts and policies related to the student drop out problem which are practice in the world and also in Sri Lanka.

2.2.2.1 Free and compulsory education act

The education ordinance no 31 of 1939 provided for enabling legislation to enforce the compulsory attendance of the 5-14 age groups. The 26 of 1947 (amending the 1939 Ordinance) provided for the extension of compulsory education to 16 years. Surprisingly, however compulsory education was not a priority issue for policy and administrators for several decades and no effort were made to introduce compulsory education regulation until the 1990s. The report of the national education commission (1992) drew attention to the need for such legislation and proposed in 1996 regulations to enforce the compulsory school attendance of the 5-14

age group. Regulations made in furtherance of the National Policy of the State to provide Education for all children were enforced by Gazette notification 1003/5 of 25 November 1997 and came into operation on 1st January 1998.

Under these regulations for enforcing compulsory attendance of the 5-14 age groups the minister was to appoint two sets of committees to implement them.

- 1) School attendance committees in Grama Niladhari Units (SAC)
- 2) School attendance monitoring committees in each Divisional Secretariat Division (SAMC)

Comprising representatives of education officials, officials of other relevant line Ministries, Principals and School Development Societies.

2.2.2.2 Education for All (EFA)

The Education for All movement took off at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990. Since then, governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies and the media have taken up the cause of providing basic education for all children, youth and adults all around the world.

From Jomtien to Dakar: Ten Years of Education for All

In 1990, representatives from 155 countries and 150 organizations pledged to provide education for all by the year 2000 at the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand). Their intention was that children, youth and adults would "benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs". The World Declaration on Education for All thus defined a bold new direction in education. The Declaration rang the death-knell of rigid, prescriptive education systems and ushered in an era where flexibility could thrive. From now on, education would be tailor-made, adapted to the needs, culture and circumstances of learners. The decision to review progress a decade later was taken in Jomtien.

Two important milestones intervened in 1996. The Mid-Decade Conference held in Amman Jordan, noted that considerable progress had been made. Its weak reporting underlined the need for an in-depth assessment. The report to

UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for The Twenty-first Century promoted a holistic view of education consisting of four "pillars": learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. The text was widely adopted.

The Education for All decade culminated at the World Education Forum (26-28 April 2000, Dakar, Senegal) which adopted the Dakar Framework for Action Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments. This document commits governments to achieving quality basic education for all by 2015, with particular emphasis on girls' schooling and a pledge from donor countries and institutions that "no country seriously committed to basic education will be thwarted in the achievement of this goal by lack of resources.

The Dakar Framework for Action draws on the results of the global EFA 2000 Assessment involving more than 180 countries. Launched in 1998, this global exercise was the most comprehensive study ever made of basic education. It was carried out by national teams assisted by ten regional advisory groups, comprising UN agencies the World Bank, bilateral donor agencies, development banks and inter-governmental organizations.

Preliminary results were debated at five regional preparatory conferences and a special gathering of the nine high-population countries (E9) between December 1999 and February 2000 (in Johannesburg, South Africa; Bangkok, Thailand; Cairo, Egypt; Recife, Brazil; Warsaw, Poland; and Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic).

National assessments were complemented by fourteen thematic studies on educational issues of global concern, surveys on learning achievement and the conditions of teaching and learning, as well as twenty case-studies.

The assessment revealed a mixed scorecard. The number of children in school soared (from 599 million in 1990 to 681 million in 1998) and many countries were approaching full primary school enrolment for the first time. On the other hand, some 113 million children were out of school, discrimination against girls was widespread and nearly a billion adults – mostly women – were illiterate. The lack of qualified teachers and learning materials was the reality for too many schools.

While the donor community was criticized for dwindling aid commitment, some countries such as Bangladesh, Brazil and Egypt were earmarking close to 6 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) for education. For some African countries, education absorbs up to a third of the national budget, although several of them spend as much on debt repayment as on health and basic education combined.

Disparities in quality were also widespread. Over-conservative systems were out of touch with young people's needs, in sharp contrast with the plethora of initiatives that successfully adapted learning to local needs or reached out to marginalized populations. New media and virtual networks had also started to shake the dust off education systems.

2.2.2.3 Education for all policy in Sri Lanka

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) clearly grant the right for all children to receive education without discrimination on any grounds in their general assembly. The UN's Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 1993 mentions that the state should recognize the principle of equal educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities in integrated settings. The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the Salamanca conference (UNESCO, 1994). The conference's statement proclaimed that those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools as a means to combat discriminatory attitudes and build an inclusive society. The urgency of reaching marginalized groups was re-stated in the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000. These global declarations have influenced Sri Lanka's government policies, plans and goals with regard to education of children with disabilities. In 1961, the National Education Commission made free education compulsory for all children aged 6-14 years. It recommended that legislation be enacted to compel the registration of all children with disabilities in order to obtain reliable figures. It also suggested the setting up of a special school for every 150 sensory and physically handicapped and 100 mentally handicapped children. The commission influenced the movement towards adopting an integrative approach to special education by stating that 'wherever possible, handicapped pupils should be accommodated in normal schools'. This became government policy.

2.2.2.4 Millennium educational goals in Sri Lanka (MGDs)

Achieving universal primary education

Emphasized by present president of Sri Lanka “As leaders we have a duty therefore in particular...to the children of the world, to whom the future belongs.” Millennium Declaration “...will not deprive our children of their right to free education.” Mahinda Chintana Since 1943, education in Sri Lanka has been considered a basic right. Universal primary education means that every girl and boy should be enrolled and completes primary school education in full. The net enrolment ratio in primary education was 97% in 2000 - 2001, which is much higher than the south Asian regional average. The literacy rate of 15 - 24 year olds has increased. Sri Lanka needs to ensure the following in order to achieve Universal Primary Education. Every household must ensure that their children attend and complete primary school. Poor households must be able to afford to send their children to primary school. Under goal 2, targets 3 ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, girls and boys alike, will be able to complete a full primary schooling.

Primary school enrollment rates are almost at target but there was still a small proportion of children that has been denied the right of education. These children live under extreme poverty; were street children, children living in public intuitions (orphanage) and in rural and plantation areas, children displaced by the ethnic conflict and belonging to marginalized groups. These children should be brought into the education system in order for Sri Lanka to achieve target 3.

The following indicators were used to measure progress towards the target:

The Key Indicators are:

- Net enrolment rate in primary school
- Proportion of students in Grade 1 who reach Grade 5
- Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds

Sri Lanka is the best performer in South Asia in primary school indicators and is on track towards achieving universal primary education, with a net enrolment ratio in primary education in 2003 of 98.35%. Primary, secondary and tertiary education is free in Sri Lanka and, since 1997, education for the 5-14 year age group has been mandatory and facilitated through an island wide network of 10,475 primary and secondary schools. However Sri Lanka needs to ensure that policies promoting

the participation of poor, rural, street and other disadvantaged children are in place. In 2002, 97.6% of the children enrolled at primary school reached Grade 5 and youth literacy rates reached 95.6%. If available data are disaggregated by gender, more boys than girls appear to drop out after completing junior secondary education. Drop-out rates are prevalent in low-income urban neighborhoods, the plantation sector, remote deprived villages and the conflict areas of the North and East.

Government Strategies and Progress

Investment in education is the nucleus of government policies to increase national income, reduce poverty and promote human development. Right now several strategies are being followed. Incentives include scholarships, mid-day meals, free textbooks, fabric for school uniforms and easy access to schools. Deserving but poor students are also provided with financial support up to university level.

Public funding favour areas of low learning levels, with the North and East receiving the highest expenditure per student. Policy initiatives include modernizing the primary school curriculum, focusing on language, mathematics, religion and environmental studies and upgrading teacher training courses. Educational outcomes are evaluated by two research centers: the National Education and Evaluation Centre and the National Institute of Education.

The National Action Plan for Children has been formulated for the period 2004 to 2008, to ensure universal access to services that are necessary for the full development of children. These services range from early childhood care to secondary education, to education services in conflict-affected areas. These plans also include programmes to assist marginalized children within the ambit of the education system.

The challenges facing Sri Lanka in reaching primary education

- Shortage of qualified teachers and disparities in teacher deployment, which has caused a lack of teachers in schools in disadvantaged areas
- Incompetence of teachers and non-adaptation of school curricula to local needs

- Serious deficiencies in the quality and efficiency of education are masked by Sri Lanka's impressive education indicators
- Disparities in educational standards between rural and urban children , with only 37% of rural children mastering local language skills and a mere 38% having numeracy skills
- Extreme poverty causes children to drop-out and seek employment to support families
- Insufficient government funding to schools in poor areas to improve staffing and facilities
- Enforcement of mandatory primary education for all
- Improving the quality of education
- Marginalized children out of education system
- Lack of adequate education infrastructures & services for children in the conflict areas (North and East).

Source: MDGs Country Report 2005 – Sri Lanka

2.3 Theories relating to student drop out

2.3.1 Social cognitive theory (SCT)

Many theories had been proposed over the years to explain the developmental changes that people undergo over the course of their lives. These theories differ in the conceptions of human nature they adopt and in what they regard to be the basic causes and mechanisms of human motivation and behavior. The present chapter analyzes human development from the perspective of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). Since development is a life- long process (Baltes & Reese, 1984), the analysis was concerned with changes in the psychosocial functioning of adults as well as with those occurring in childhood. Development was not a monolithic process. Human capabilities vary in their psychobiologic origins and in the experiential conditions needed to enhance and sustain them. Human development, therefore, encompasses many different types and patterns of changes. Diversity in social practices produces substantial individual differences in the capabilities that were

cultivated and those that remain underdeveloped.

Human behavior had often been explained in terms of one-sided determinism. In such modes of unidirectional causation, behavior was depicted as being shaped and controlled either by environmental influences or by internal dispositions. Social cognitive theory favors a model of causation involving triadic reciprocal determinism. In this model of reciprocal causation, behavior, cognition and other personal factors, and environmental influences all operate as interacting determinants that influence each other bidirectional. Reciprocal causation does not mean that the different sources of influence are of equal strength. Some may be stronger than others. Nor do the reciprocal influences all occur simultaneously. It took time for a causal factor to exert its influence and activate reciprocal influences. Consider briefly the major interactional links between the different subsystems of influence. Reciprocal causation reflects the interaction between thought, affect and action. Expectations, beliefs, self- perceptions, goals and intentions give shape and direction to behavior. What people think, believe, and feel, affects how they behave (Bandura, 1986; Bower, 1975; Neisser, 1976). The natural and extrinsic effects of their actions, in turn, partly determine their thought patterns and emotional reactions. The personal factor also encompasses the biological properties of the organism. Physical structure and sensory and neural systems affect behavior and impose constraints on capabilities. Sensory systems and brain structures are, in turn, modifiable by behavioral experiences (Greenough, Black, & Wallace, 1987).

Reciprocal causation was concerned with the interactive relation between personal characteristics and environmental influences. Human expectations, beliefs, emotional bents and cognitive competencies were developed and modified by social influences that convey information and activate emotional reactions through modeling, instruction and social persuasion (Bandura, 1986). People also evoke different reactions from their social environment by their physical characteristics, such as their age, size, race, sex, and physical attractiveness, quite apart from what they say and do (Lerner, 1982). People similarly activate different social reactions depending on their socially conferred roles and status. For example, children who have a reputation as tough aggressors will elicit different reactions from their peers than those reputed to be unassertive. Thus, by their social status and observable characteristics people can

affect their social environment before they say or do anything. The social reactions so elicited affect the recipients' conceptions of themselves and others in ways that either strengthen or alter the environmental bias (Snyder, 1981). Reciprocal causation in the triadic system represents the two-way influence between behavior and the environment. In the transactions of everyday life, behavior alters environmental conditions and was, in turn, altered by the very conditions it creates. The environment was not a fixed entity that inevitably impinges upon individuals. When mobility was constrained, some aspects of the physical and social environment may encroach on individuals whether they like it or not. But most aspects of the environment do not operate as an influence until they were activated by appropriate behavior. Lecturers do not influence students unless they attend their classes, hot stove tops do not burn unless they were touched, and parents usually do not praise their children unless they do something praiseworthy. The aspect of the potential environment that becomes the actual environment for given individuals thus depends on how they behave. Because of the bi directionality of influence between behavior and environmental circumstances, people were both products and producers of their environment. They affect the nature of their experienced environment through selection and creation of situations. People tend to select activities and associates from the vast range of possibilities in terms of their acquired preferences and competencies (Bandura & Walters, 1959; Bullock & Merrill, 1980; Emmons & Diener, 1986). Through their actions, people create as well as select environments. Aggressive persons produce hostile environments wherever they go, whereas those who act in a more friendly manner generate an amiable social milieu (Raush, 1965). Thus, behavior determines which of the many potential environmental influences will come into play and what forms they will take. Environmental influences, in turn, partly determine which forms of behavior are developed and activated. The growing recognition of reciprocal causation has altered the way in which socialization is viewed. One-sided developmental analyses of how parents influence their children have given way to transactional analyses of how parents and children influence each other (Bell & Harper, 1977; Cairns, 1979; Lewis & Rosenblum, 1974).

The social Cognitive Theory explores the “Social Environment or external Factor “that influences personal behavior. But “Self efficacy “illustrates the personal

factor that drives people to do a given task. These two factors are relevant in terms of reciprocal interaction.

2.3.2 Self- efficacy theory

Self efficacy was related to all thoughts that affect human functioning, and stand at the very core of the social cognitive theory. Self efficacy was involved of their in people's judgments of their capabilities to perform activities rather than personal traits. E.g. one's physical characteristics or psychological traits. Self efficacy beliefs provide the foundation of human motivation, well being and personal accomplishment. Efficacy believed multi dimensional rather than just a reflection on a single disposition, and they were also linked to different domains of functioning. Thus efficacy beliefs for one subject of study may differ from those of other subjects. In terms of academic functioning the self efficacy level refers to variations across different levels of tasks. Strength of perceived efficacy was measured by the degree of certainty with which one can perform a given task.

According to Barry J. Zimmerman (Cited in Bandura, 1986) the development of self efficacy serves as a major personal drive in studying for accomplishment tasks and to enable youth to reach the goal of self education. Schools must foster student's personal development of self beliefs, and self regularity capabilities to educate themselves throughout their lives. Self efficacy beliefs influence persistence and choices of activities. Thus students who have a high sense of self efficacy to accomplish an educational task will participate more readily, work harder and persist longer when encountering difficulties than those who doubt their capabilities (Bandura, 1986) However to understand the phenomenon of school dropouts, we have to take into account all related factors. Besides identifying and explaining the causes of their dropping out is extremely difficult to do due to both internal (student) and external (social context) factors. Many empirical researchers explained students' school dropout phenomenon through different social science perspectives such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, and economics (Rumberger, 2001).

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive theory regarding personal/internal factors and social environment/external factors were therefore relevant to the phenomenon of the Badulla educational zones student's dropouts.

2.3.3 Human capital theory

Education was an economic good because it was not easily obtainable and thus needs to be apportioned. Economists regard education as both consumer and capital good because it offers utility to a consumer and also serves as an input into the production of other goods and services. As a capital good, education can be used to develop the human resources necessary for economic and social transformation. The focus on education as a capital good relates to the concept of human capital, which emphasizes that the development of skills was an important factor in production activities. It was widely accepted that education creates improved citizens and helps to upgrade the general standard of living in a society. Therefore, positive social change was likely to be associated with the production of qualitative Citizenry. This increased faith in education as an agent of change in many developing countries, including Sri Lanka, led to a heavy investment in it. The pressure for higher education in many developing countries had undoubtedly been helped by public perception of financial reward from pursuing such education. Generally, this gone with the belief those expanding educations promote economic growth.

However, the paradox accompanying this belief was that, despite the huge investment on Education, there were problem with completing compulsory education in Sri Lanka.

Concept of Human Capital Theory

The economic prosperity and functioning of a nation depend on its physical and human capital stock. Whereas the former had traditionally been the focus of economic research, factors affecting the enhancement of human skills and talent were increasingly figuring in the research of social and behavioural sciences. In general terms, human capital represents the investment people make in themselves that enhance their economic productivity.

The theoretical framework most responsible for the wholesome adoption of education and development policies had come to be known as human capital theory. Based upon the work of Schultz (1971), Sakamota and Powers (1995), Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1997), human capital theory rests on the assumption that formal education was highly instrumental and even necessary to improve the production capacity of a population. In short, the human capital theorists argue that an educated population was a productive population.

Human capital theory emphasizes how education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of cognitive stock of economically productive human capability which is a product of innate abilities and investment in human beings. The provision of formal education is seen as a productive investment in human capital, which the proponents of the theory have considered as equally or even more equally worthwhile than that of physical capital.

According to Babalola (2003), the rationality behind investment in human capital was based on three arguments:

- i. That the new generation must be given the appropriate parts of the knowledge which had already been accumulated by previous generations;
- ii. That new generation should be taught how existing knowledge should be used to develop new products, to introduce new processes and production methods and social services; and
- iii. That people must be encouraged to develop entirely new ideas, products, processes and methods through creative approaches.

According to Fagerlind and Saha (1997) human capital theory provides a basic justification for large public expenditure on education both in developing and developed nations. The theory was consistent with the ideologies of democracy and liberal progression found in most Western societies. Its appeal was based upon the presumed economic return of investment in education both at the macro and micro levels. Efforts to promote investment in human capital were seen to result in rapid economic growth for society. For individuals, such investment was seen to provide returns in the form of individual economic success and achievement. Most economists agree that it was human resources of neither nation, not it was capital nor its material

resources that ultimately determine the character and pace of it was economic and social development (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall ,1997).

Human resources constitute the ultimate basis of wealth of nations. Capital and natural resources were passive factors of production, human beings were the active agencies who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organization, and carry forward national development.

Application of Human Capital Theory to Educational System

Babalola (2003) asserts that the contribution of education to economic growth and development occurs through its ability to increase the productivity of an existing labour force in various ways. However, economic evaluation of educational investment projects should take into account certain criteria according to Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1997) which were:

- Direct economic returns to investment, in terms of the balance between the opportunity costs of resources and the expected future benefits;
- Indirect economic returns, in terms of external benefits affecting other members of society; Human Capital Theory: Implications for Educational Development
- The private demand for education and other factors determining individual demand for education;
- The geographical and social distribution of educational opportunities; and,
- The distribution of financial benefits and burdens of education.

Education plays a great and significant role in the economy of a nation, thus educational expenditures were found to constitute a form of investment. This augments individual's human capital and leads to greater output for society and enhanced earnings for the individual worker. It increases their chances of employment in the labour market, and allows them to reap pecuniary and non-pecuniary returns and gives them opportunities for job mobility. Education was a source of economic growth and development only if it was anti-traditional to the extent that it liberates, stimulates and informs the individual and teaches him how and why to make demands upon him. Accordingly, a proper educational strategy would manifest itself in four major

development-producing capacities. According to Bronchi (2003) the first was the development of a general trend favorable to economic progress.

The reference was to social mobility, a general increase in literacy necessary for improved communication. The second capacity emphasizes the development of complementary resources for factors which are relatively plenty and substitutes for relatively scarce factors. That was, educated people would be more adaptable to varying production needs. The third capacity underscores the durability of educational investment. He argued that education has greater durability than most forms of non-human reproductive capital, which implies that a given investment in education tends to be more productive, other things being equal, than some outlay on non-human capital. Finally, education was an alternative to consumption, for it transferred to round-about production the resources that would otherwise be consumed now.

2.4 Factors associated with student drop out

2.4.1 Family factors

There was no particular reason why students drop out of school. Many factors are connected with dropping out. Risk factors begin to add up even before students enroll in school. They include: the low educational level of parent, the broken family structure, the establish pattern of sibling school failure and the lack of pre-school experiences (Gassama, 2006). These factors created a home environment which negatively affects on the value of education. Additionally at risk factors also play into the student academic success with the passing of the time thereby polarizing the students drop out.

Certain family circumstances were associated with higher risk of dropping out. Children in single parent or impoverished homes, whose families are mobile, who experience trauma (e.g. divorce, abuse, illness, unemployment), or have a family history of dropouts have higher risk for dropping out. Children may contribute to the family income or may assist some aged family members (Gassama, 2006).

Mobility also added to students' risk of dropping out: they experience serious disorientation after continuous moving. Gender roles as reinforced by family also can contribute to school dropout even though girls are potential high achievers. Here is a dramatic generational conflict within the family since the mother demand the daughter be at home and the daughter aims at something more, via education (UNICEF, 2009).

Students drop out of school as a result of a multitude school factors which included family backgrounds and personal factors (Gassama, 2006) When student experience school failure they become frustrated with the lack of achievement and finally they will be dropped out from the school.

Factor for the student drop out are more complex and related with various reasons. There were five major factors for the school drops out (Bridgeland, 2006) they are as follows:

- 1) Classes were not interesting
- 2) Missed too many days and could not catch up
- 3) Spent time with people who were not interested in school
- 4) Had too much freedom and not enough rules in my life
- 5) Was failing in school

In Taiwan, Tang, 2009 conducted a survey including different levels of individual, family, and school, which explains students' dropout. The findings of the study indicated that single-parent family, lower learning achievement, and lower stress from academic credits influenced the occurrence of dropout behavior. Importantly, the results also showed that there were effects of family factor on the relationship between association with deviant peer and dropout.

2.4.1.1 Economic status of family

In China some students from poor families had to quit school for not having enough money for tuition fees. Fortunately, care and compassion from the society gave them a helping hand. This year, some freshmen from poor families in eastern China's Xuzhou entered colleges with the help of the society and favorable policies. The local government says it has fulfilled its commitment of letting no

college student drop out of school due to poverty cited in www.english.cri.cn web page.

Also South African researcher (Macgregor, 2007) found that shocking 40% of South African students drop-out of schools in their early stages, a major study has found. Financial difficulties among the country's large pool of poor black students are, unsurprisingly, largely to blame first generation students from low-income, less educated families are the most likely to drop out.

2.4.1.2 Educational level of parents

If the parents are uneducated there may be little encouragement to do their home work or to stay in school and they don't keep trust on higher education.

2.4.1.3 Siblings has dropped out

Educational level of household members are particularly influential in determining whether and how long children greater. Low education of other family members is affected to the students drop out. (DFID report, 2009)

2.4.2 Student factors

For the student drop out phenomenon other than family factors, social factors, school factors, student factors also have great influence. (Gonzalaz, 2010) Students drop out because of the personal or individual factors such as problems at home, early pregnancy etc. Some students need to work to support their family economically and peer group pressure affected too. According to Roderick (1993), the most common reasons for dropping out, young men and women, included not liking school and poor school performance. Males appeared to be more likely than females to drop out of school because of conflicts with school personnel, expulsion/suspensions, and/or financial/home responsibilities. Females were more frequently cite pregnancy (for obvious reasons) and marriage than their male counterparts.

Students drop out of school for a variety of reasons. The most common reason is probably due to lack of motivation on the student's part. They do not see the benefits of learning and staying in school. They will most likely regret their decision once they are older (Pisky, 2007).

A large portion of dropouts happen before the tenth grade (Schwartz, 2009). The main causes of student dropouts are personal factors, home and school stability, school experiences, social behavior, and rebellion. Personal problems affecting students seem to be the main cause for students to drop out of high school.

UNICEF, (2009) demonstrated a high correlation between dropping out and certain personal characteristics, including both social and academic factors. Risk of dropping out is linked to negative self-perceptions or low self-esteem, low aspirations. Students who leave school often exhibit poor academic achievement and poor school attendance. Many students who drop out express negative attitudes about school. They consider the coursework irrelevant, don't like school, don't get along with teachers or other students, don't feel safe and/or don't feel they fit in. In Sri Lanka discovered lot of factors for the students drop out such as extreme poverty, child labor, grade repetition, low achievement, lack teacher, more distance (difficult to access) to school.

2.4.2.1 Attendance

Poor attendance: Teens who struggle in school are also absent a lot, and along with academic failure, absenteeism is an important future predictor for dropping out. As with the previous example, students who are absent for twenty percent of their eighth grade year (one day per week) are also highly likely to drop out in high school (Convissor, 2006). Irregular attendance and temporary withdrawals can be both are precursor to dropping out. These can be caused by a range of factors including: child ill health, ill health of family members, and distance to school etc. (DFID report, 2009).

2.4.2.2 Achievement

The strongest educational predictor of dropping out was poor academic achievement (Woods, 1995). Also, students who repeat grades or who were over age for their grade were more likely to drop out. Wehlage and Rutter (1986) found that students who dropped out see all schooling in relation to their experiences in high school, and in terms of their lack of academic success and disciplinary problems, and these students often decide to terminate this negative situation.

There is evidence that children with low achievement are more likely than those with higher achievement to drop out. Low achievement is related with other factors such as absenteeism, repetition, schooling quality, household context and demand on time (DFID report, 2009).

2.4.2.3 Grade retention

Melissa (1995) emphasized that grade retention had more influence on students drop out. There was indeed a strong association between grade retention and student drop out. Literature on grade retention suggests three important aspects of the retention experience that combine to place students at risk of school failure and early school leaving.

Being held back (retention), linked to academic difficulty, students who are held back and who are older than the kids in their grade also tend to drop out (Convissor, 2006).

2.4.3 School factors

One more point thing was school curriculum and resources for the students. Because of the curriculum of the school is not interesting, some students decide not to continue their study in college. Sometimes, the objects that the school included in the curriculum were too much to accept. They found it hard to understand and spent long time on studying these subjects. Some subjects were not related to their course, so they are not interested in it. Additionally, the resources that the school used was not updated. They are in a version, and the information in the books is also old. That's why students feel bored of studying something that is not updated. For example, some books in the library in the University of South-East Asia are very old, and the information in the books was not up to date and useful, so some students have stopped. Likewise, family and social pressure was the chief that led students to dropout school it was cited in web page, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/24124405>.

Educational institutions contributed significantly to the dropout problem. Discipline, school organization and size, programs, courses, the type of instruction, school climate, and adult-student relationships can all influence students to drop out. These factors "blame" the other side of the coin: not the real actor-victim that was

the student, but the educational system, therefore schools, teachers and programs. Let us consider that the school rather than the individual student should be considered at risk (UNICEF, 2009). Courses, programs, curriculum quality: It is to bear in mind that most students, particularly those of specific cultures, prefer learning situations that are active, participatory, emotionally engaging, and filled with visual and physical stimulation. Students frequently describe classes and school as boring; and some authors have concluded boredom was a first step in dropping out from school. Boredom is actually the first absenting behavior; it was a way of internally dropping out (UNICEF, 2009).

Quality of curriculum: Classrooms become places where material must be learned even though it may seem nonsensical to students (because there is not time to explain), where students are denied the opportunities to explore related topics they may be curious about (because their interests may wander too far from the official topics to be covered). As a result, many students stop asking questions soon after give in.

- Passive instructional strategies
- Disregard of student learning styles
- Lack of relevant curriculum
- Low expectations (UNICEF, 2009)

There were many reasons why some kids drop out of school. Some people drop out because the course work is too hard. Some people drop out because they think it is a waste of time. School is important and you should make sure to get the most out of it was cited in web page, www.answers.ask.com.

Latin American Government conduct a survey (ECLAC) collaborates with 17 Caribbean countries and most of the Caribbean countries faced this student drop out problem. They found that mainly social factors were affected to the student drop out problem. (Prebisch, 2002) Thirty seven percent of Latin American adolescents (from 15 to 19 years) drop out of school before completing secondary education. Almost half leave early, without finishing primary school, but in several countries most leave during the first year of high school. Dropping out is far more common among adolescents from lower income households and this is one of the main routes by which social inequality is transmitted. In 11 of 17 countries, more than half of all

children not finishing primary school belonged to these households. Other factors that contributed to their dropping out included work, adolescent pregnancy, and lack of interest. The mother's low educational level (five years or less of studies) increased the risk of dropping out by over 170% (Prebisch, 2002).

2.4.3.1 Lack of teachers

The lack of qualified teachers was cause of drop out so they are used only traditional teaching methods and no innovation in teaching learning process. It cause student drop out (UNICEF, 2009).

2.4.3.2 Difficult to access

A limited number of schools mean schools were often located further away. This is particularly the case at secondary and rural situations. Younger children and girls were particularly at risk of drop out where schools are located at a distance (DFID report, 2009).

2.4.3.3 Traditional teaching methods

Centrall (1999) stated that traditional teaching methods were not always working successfully and alternative methods of education must be implementation to student success. Another study carried out with the same perspective of dropout prevention and academic intervention programs also designed for students in grades one through 12 who do not perform well in traditional educational programs. The programs may differ from traditional educational programs in scheduling, administrative structure, philosophy, curriculum, or setting and must use alternative teaching methodologies, curricula, learning activities, and diagnostic and assessment procedures to meet the students' needs, abilities, talents, and interests.

Education Fact Sheet (2010) revealed that educational programs must also provide character development and law education, and related services to support program goals and lead to a student's improvement in academics, attendance, and discipline. Dropout prevention and academic intervention programs must emphasize academic performance and may provide instruction in career education, pre-employment training, and behavioral management. Teaching methods must be meeting the specific needs of the student.

Academic difficulty and failure, Struggling in school and failing classes is one of the main reasons teens drop out, and this pattern often shows up early. Students who fail eighth grade English or math, for example, are seventy-five percent more likely to drop out of high school (Convissor, 2006).

2.4.4 Social factors

Education is very important for everyone. But social factors are really affected to the completion of education in a country. Research found that lots of Cambodian children were facing many social problems that can lead them to their dropping out of school, including war, poverty, school curriculum and resources, family and social pressure. War is a vital problem which leads students to drop out of school. Another important point is that poverty. Poverty is also a significant thing which causes students to drop out of school. Parents are poor, and they cannot support their children to study. Some children are living in a difficult condition; therefore, they have to stop studying and make money to support their families. They have to work from dawn to dusk; hence, they do not have enough time to study and decide to drop out of school. Due to lacking of money, some students cannot go to school on time because they do not have any ways to travel to study. Transportation is very important for students who live far away from the school. They find it difficult to go to school, so they decide to drop out was cited in web page, www.scribd.com/doc/24124405.

Socioeconomic barriers prevented the young person from fully participating in school's social world. These especially aim at higher relational performances, personal growth and social formation. Barriers may have to do with working outside the home, with not having the economic resources to participate in the school's extracurricular activities, or with being treated as an inferior because of visible markers that communicate the student's low socioeconomic status (e.g., dress, speech, family automobile). If few job opportunities (or none at all) exist within a community, students may see little benefit for studying hard and staying in school. Particularly city youngsters may easily find alternatives to get some money; if so, school is no longer appealing to them and out of their thoughts. As argued in the report by Shannon & Bylsma, 2002, "contemporary schools generally reflect white, middle-class culture. Students from different cultural and economic backgrounds

may feel alienated, unwelcome, or out of place in these schools leading to disengagement and dropping out or attitudes and behaviors that result in the system "pushing" them out. Schools promote the values of the majority culture and not that of the minority child". - School dropout may occur in rich areas too and affect well-off families; the North East of Italy is marked with a significant economic increase, specifically middle enterprises, excellent production, and attempt to emerge from the domestic market. Job opportunities are easy and many and represent a strong factor to school dropout. The phenomenon has double sides there: students leave after several failures or because they are so attracted by the labor market which absorbs dropouts more easily than school. Students that pass the year may drop out too, which means that school dropout may occur beyond school failures. This area suffers from a cultural life although there are libraries and theaters, and does not offer any incentives or motivations to study. Local people tend to consider school a waste of time, it takes the young away from potential jobs. Commuting is an additional factor that at-risk students consider a negative element contributing to their disengagement and disaffection. Commuting means they leave home early in the morning and are back in the middle of the afternoon. They have no time for their friends, for themselves either. They have no chance to get involved in their community. If they were working, commuting wouldn't be a problem, or at least the young could bear it more easily (UNICEF, 2009). Transition to a new school, a poor transition from the smaller, more protected environment of middle school to the anonymity of a high school can cause a teen to have difficulty catching up-and some kids never do (Convissor, 2006).

2.4.4.1 High risk peer group

One of Japanese research found that peer pressure influence to continue or discontinue their education. Most drop-outs said they drop out from the schools "because everyone else did", TES Report (1998). Smith & Naylor (2001) cited in Nattavudh (2009) found that risk of dropping out to be extremely high amongst students from lower social class backgrounds and living in high unemployment rate areas. An individual's nonschool experiences also have been found to impact dropout. When adolescents are forced to take on adult

responsibilities, it decreases their likelihood of staying in school until graduation. (Cairns, Cairns, & Neckerman, 1989; Gleason & Dynarski, 2002; Rumberger, 2001)

2.4.4.2 High risk social behaviors

Children and adolescents may also have general attitudes and behaviors that increase the likelihood that they will not graduate. Early antisocial behavior, such as violence, substance use, or trouble with the law, has been linked in a number of studies to dropping out of school (Battin, 2000). Early sexual involvement has also been linked to dropping out (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000), as has spending no time each week reading for fun (Gleason & Dynarski, 2002). Having close friends who are involved in antisocial behavior or who have dropped out increases the risk that a youth will also drop out (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000). Low occupational aspirations and having low self-esteem and self-confidence (Rosenthal, 1998) also have been found to increase the risk of dropout.

2.5 Related researches

The identification of significant causes for the student drop out was accomplished in several steps. The first step included a thorough review of the literature to determine the factors affecting to the student drop out and conditions that increase the likelihood of student's risk factors and for dropping out of school. Lot of researches and article were reviewed to obtain historic view of the issue. Best assess for student drop out of government school in Badulla zone is Drop out risk factors and exemplary programs (Hammond, 2007)

In this study researcher found that, as for other types of educational outcomes, is dropping out of school stems from a wide variety of factors in four areas or domains: individual, family, school, and community factors Risk factors for dropout from all four domains were described in the articles reviewed (Hammond, 2007). A brief summary of some of these factors are described here, beginning with the factors identified in the individual domain.

An another study emphasized that, the analysis of the determinants of school dropout in developed countries had highlighted factors such as drug use,

alcohol consumption, and parents psychiatric disorders, controlling for possible confounding factors such as socio economic status of the family,gender,race,and age of the child (Chatterji and DeSimone, 2005)For developing countries, most often the trade-off between school and child labor has been underlined with fewer studies concentrating just on the determinants of school performance(Ravallion and wodon, 2000).

In terms of methods, earlier studies modeled the probability that the child work or in alternative attend school, estimating a logit model (Patrinons and Psacharopoulos, 1997).Underlying this approach was, in some cases , the idea that school attendance and child labor are mutually exclusive activities if the child is working, he/she is not attending school and vice versa. In other cases, work was included among the exogenous factors explaining school performance. Results suggested that poverty, as captured for example by the number of sibling or work status of the father, is a determinant of child labor and of poor school performance.

American researcher emphasized that (Lamm, 2005) low income, unemployment and child labor can be occurred due to the student drop out. The costs of dropping out of high school can have a profound effect on a young person's life. The relative earnings of high school dropouts are lower than those for students who complete high school and/or college. Similarly, high school dropouts experience more unemployment during their work careers. Young women who drop out of high school are more likely to become pregnant at young ages and more likely to become single parents (Snyder & Sickmund, 1995).

In 1992, the unemployment rate among those dropping out of school was 11%, compared with 7% for those who graduated from high school but did not attend college. The median income among dropouts who were employed full time was only half that of high school graduates. While the real income (income adjusted for inflation) of college graduates has increased during the past 20 years, the real income of dropouts has declined dramatically (Snyder & Sickmund, 1995).These are sobering statistics when contrasted with the reality of a workplace that continues to require increased literacy, more education, enhanced technical skills, and the ability to embark on careers that require lifelong learning. Without the skills and training that schooling

should provide, those who do not complete their education face a lifetime of limited opportunities or even possibly a life of delinquency and crime.

It takes more than a day to drop out of school. Studies show that a single event rarely causes a youth to drop out; rather it is the results of a long process of disengagement that can be begin before kindergarten. Pattern linked to high student drop out can be set by the third grade and failing grades or discipline problems in elementary or middle schools serve as common markers. While dropping out may be a process, there are clear warning sign and risk factors along the path before drop out occur (Duncan, 2009). American National dropout prevention center carried out a survey (Hammond, 2007) and found that the dropping out of school is related to a variety of factors that can be classified in four areas or domains such as

- Individual factors (Student factors)
- Family factors
- School factors

Community factors and there is no single risk factor that can be used to accurately predict who is at risk of dropping out. Risk factors that are significantly related to school dropout include (Hammond, 2007).

- Learning disabilities or emotional disturbances
- Adult responsibilities
- Belonging to a peer group engage in high risk behaviors
- Low school attainment
- Retention or over age for grade
- Poor school attendance
- Low educational expectations
- Low commitment to school
- No extracurricular participation
- Low socio economic status
- Low educational level of parents
- Lack of family interest in school

Many of the above risk factors are direct results of school environment, including available resources, student body performance and academic policies and

practices. The budgets that strictly limited the availability of art, music, foreign language, science and physical education, increase the likelihood that at-risk students will drop out of school. (Allensworth, 2004) Students who might otherwise lose interest in school often remain engaged when they are presented with an enriched curriculum that produces them with experiential, hand-on learning in a wide range.

2.5.1 Related Factors for School Student Dropout in Asian Countries

The complexity of the school dropout phenomenon is illustrated in a variety of ways and it is hard to identify or specify significant influencing factors. In general, UNESCO discovered four main related factors for dropping out of school in seven Asian countries, namely, Sri Lanka Thailand, Vietnam, Nepal, India, Phillipines, and Pakistan. The main related factors discovered by UNESCO (1987) are as follow:

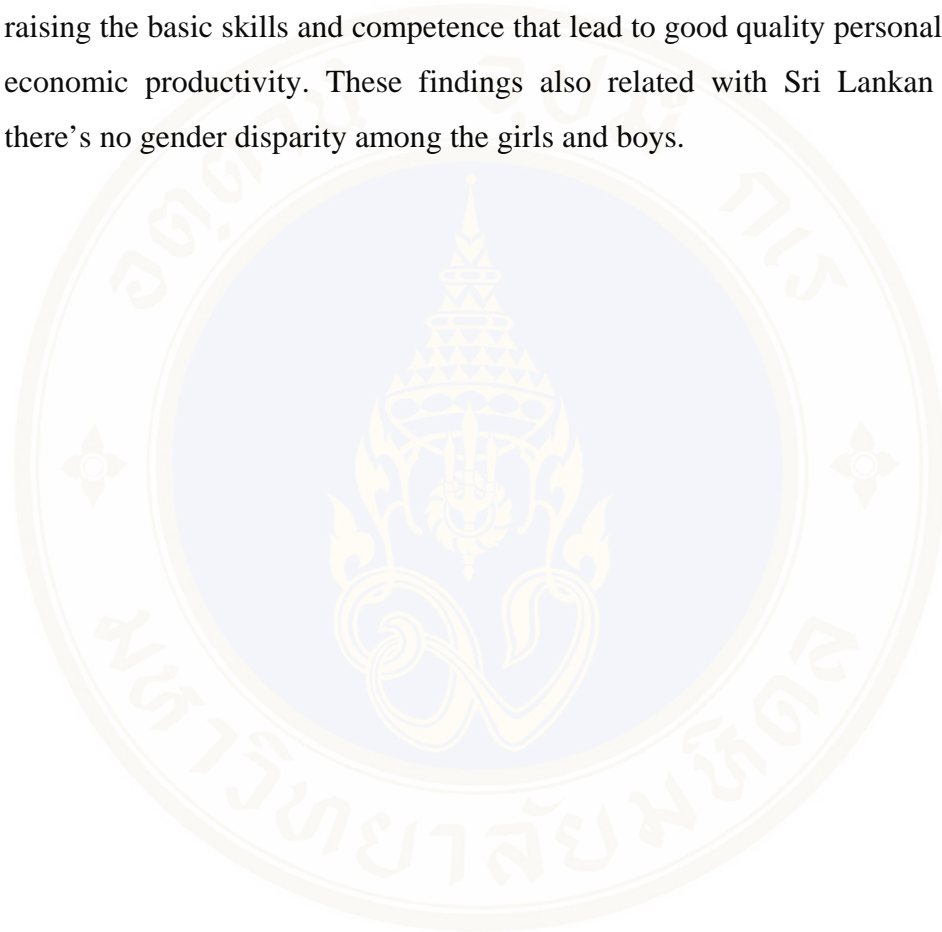
- 1) Pupil/family related factors including the ability, the readiness, or the preparedness of the student and parents attitudes toward schooling.
- 2) Teacher related factors including the shortage of qualified teachers, the teacher's attitude toward teaching, the motivation of teachers as well as class size.
- 3) School system related factors including the teacher centered system, the use of traditional memorization, and lack of ability to use edutainment or enjoyable teaching methods.
- 4) Community and environment related factors including socio-economic condition topography, community's supportiveness, and migration.

In addition, UNESCO also discovered that in Sri Lanka, the school dropout and repetition rates were somewhat high in primary cycle, and declined every grade thereafter.

2.5.2 School Dropout Problem in South East Asia (ADB, 1998)

Asian Development Bank (1998) discovered that the school dropout rate in South East Asia is higher than fifty percent meaning that fifty percent completed fifth grade within the prescribed time. The school dropout rate in South Asia is high in the midyear and at the end of the school year. To convince the parents to keep their children in school to complete their education within the prescribed time for a

long time is difficult in South East Asia due to mandates of tradition. Children (mostly girls) are forced to leave school to help the family. The value of primary education for national development is well known across the world, and the return rate on investment of primary schooling is the highest, often exceeding 25% in developing countries. Formal education is one of the most cost efficient ways for raising the basic skills and competence that lead to good quality personal welfare and economic productivity. These findings also related with Sri Lankan context but there's no gender disparity among the girls and boys.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was focused to find out the factors for the students drop out of government schools in Badulla educational zone, Sri Lanka. The descriptive survey method was used in this study. Descriptive method of research was a fact- finding study with adequate and accurate interpretation of the findings. Since the present study was concerned with the present status of the causes of students drop out in Badulla educational zone, the descriptive survey method of research was the most accurate method to use for this study. A systematic procedure for this research project will be presented in this chapter as follows:

- 3.1 Research design
- 3.2 Population and sample
- 3.3 Research instruments
- 3.4 Quality of the research instruments
- 3.5 Data collection
- 3.6 Data analysis

3.1 Research design

This research was carried out by using a descriptive survey designed method. The survey was conducted by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to gather a considerable amount of causes from the students of the Meegahakula and Kandaketiya divisions. Besides, the respondents were literate. The questionnaire translated in to Sinhala by the researcher because English is not dominant in these areas. The research instrument used a 5 point Likert-type scale to collect and measure student's perception levels.

3.2 Population and sample

3.2.1 Population

This study was conducted in Badulla educational zone. The population of the study was 3,802 grade 10 students (104 schools) and 31 dropped outs students. Out of the 104 schools, 24 secondary schools represent Meegahakula and Kandaketiya divisions. The table 3.1 shows number of schools and grade 10 students in each division.

Table 3.1 Number of schools and grade 10 students in each division.

Educational Division	Number of Secondary Schools	Number of Grade 10 Students
1. Badulla	27	1,656
2. Hali ela	39	1,072
3. Soranathota	14	324
4. Meegahakula	9	286
5. Kandaketiya	15	464
Total	104	3,802

3.2.2 Sample

3.2.2.1 In the first stage the top two divisions of drop out ranking were selected using specific sampling method. Kandaketiya and Meegahakula divisions had been reported as the top two in dropout rate in 2009 (Finance commission, 2009).

3.2.2.2 In the second stage all the secondary schools (24) schools having grade 10 classes were included to the sample.

3.2.2.3 In the third stage 362 students out of the population of 3802 grade 10 students of secondary schools in two divisions were selected as the sample of survey. Further 35 dropped outs were selected for the study

The sample size was calculated using Yamane formula as follows.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

n = Sample size

N= Population size

e = error of random sampling = 5%

$$n = \frac{3,802}{1 + 3,802 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 362$$

After determining the total sample size of the grade 10 students, the number of students selecting from each divisions were determined using proportional probability procedure of Meegahakula and Kandaketiya divisions. The table 3.2 shows the number of students selecting from each divisions.

Table 3.2 Number of sample students

Educational Division	Number of total schools	Number of grade 10 students	Percentage (%)	Number of students for sample
Meegahakula	9	286	38	138
Kandaketiya	15	464	62	224
Total	24	750	100	362

It was followed proportional probability procedure to select the number of students from each school .The table 3.3 shows name of the schools & number of sample students.

Table 3.3 Name of the schools & number of sample students

Educational Division	Name of the school	School Type	Number of Grade 10 Students	Number of students for sample
Meehahakula	B/Pitamaruwa m.v	1C	15	7
	B/Thaldena m.v	1AB	62	30
	B/Kalugahakandura m.v	1C	41	20
	B/Meegahakula m.m.v	1C	70	34
	B/Morahela m.v	Type 2	23	11
	B//Karandagahamada m.v	Type 2	25	12
	B/Polgahaarawa .v	Type 2	9	4
	B/Balagolla .v	Type 2	19	9
	B/Mmahakandura.v	Type 2	22	11
Kandaketiya	B/Galaudam.m.v	1AB	70	34
	B/Godunna.m.v	1C	35	17
	B/Wiyaluwa m.v	1C	28	14
	B/Beramada v	Type 2	4	2
	B/Labugasthalawa v	Type 2	6	3
	B/DS Senanayaka m.m.v	1AB	87	42
	B/Kandakepu ulpotha m.v	1C	96	46
	B/Kulegedara mohottala m.v	1C	24	12
	B/Mmahakele v	Type 2	15	7
	B/Maliyadda m.v	1C	27	13
	B/Mudagamuwa .v	Type 2	15	7
	B/Wellewelathanna v	Type 2	9	4
	B/Wewathanna v	Type 2	7	3
	B/Narangala t.v	Type 2	29	14
	B/Nurania m.v	Type 2	12	6
Total			750	362

According to the records there were 31 students studying in community learning center of Badulla educational zone. Thus the researcher selected those all 31 as his population of drop out students.

3.3 Research instruments

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The data collection instrument of this research was a questionnaire. It was consisted of two parts.

Part 1 The questionnaire was designed to survey demographic data of the students including age, gender, study status, living condition,

Part 2 The questionnaire was designed to measure the perception of students. This part of the questionnaire was consisted of 31 items under four domains.

Table 3.4 Division of factors caused for drop out into 31 items

Factors caused for dropped out	No. of items
Family factors	9
Economic status	1-3
Education level of parents	4-6
Sibling has dropped out	7-9
Student factors	9
Attendance	10-12
Achievement	13-15
Grade retention	16-18
School factors	9
Lack of teachers	19-21
Difficult to access	22-24
Traditional teaching methods	25-27
Social factors	4
High risk peer group	28-29
High risk social behavior	30-31

The classification of perception level of students

Each of the items had used five point likert scales (Likert, 1932) the measures degree of facts. Each item was score from 1-5. High scores on the scale represent high perception.

Table 3.5 Measurement scale of perception level

Facts level	Score
Strongly disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neutral	3
Agree	4
Strongly agree	5

The interpretation of the mean of facts level was employed in the following criteria. The score of the answers were classified into 3 levels according to the Best's criteria. (1977) as follows:

Higher score- lower score

No. of levels

$$\frac{5 - 1}{3} = \frac{4}{3}$$

$$= 1.33$$

Table 3.6 Criteria for understanding the means of perception level

Mean Score	Facts level
1.00- 2.33	Low
2.34- 3.67	Moderate
3.68-5.00	High

3.3.2 Interview guide line

Data collection instrument for students, who were drop out was an interview guide line.

1. What are the causes of students drop out?
2. What is the main cause for students drop out?
3. How long have you been stopped your schooling?
4. Did you ever dropped out before grade 10 and join to school again?
5. What are you doing after drop out?
6. Do you remember any dropped out friends in your school time?
7. Did you ever punish or arrest by police for any misbehaviors?
8. What are the recommendations for stop student drop out?

3.4 Quality of the research instrument

3.4.1 The content validity of the questionnaire was done by consulting with three specialists, to examine the correctness and appropriateness of language, content covering, and content relevance of the questionnaire to fit the education system of Sri Lanka. The last revision and improvement of questionnaire was done before being used to collect data.

3.4.2 Checked the reliability Cronbach's alpha coefficient (1970), was employed to assess the reliability of the instrument and the value was computed using package program.

3.4.3 The confident value of 0.78 was obtained for overall perception level with 31 items and it can be concluded that the questionnaire had a high rate of reliability.

3.5 Data collection

Researcher asked permission to collect data from Uva provincial department of education. After obtaining the written permission, the researcher met the zonal director of the Badulla educational zone to explain the purpose and importance of the study. Researcher explained the questionnaires to zonal director and it was helpful to collect the data easily. Then the questionnaires were distributed to the not drop out students with the help of their class teachers and school principals. Then the questionnaires were collected within one week. Data from the dropped out students was collected with the help of non formal project officers.

To assure the respondents confidentiality, the researcher attached a letter to the questionnaire to explain the purpose of the study and, the respondents were informed clearly that it was not necessary to show their names on the questionnaires. The respondents were given one week to answer the questionnaires. After that questionnaires were collected with the help of school principals and non formal officers.

3.6 Data analysis

All the data collected from the respondents was checked, grouped and tabulated to facilitate the analysis process. The data was electronically processed and analyzed by using SPSS. The researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics for analyzing the data.

Descriptive statistical analyses used to analyze demographic data in this study were frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The inferential statistical analysis, t –test was used to compare the significant differences of not drop out students and drop out students.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, the researcher presents the results of the research conducted on the students drop out of government secondary schools in the Badulla educational zone, Sri Lanka. The data of the study was analyze and summarized according to the following sequences:

4.1 General information of the students

4.2 Perception on student drop out

4.2.1 Family factors

4.2.2 Student factors

4.2.3 School factors

4.2.4 Social factors

4.3 Comparison of the factors differences with their effects on student drop out

4.4 Summary of the research results

4.5 Content analysis

4.1 General Information of students

The individual information of the students was presented and analyzed by descriptive statistics as shown in the table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Frequency and Percentage of the individual information of the sample**(n=393)**

Individual information	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age		
14 – 15 years	328	83.5
Above 15 years	65	16.5
Gender		
Male	205	52.2
Female	188	47.8
Study status		
Not drop out	362	92.1
Drop out	31	7.9
Stay with family		
Stay with family	371	94.4
Away from family	22	5.6
Total	393	100

The highest percentage of age at 83.5% students was in the age of 14-15 years and rest 16.5% students were in the age of above 15 years. From the analysis of the data there were 52.2% were female students and 47.8 % of them were male. For their study status 92.1% were not drop out students and remain 7.9% students were dropouts from the schools. For their family status, 94.4% students were live with their family members and the rest 5.6% of students away from their family members.

4.2 Perception on student drop out

4.2.1 Family factors

Student's perception towards the student drop out of family factors was measured with nine items, analyzed and described as shown in the table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for family factors

(n=393)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
Family factors (Total average)	2.80	.526	Moderate	3.55	.785	Moderate
1.Economic status						
1.1 Low monthly income of the family	3.89	.773	High	4.74	.445	High
1.2 Not having permanent houses	2.88	.952	Moderate	4.35	.798	High
1.3 Inability of obtaining daily needs like food and clothing	3.46	.998	Moderate	4.29	.739	High
Average	3.41	.672	Moderate	4.46	.372	High
2. Education level of parents						
2.1 Not having a permanent job for the father or mother	2.23	1.04 3	Low	2.87	1.52 2	Moderate
2.2 Not receiving the support of the parents for the children's education	2.72	1.07 0	Moderate	3.03	1.16 9	Moderate

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

Table 4.2 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for family factors (cont.)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
2.3 Illiteracy (reading & writing) of parents	2.19	.878	Low	2.77	1.230	Moderate
Average	2.38	.766	Moderate	2.89	1.172	Moderate
3. Sibling has dropped out						
3.1 Brothers and sisters doing jobs giving up their education	2.19	1.039	Low	3.03	1.449	Moderate
3.2 Having married brothers and sisters who haven't completed their education	2.51	1.043	Moderate	3.29	1.395	Moderate
3.3 Wrong attitudes of the dropped out brothers and sisters	3.05	1.095	Moderate	3.58	1.148	Moderate
Average	2.58	.843	Moderate	3.30	1.156	Moderate

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

The overall level of perception for family factors related to not drop out students and drop out students was moderate with the mean values of 2.80, 3.55 respectively.

Economic status was measured with three items and the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on low monthly income of the family was high with the highest mean values of 3.89 and 4.74 respectively. While not having permanent houses was moderate with the lowest mean value of 2.88 for the not drop out and inability of obtaining daily needs like food and clothing was high with the lowest mean value of 4.29 for drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of economic status was moderate for not drop out students and high for drop out students with average mean values of 3.41 and 4.46 respectively.

Education level of parents was measured with three items and the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on not receiving the support of the parents for the children's education was moderate with the highest mean values of 2.72 and 3.03 respectively, while illiteracy (reading & writing) of parents was moderate with the lowest mean values of 2.19, 2.77 for not drop out students and drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of education level of parents was moderate for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 2.38 and 2.89 respectively.

Sibling has dropped out was measured with three items and the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on wrong attitudes of the dropped out brothers and sisters was moderate with the highest mean values of 3.05 and 3.58 respectively, while brothers and sisters doing jobs giving up their education was low with the lowest mean values of 2.19 for not drop out students and moderate with mean value of 3.03 for drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of sibling has dropped out was moderate for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 2.58 and 3.30 respectively.

4.2.2 Student factors

Student's perception towards the student drop out of student factors was measured with nine items, analyzed and described as shown in the table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for student factors

(n=393)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
Student factors (Total average)	3.37	.481	Moderate	3.41	.491	Moderate
1. Attendance						
1.1 Less participation in studies due to irregular	3.56	.940	Moderate	3.39	1.006	Moderate
1.2 Facing problems in associating peers at school due to irregular attendance	3.31	1.119	Moderate	3.29	1.054	Moderate
1.3 Getting punishments at school due to irregular attendance	2.54	1.111	Moderate	3.13	1.335	Moderate
Average	3.14	.770	Moderate	3.27	.854	Moderate
2. Achievement						
2.1 Condemned by the teachers due to their low achievement levels	2.95	1.129	Moderate	2.61	1.054	Moderate
2.2 Low literacy level (reading & writing) of the children	3.25	1.005	Moderate	3.11	.944	Moderate
2.3 School becoming an unpleasant place as the children are humiliated by the students due to their	3.14	.951	Moderate	3.10	.870	Moderate
Average	3.12	.822	Moderate	2.94	.722	Moderate
3. Grade retention						
3.1 Failing in the same grade reduces the desire to attend school	4.38	.549	High	4.29	.739	High

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

Table 4.3 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for student factors (cont.)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
3.2 Classroom becoming an unpleasant place due to the departure of close friends	3.54	.596	Moderate	3.61	.751	Moderate
3.3 Associating friends who are unpleasant for their age and becoming humiliated in the classroom	3.61	.567	Moderate	4.13	.846	High
Average	3.84	.354	High	4.01	.520	High

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

The overall level of perception for student factors related to not drop out students and drop out students was moderate with the mean values of 3.37, 3.41 respectively.

Attendance was measured with three items and the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on less participation in studies due to irregular attendance of school was moderate with the highest mean values of 3.56 and 3.39 respectively, while getting punishments at school due to irregular attendance was moderate with the lowest mean values of 2.54, 3.13 for not drop out students and drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of attendance was moderate for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 3.14 and 2.27 respectively.

Achievement was measured with three items the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on low literacy level (reading & writing) of the children was moderate with the highest mean values of 3.25 and 3.11 respectively, while condemned by the teachers due to their low achievement levels was moderate

with the lowest mean values of 2.95, 2.61 for not drop out students and drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of achievement was moderate for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 3.12 and 2.94 respectively.

Grade retention was measured with three items the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on failing in the same grade reduces the desire to attend school was high with the highest mean values of 4.38 and 4.29 respectively, while classroom becoming an unpleasant place due to the departure of close friends was moderate with the lowest mean values of 3.54, 3.61 for not drop out students and drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of grade retention was high for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 3.84 and 4.01 respectively.

4.2.3 School factors

Student's perception towards the student drop out of school factors was measured with nine items, analyzed and described as shown in the table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for school factors

(n=393)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
School factors (Total average)	3.07	.600	Moderate	3.37	.366	Moderate
1.Lack of teachers						
1.1 Tendency to make unnecessary friendships when they waste time due to the deficiency of teachers	3.02	1.125	Moderate	2.90	1.106	Moderate

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

Table 4.4 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for school factors (cont.)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
1.2 Refusing the school thinking that attending school is a useless thing when they are enable to get the education they expected from school	2.74	1.081	Moderate	2.84	1.068	Moderate
1.3 Children having unnecessary influences at school due to the deficiency of teachers	3.11	1.015	Moderate	3.13	.885	Moderate
Average	2.96	.870	Moderate	2.96	.676	Moderate
2. Difficult to						
2.1 Getting discouraged to attend school regularly due to the distance between the school and home	3.76	1.047	High	4.71	.461	High
2.2 Difficulties of attending school caused by natural disasters	3.36	.925	Moderate	4.32	.748	Moderate
2.3 Not having proper transport facilities to attend school	3.25	.888	Moderate	4.52	.570	High
Average	3.46	.682	Moderate	4.52	.374	High

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

Table 4.4 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for school factors (cont.)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
3.Traditional teaching methods						
3.1 Becoming the classroom an unpleasant place due to teacher centered learning process	2.91	1.210	Moderate	2.52	1.122	Moderate
3.2 School becoming an undesirable place due to the punishments given in the traditional learning process	2.82	.952	Moderate	2.53	.926	Moderate
3.3 Exam oriented learning process	2.67	.896	Moderate	2.84	.898	Moderate
Average	2.80	.730	Moderate	2.62	.708	Moderate

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

The overall level of perception for school factors related to not drop out students and drop out students was moderate with the mean values of 3.07, 3.37 respectively .

Lack of teachers was measured with three items and the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on children having unnecessary influences at school due to the deficiency of teachers was moderate with the highest mean values of 3.11 and 3.13 respectively, while refusing the school thinking that attending school is a useless thing when they are able to get the education they expected from school was moderate with the lowest mean values of

2.74, 2.84 for not drop out students and drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of lack of teachers was moderate for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 2.96 and 2.96 respectively.

Difficult to access to schools was measured with three items and level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on getting discouraged to attend school regularly due to the distance between the school and home was high with the highest mean values of 3.76 and 4.71 respectively, while not having proper transport facilities to attend school was moderate with the lowest mean values of 3.25 for the not drop out students and followed by difficulties of attending school caused by natural disasters was moderate with the lowest mean values of 4.32 for the drop out students. The overall perception level of difficult to access was moderate for not drop out students with average mean value of 3.46 followed by it was high for drop out students with average mean value of 4.52 respectively.

Traditional teaching method was measured with three items and the level of perception of not drop out students on becoming the classroom an unpleasant place due to teacher centered learning process was moderate with the highest mean value of 2.91 and exam oriented learning process was moderate with highest mean value of 2.84 for drop out students. While exam oriented learning process was moderate with the lowest mean value of 2.67 for the not drop out students and becoming the classroom an unpleasant place due to teacher cent red learning process was moderate with the lowest mean value of 2.52 for drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of traditional teaching method was moderate for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 2.80 and 2.62 respectively.

4.2.4 Social factors

Student's perception towards the student drop out of social factors was measured with two items, analyzed and described as shown in the table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Mean, standard deviation and level of perception of not drop out student and drop out student for social factors

(n= 393)

Statement	Not drop out student			Drop out student		
	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception	Mean	S.D.	Level of Perception
Social factors (Total average)	2.90	.728	Moderate	2.40	.816	Moderate
1. High risk peer groups						
1.1 School becoming an unpleasant place due to the acceptance of wrong attitudes of peer groups towards education	2.95	1.026	Moderate	2.35	1.018	Moderate
1.2 Addicting to bad habits of peer groups	2.96	1.005	Moderate	2.45	1.207	Moderate
Average	2.95	.839	Moderate	2.40	.978	Moderate
2.High risk social behavior						
2.1Tending to earn money through commonly existing employment opportunities that are not suitable for the age of school children	2.90	1.029	Moderate	2.29	1.039	Moderate
2.2 Getting wrong attitudes due to misuse of media	2.80	.904	Moderate	2.52	.811	Moderate
Average	2.85	.821	Moderate	2.40	.841	Moderate

Note: 1.00-2.33=Low, 2.34-3.67=Moderate, 3.68-5.00=High

The overall level of perception for social factors related to not drop out students and drop out students was moderate with the mean values of 2.90, 2.40 respectively .

High risk peer group was measured with three items and the level of perception of not drop out students and drop out students on addicting to bad habits of peer groups was moderate with the highest mean values of 2.96 and 2.45 respectively, while school becoming an unpleasant place due to the acceptance of wrong attitudes of peer groups towards education was moderate with the lowest mean values of 2.95, 2.35 for not drop out students and drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of high risk peer group was moderate for not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 2.95 and 2.40 respectively.

High risk social behaviors was measured with three items and level of perception of not drop out students on tending to earn money through commonly existing employment opportunities that are not suitable for the age of school children was moderate with the highest mean value of 2.90 and getting wrong attitudes due to misuse of media was moderate with highest mean value of 2.52 for drop out students. While getting wrong attitudes due to misuse of media was moderate with the lowest mean value of 2.80 for the not drop out students and tending to earn money through commonly existing employment opportunities that are not suitable for the age of school children was moderate with the lowest mean value of 2.29 for drop out students respectively. The overall perception level of high risk social behavior was moderate not drop out students as well as drop out students with average mean values of 2.85 and 2.40 respectively.

4.3 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out

4.3.1 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on family factors

The data on student perception of student drop out was collected from dropout students and not drop out students. In this part it is focused to compare the perceptions of dropout students and not out student related to the family factors. t – test was carried out to find out the distribution of variables and compare the mean differences as shown in the table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Comparison of student drop out with family factors

(n=393)

Family factors	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	2.80	.526	7.398	391	.000*
Drop out	31	3.55	.785			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.6 shows the comparison of student drop out with their family factors. Mean score for the not drop out was 2.80 (with the standard deviation of .526) while mean score for the drop out was 3.55 (standard deviation of .785). The results showed a P. value of .000 which suggested that there was statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for family factors on student drop out. Thus, result revealed that drop out student faced various problems related to their family background than not drop out student such as poor economic status, low education level of parents, and sibling has dropped out.

4.3.2 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on student factors

The data on student perception for student drop out was collected from dropout students and not drop out students. In this part it is focused to compare the perceptions of dropout students and not out student related to the student factors. t – test was carried out to find out the distribution of variables and compare the mean differences as shown in the table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Comparison of student drop out with student factors

(n=393)

Student factors	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.37	.481	.434	391	.664
Drop out	31	3.41	.491			

Table 4.7 shows the comparison of student drop out with their student factors. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.37 (with the standard deviation of .481) while mean score for the drop out was 3.41 (standard deviation of .491).The results showed a P. value of .664 which suggested that there was no statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for student factors on student drop out.

4.3.3 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on school factors

The data on student perception for student drop out was collected from dropout students and not drop out students. In this part it is focused to compare the perceptions of dropout students and not out student related to the school factors. t – test was carried out to find out the distribution of variables and compare the mean differences as shown in the table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Comparison of student drop out with school factors

(n=393)

School factors	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.07	.600	2.682	391	.008*
Drop out	31	3.37	.366			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.8 shows the comparison of student drop out with their school factors. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.07 (with the standard deviation of .600) while mean score for the drop out was 3.37 (standard deviation of .366).The results showed a P. value of .008 which suggested that there was statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for the school factors on student drop out. It indicated that drop out student faced different problems related to their school background than not drop out student such as lack of teachers, difficult to access to school, and traditional teaching methods.

4.3.4 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on social factors

The data on student perception for student drop out was collected from dropout students and not drop out students. In this part it is focused to compare the perceptions of dropout students and not out student related to the social factors. t – test was carried out to find out the distribution of variables and compare the mean differences as shown in the table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Comparison of student drop out with social factors

(n=393)						
Social factors	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	2.90	.728	3.604	391	.000*
Drop out	31	2.40	.816			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.9 shows the comparison of student drop out with their social factors. Mean score for the not drop out was 2.90 (with the standard deviation of .728) while mean score for the drop out was 2.40 (standard deviation of .816).The results showed a P. value of .000 which suggested that there was statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for social factors on student drop out.

4.3.5 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on economic status

The student perception on family factors were gathered under three variables: economic status, education level of parents, and sibling has dropped outs. The table 4.10 shows the analysis of data related to economic status on student drop out.

Table 4.10 Comparison of student drop out with economic status**(n=393)**

Economic						
status	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.41	.672	8.627	391	.000*
Drop out	31	4.46	.372			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.10 shows the comparison of student drop out with economic status. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.41 (with the standard deviation of .672) while mean score for the drop out was 4.46 (standard deviation of .372). The results showed a P. value of .000 which suggested that there was statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for economic status on student drop out. Result revealed that drop out student faced various problems related to their economic status than not drop out student such as low income of family, not having permanent houses and inability of obtaining daily needs like foods and cloths.

4.3.6 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on education level of parents

Table 4.11 Comparison of student drop out with education level of parents**(n=393)**

Education						
level of parents	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	2.38	.766	3.36	391	.001*
Drop out	31	2.89	1.172			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.11 shows the comparison of student drop out with their education level of parents. Mean score for the not drop out was 2.38 (with the standard deviation of .766) while mean score for the drop out was 2.89 (standard deviation of 1.172). The results showed a P. value of .001 which suggested that there was statistically

significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for education level of parents on student drop out. Thus, result revealed that drop out student faced a range of problems related to their parent's low education level than not drop out student such as not having a permanent job of the father or mother, not receiving the support of the parents for the children's education and illiteracy (reading & writing) of parents.

4.3.7 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on sibling has drop out

Table 4.12 Comparison of student drop out with sibling has drop out

(n=393)

Sibling has						
drop out	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	2.58	.843	4.400	391	.001*
Drop out	31	3.30	1.156			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.12 shows the comparison of student drop out with their sibling has dropped out. Mean score for the not drop out was 2.58 (with the standard deviation of .843) while mean score for the drop out was 3.30 (standard deviation of 1.156). The results showed a P. value of .001 which suggested that there was statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for sibling has drop out on student drop out. It meant that already drop out siblings created negative impact on drop students for their schooling.

4.3.8 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on attendance

The student's perception on student factors were gathered under three variables: attendance, achievement, and grade retention. The table 4.13 shows the analysis of data related to attendance.

Table 4.13 Comparison of student drop out with attendance**(n=393)**

Attendance	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.14	.770	.887	391	.376
Drop out	31	3.27	.854			

Table 4.13 shows the comparison of student drop out with their attendance. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.14 (with the standard deviation of .770) while mean score for the drop out was 3.27 (standard deviation of .854). The results showed a P. value of .376 which suggested that there was no statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for attendance on student drop out.

4.3.9 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on achievement

Table 4.14 Comparison of student drop out with achievement**(n=393)**

Achievement	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.12	.822	1.190	391	.235
Drop out	31	2.94	.722			

Table 4.14 shows the comparison of student drop out with their achievement. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.12 (with the standard deviation of .822) while mean score for the drop out was 2.94 (standard deviation of .722). The results showed a P. value of .235 which suggested that there was no statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for achievement on student drop out.

4.3.10 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on grade retention

Table 4.15 Comparison of student drop out with grade retention

(n=393)

Grade retention	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.84	.354	2.462	391	.014*
Drop out	31	4.01	.520			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.15 shows the comparison of student drop out with their grade retention. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.84 (with the standard deviation of .354) while mean score for the drop out was 4.01 (standard deviation of .520). The results showed a P. value of .014 which suggested that there was statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for grade retention on student drop out. Result revealed that drop out student faced a many problem than not drop out student related to grade retention such failing in the same grade reduces the desire to attend school, classroom becoming an unpleasant place due to the departure of close friends and associating friends who are unpleasant for their age and becoming humiliated in the classroom.

4.3.11 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on lack of teachers

The student perception on school factors were gathered under three variables: lack of teachers, difficult to access, and traditional teaching methods. The table 4.16 shows the analysis of data related to lack of teachers.

Table 4.16 Comparison of student drop out with lack of teachers**(n=393)**

Lack of teachers	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.07	.600	.002	391	.999
Drop out	31	2.96	.676			

Table 4.16 shows the comparison of student drop out with their lack of teachers. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.07 (with the standard deviation of .600) while mean score for the drop out was 2.96 (standard deviation of .676). The results showed a P. value of .999 which suggested that there was no statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for lack of teachers on student drop out.

4.3.12 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on difficult to access to schools

Table 4.17 Comparison of student drop out with difficult to access to schools**(n=393)**

Difficult to access to schools	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	3.46	.682	8.530	391	.000*
Drop out	31	4.52	.374			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.17 shows the comparison of student drop out with their difficult to access to schools. Mean score for the not drop out was 3.46 (with the standard deviation of .682) while mean score for the drop out was 4.52 (standard deviation of .374). The results showed a P. value of .000 which suggested that there was statistically

significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for difficult to access to schools on student drop out. This result revealed that drop out student faced a range of troubles related to accessing to schools than not drop out student such as getting discouraged to attend school regularly due to the distance between the school and home, difficulties of attending school caused by natural disasters and not having proper transport facilities to attend school.

4.3.13 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on traditional teaching methods

Table 4.18 Comparison of student drop out with traditional teaching methods (n=393)

Traditional teaching methods	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	2.80	.730	1.308	391	.192
Drop out	31	2.62	.708			

Table 4.18 shows the comparison of student drop out with their traditional teaching methods. Mean score for the not drop out was 2.80 (with the standard deviation of .730) while mean score for the drop out was 2.62 (standard deviation of .708). The results showed a P. value of .192 which suggested that there was no statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for traditional teaching methods on student drop out.

4.3.14 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on high risk peer group

The student perception on social factors was gathered under two variables: high risk peer group and high risk social behavior. The table 4.19 shows the analysis of data related to high risk peer group.

Table 4.19 Comparison of student drop out with high risk peer groups**(n=393)**

High risk peer						
groups	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	2.95	.839	3.454	391	.001*
Drop out	31	2.40	.978			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.19 shows the comparison of student drop out with their high risk peer groups. Mean score for the not drop out was 2.95 (with the standard deviation of .839) while mean score for the drop out was 2.40 (standard deviation of .978). The results showed a P. value of .001 which suggested that there was statistically significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for high risk peer groups on student drop out. The result revealed that not drop out student thought high risk peer groups have a strong association for student drop out.

4.3.15 Comparison on the factors differences with their effects of the student drop out based on high risk social behavior

Table 4.20 Comparison of student drop out with high risk peer social behaviors**(n=393)**

High risk social behaviors						
	n	Mean	S.D.	t	df	P value
Not drop out	362	2.85	.821	3.035	391	.005*
Drop out	31	2.40	.841			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 4.20 shows the comparison of student drop out with their high risk peer social behaviors. Mean score for the not drop out was 2.85 (with the standard deviation of .821) while mean score for the drop out was 2.40 (standard deviation of .816). The results showed a P. value of .005 which suggested that there was statistically

significant differences between not drop out student and drop out student for high risk peer social behaviors on student drop out. The result revealed that not drop out student thought high risk social behavior have a strong association for student drop out.

4.4 Summary of the research results

Table 4.21 Summary of the research results

Hypotheses	Results
1. There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their family factors.	Accepted
2. There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their student factors.	Rejected
3. There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their school factors.	Accepted
4. There is statistically significant difference on student drop out between not drop out students and drop out drop out students for their social factors	Accepted

4.5 Content Analysis of Interviews

To understand the factors for the students drop out more clearly, the interviewed 10 drop out students who were randomly selected from Kandaketiya and Meegahakula divisions with the help of non formal project. The interviews were carried out at villages in October 2010. The interview process had taken 15 to 30 minutes for each student. All of the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed, verbatim. The findings are explained in terms of content analysis, under the relevant areas derived from the interview guide line, with some inclusion of students' quotes to help support the inductive analysis. Information collected would be treated highly confidential and reported anonymously.

Table 4.21: Interview informants' characteristics.

Name*	Age	Gender	Level of Education (Highest grade passed)	Parents alive or Not	Employed or Not
Kamal	16	Male	Grade 8	No	Yes
Ruwan	16	Male	Grade 9	No	Yes
Amal	17	Male	Grade 10	Yes	No
Ruvini	16	Female	Grade 9	Yes	Yes
Ganga	18	Female	Grade 10	Yes	Yes
Anoma	16	Female	Grade 10	Yes	No
Palitha	19	Male	Grade 7	No	Yes
Vajira	17	Male	Grade 10	Yes	No
Rohana	18	Male	Grade 10	Yes	No
Kamani	16	Female	Grade 8	No	Yes

*Providing anonymous, all informants names were changed in order to protect identity and privacy.

Causes for drop out

According to the informants, all of the interviewees drop out from the neighboring schools due to various reasons. There were 6 male and 4 female facing for the interview. Several reasons were given for their drop out but most of the students said the poor economical condition of the family and difficult to access to schools were influenced for their drop out. Some students revealed that grade retention and lack of teachers in their schools were caused for their drop out. When asked about one's perception toward students drop out, he stated:

“Every day I walk to school more than 5 kilometers, I start my journey before 6 am to go to the school on time. If I late I will be punished. It's very difficult to go to school regularly. There are unsafe roads and threats of wild elephants too. Then I stopped my schooling” (Palitha, 19).

Most of the informants said that they dropped out with in last 1-5 years. Some students said that they left the school a few years ago and have already engaged with some part time jobs. Six informants told the researcher they have not engaged any academic work and two of them had joined to the community learning center for vocational training. Mr. Ruwan added,

“I discontinued my schooling due to the economical problems of my family. Then I found a part time job to help my father. But I was paid very less amount and there were very difficult duties. So I joint to this welding course and waiting for a better job” (Ruwan, 16).

Characteristics of drop out students

In terms of characteristics of drop out students, the interviewed informants stated some common characteristics. Most of the informants pointed out their habit of irregular pattern of school attendance. Ms Ganga said that,

“I had to help my mother for house holding works and baby caring. At that time my younger sister was only 6 months. My mother went to farm to assist my father. So I missed several days to attend the school. Next time the class was unpleasant

for me as I was unable to catch the lessons and teachers were not happy with my absence” (Ganga, 18).

Some of informants had to leave the school due to their long time absenteeism and they were entered to school again in accordance with the involvement of their teachers or others. Ms Kamani had the same experience and recalled his experience:

“My father died by wild elephants’ attack when I was in grade 7. My mother was helpless with two kids of me and my younger sister who was 3 years old. I had to stay at home to take care of my sister when my mother was working in a rubber estate. So I was absent nearly six months. I wouldn’t be able to stay at home since my class teacher came to see me and asked me to come to the school. Though I started schooling again it lasted only three months due to my personal problems became worst” (Kamal,16).

Another common characteristic which came up with the interviews was that some of drop outs were employed in unsuitable jobs for their age such as selling goods at markets, house hold servants, helpers for construction sites or rubber estates. Kamal, Ruwan, and Amal were arrested by police when they were employing at illegal sand mine location. Amal expressed his feeling:

“I used to go to sand mine location with my father, after school and weekends. I helped my father and earned little money. In my area sand mining is prohibited. One day police seized the place and all workers were taken in to custody. I had to wait two days at police station” (Amal16).

Suggestions for prevention of student drop out

Palitha suggested opening new schools in locations where easy to access. Because of the only school of his village were placed in unsafe and difficult area.

“There was lack of transport facilities in my area. If it’s possible to arrange school bus service at least in the morning and school closing time, it may be helpful to students to go to school every day”.

Kamani also suggested that;

“Most of students in this area came from poor families and parents cannot spend money to buy books and other stationeries. Therefore if you can arrange some donations for poor students like me it will help them to schooling every day”.

According to Vajira, lack of teachers and Lack of facilities were caused for student drop out. He made suggestions to solve the problem by;

“In my school there were only five teachers including the principal. School has classes up to grade 11. Most of the times we were learning to gather with another class. Also because of lack facilities teachers avoided some lessons. When teachers were on leave we had do nothing. If these problems can be solved by giving enough facilities and teachers, most of students may attend student daily”.

Overall summary of the interview

Interview participants were disappointed with the decision that they made to quit their schooling. They believed that if they had support to avoid their obstacles they would have continued their education to have better life.

According to the participants, if they were able to access to their school easily or they had better transport system to their school, they might attend the school regularly. Thus they would not miss their academic works, or the class room would not be unpleasant place.

The interview respondents pointed out that their poor economic status also highly caused for their dropping out. The participants believed that if there were some one to give them a hand for their educational needs they would be able to continue their education without problems while it would be a great assistance to up lift their helpless families.

The interviewees pointed out that there were problems of lack of teachers, and poor educational facilities. As a result of that, they felt schooling wasted their time they fed up with the class room without teaching and learning. Then they tended to support their family instead of going to school. They suggested solving these problems

immediately for make a better future for their younger generation by providing adequate teachers and resources.

This chapter presented the results from questionnaires and interviews that derived from not drop out and drop out students. In the next chapter the discussion of the findings will be carried out with Sri Lankan educational context.



CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study proposed to find the perception of students on student drop out of government secondary schools of Badulla educational zone Sri Lanka. The data was collected from 362 students who were studying in government secondary schools at the time of data collection and 31 drop out students who were engaging activities at community learning center. In this chapter, the results obtained from the survey questionnaires from 393 respondents shall be statistically discussed while the discussion of the interview results shall be examined to support the findings along the way.

The discussion of research findings are carried out in the following order.

5.1 Personal factors of respondents

5.2 Factors caused for student drop out

5.3 Comparison of students drop out with family, student, school and social factors

5.1 Personal factors of respondents.

The research findings showed that over three fourth of the students (83.5%) were age between 14-15 years older while the rest of the students (16.5%) were age above 15 years. There were no any students of age below 14 years. The situation represented the national characteristics of student population of grade 10 in Sri Lanka who was age between 14 – 15 years. It was notable that none of the students were age below 14 years. In Sri Lanka most of students started their schooling at age 6 and this result indicated that all of students entered to the school at their required age. This would be happened because of the compulsory education policy of Sri Lanka which interpreted the compulsory age of education as age between 5-14 years. Being

the majority of students were age of compulsory period, it was assumed that these students would be able to complete the higher education at their required age which can be benefit for their future lives. Also it was found that very low percentage of students who were 15 years or above. This noted that it was few students failing in the same grade in Sri Lankan context.

According to the research findings, 52.2% of the students were female and 47.8% were male students. This result represented the general condition that there were no gender disparities of students in Sri Lanka. Also this matched with the first, theme of national educational development plan, that equal access and equity for education.

Among the students of secondary schools in Badulla educational zone, 94.4% stayed with their family while the rest (5.6%) stayed away from their family. It was found that most of the students who were away from their family showed high possibility to be dropped out. Also this was a represent the family life of Sri Lanka which showed the high relationship of parents and children. Thus it was hardly seen broken families in Sri Lanka.

5.2 Factors caused for student drop out

5.2.1 Family factors

The research result found that the perception level of not drop out students and drop out students on affecting of family factors for the student drop out was in moderate level with the mean values of 2.80, 3.55 respectively. From findings of the interview also, it was revealed that the family factors affected for student dropout while most of related studies found the same result. This result is consistent with the findings of Gassama (2006) which stated that low educational level of parent, the broken family structure, the establish pattern of sibling school failure, those factors created a home environment which negatively affected on the value of education. Additionally at risk factors also played into the student academic success with the passing of the time thereby polarizing the students drop out. In Taiwan, single –parent family; lower learning achievement, and lower stress academic credits influenced the

occurrence drop out behavior (Tang, 2009). The same results showed that there were effects of family factor on the relationship between association with deviant peer and drop out.

There were three major variables studied under the family factor. They are economic status, education level of parents, and sibling has dropped out. Out of three components of family factors, economic status was the highest affected factor with mean value of 3.41 and 4.46 for not and drop out student respectively. According to poverty index in Sri Lanka, the first, second and seventh poorest divisional secretariat divisions were reported from Uva province. This indicated that most of the families were living under the poverty line and it had influenced highly for the student drop out. The comments from the informant on this issue confirmed the situation;

“I discontinued my schooling due to the economical problems of my family. Then I found a part time job to help my father. But I was paid very less amount and there were very difficult duties. So I joint to this welding course and waiting for a better job” (Ruwan, 16).

The same finding found in the report of finance commission (2010), that higher dropout rate reported from Uva province. Macgregor (2007) found that the financial difficulties of the family and low education level of families affected for drop out students in South Africa. The findings were also in line with the findings of Jia (2007) who studied about students dropouts in China. In his study it was also mentioned that some students from poor families had to quit school for not having enough money for tuition fees. For this factor the item number 1 (low monthly income of parents) had the highest mean value of 3.39 with the high level of perception of not drop out and high level of perceptions with mean value of 4.46 of the drop out students.

In term of the results of this study, it was found that the education level of parents also affected for student drop out with moderate level with mean value of 2.38 and 2.89 for not drop out and drop out students. This is in line with the findings of Gassama (2006) which found that low education level of parents caused for discontinuing schooling of children. For this factor the item number 2 (Not receiving the support of the parents for the children’s education) had the highest mean value of

2.72 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out and moderate level of perceptions with mean value of 3.03 of the drop out students.

The results of this study found that sibling has dropped out also affected for student drop out with moderate level with mean value of 2.58 and 3.30 for not drop out and drop out student respectively. For this factor the item number 3 (Wrong attitudes of the dropped out brothers and sisters) had the highest mean value of 3.05 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out and moderate level of perceptions with mean value of 3.58 of the drop out students. This finding also consistent with the study of Gassama (2006) which stated that the establish pattern of sibling school failure caused for student drop out and DFID report (2009) also mentioned that low education level of other family members was affected for student dropouts.

5.2.2 Student factors

According to the findings of this study it was found that the perception levels of not drop out and drop out students on student drop out were moderate level with mean values of 3.37, 3.41 respectively. This finding is in line with the findings of Gonzalaz, (2010) which mentioned that there was a great influence of student factor on student drop out. Also the same study found that students drop out because of the student factors such as problems at home, early pregnancy, need of supporting the family economically and peer groups pressure. According to Roderick (1993) the most common reason for dropping out cited by both young men and women not liking school and poor school performance.

There were three major variables studied under the student factors. They are attendance, achievements, and grade retention. Out of three components of student factors grade retention had the high perception levels for both not drop out and drop out students and it was mean values of 3.84, 4.01 respectively. This is aligned with the finding of Melissa (1995) which emphasized that grade retention had more influence on students drop out. There was indeed a strong association between grade retention and student drop out. Further literature on grade retention suggested three important aspects of the retention experience that combine to place students at risk of school failure and early school leaving. Being held back (retention), linked to academic

difficulty, students who were held back and who were older than the kids in their grade also tend to drop out (Convissor, 2007). The same finding came up with the study done by Bridgeland. J. (2006) which found that there were five major factors for student drop out ; classes were not interesting , missed too many days and could not catch up, spent time with people who were not interested in schools, had too much freedom and not enough in the life, and was failing in the school. Most of the interviewed drop out students also had been retained several times in their schooling. For retained student the class room was strange and unpleasant because of the departure of their closer friends and associating new friends who were younger at their age. This situation had revealed by UNICEF (2009), grade retention, low achievement were also affected for student drop out. Also, students who repeated grades or who were over age for their grade were more likely to drop out Woods (1995). For this factor the item number 1 (Failing in the same grade reduces the desire to attend school) had the highest mean value of 4.38 with the high level of perception of not drop out and high level of perceptions with mean value of 4.29 of the drop out students.

The results of this study revealed that the poor attendance of student also a factor affecting for student drop out as perceived by the not drop out and drop out students. Results from the interview supported the idea;

“I had to help my mother for house holding works and baby caring. At that time my younger sister was only 6 months. My mother went to farm to assist my father. So I missed several days to attend the school. Next time the class was unpleasant for me as I was unable to catch the lessons and teachers were not happy with my absence” (Ganga, 18).

This is consistent with the findings of report published by UNICEF (2009) which was mentioned that students who left the school often exhibit poor academic achievement and poor school attendance. Many students who drop out expressed negative attitudes about school. They consider the coursework irrelevant, their dislike to school, teachers other students, feeling of un-safety and/or feeling of their unmatched in the class room. The same finding resulted in the study of Convissor (2007), that absenteeism and along with academic failure was an important future predictor for student drop out. The finding of this study is consistent with the findings of DFID report (2009) which stated that irregular attendance and temporary

withdrawals could be both were precursor to dropping out. These could be caused by a range of factors including: child ill health, ill health of family members, distance to school etc. For this factor the item number 1(Less participation in studies due to irregular attendance of school) had the highest mean value of 3.56 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out and moderate level of perceptions with mean value of 3.39 of the drop out students. Through the interviews it was confirmed by drop out students and they reveal that they miss too many school days due to the some disturbance and it would discontinue the schooling.

The research findings showed that the achievement was another factor for affecting student drop out as perceived by the not drop out and drop out students at moderate levels of perceptions with the mean values of 3.12, 2.94 respectively. For this factor item 2, that low literacy level of students had the highest mean score while item number 1 that condemn by the teachers due to their low achievement level , had the lowest mean value of 2.95, 2.65 for not drop out students and drop out students. This is in line with the study done by Woods (1995) which found that strongest educational predictor of dropping out was poor academic achievement. The same finding of Wehlage and Rutter (1986) which found that students who drop out in terms of their lack of academic success and disciplinary problems, and these students often decided to terminate this negative situation. This is aligned with the finding that children with low achievement were more likely than those with higher achievement to drop out. Low achievement was related with other factors such as absenteeism, repetition, schooling quality, household context and demand on time (DFID report, 2009). According to Roderick (1993), the most common reasons for dropping out, cited by both young men and women, included not liking school and poor school performance. The findings of Gassama (2006) revealed that students became frustrated with the lack of achievement due to the school failure. In generally with Sri Lankan experiences, it can be concluded that the students who showed lack performance of their academic works were more likely to be drop out than the students with high performances. For this factor the item number 2 (Low literacy level of the children) had the highest mean value of 3.56 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out and moderate level of perceptions with mean value of 3.10 of the drop out students.

5.2.3 School factors

The research result found that the perception level of not drop out students and drop out students on affecting of school factors for the student drop out was in moderate level with the mean values of 3.07,3.37 respectively. From interviews it was found that classes were not interesting, lack of teachers, course work is too hard, difficult to access to the schools and traditional teaching methods were caused to student drop out. Because of the lack of teachers, some students decided not to continue their study in schools. Sometimes, more distance between homes to school, they found it is hard to travel daily. Some teaching methods are not fitting, thus they are not interested in it. This result is consistent with the findings of UNICEF (2009) which stated that students who left the school often due to lack of teachers, difficult to access to school ,extreme poverty and grade retention.

There were three major variables studied under the school factors. They are lack of teachers, difficult to access to school, and traditional teaching methods. Out of three components of school factors, difficult to access to school was the highest affected factor for the student drop out was moderate level with mean values of 3.46 for the not drop out students and high level with mean values of 4.52 for the drop out students. Comment was mentioned during the interview.

“Every day I walk to school more than 5 kilometers, I start my journey before 6 am to go to the school on time. If I late I will be punished. It’s very difficult to go to school regularly. There are unsafe roads and threats of wild elephants too. Then I stopped my schooling” (Palitha, 19).

As it was indicated by interview most of the student faced lot of problems to access to their schools. This is aligned with the finding that some schools are located further away and this was particularly case at secondary and rural situations. Thus Younger children and girls were particularly at risk of drop out where schools are located at a distance. (DFID report, 2009).The findings were also in line with the findings of UNICEF (2009) which stated that students who left the school often due to lack of teachers, difficult to access to school ,extreme poverty and grade retention. For this factor the item number 2 (Getting discouraged to attend school regularly due to the distance between the school and home) had the highest mean value of 3.76 with

the high level of perception of not drop out and high level of perceptions with mean value of 4.71 of the drop out students.

In term of the results of this study, it was found that the lack of teachers also affected for student drop out with moderate level of equal mean values of 2.96 for not drop out and drop out students respectively. This is in line with the findings of UNICEF (2009) which found that lack of qualified teachers is cause of drop out so they are used only traditional teaching methods and no innovation in teaching learning process. It cause student drop out. The findings of UNESCO (1987) revealed that shortage of qualified teachers, the teacher's attitude toward teaching, the motivation of teachers as well as class size also had a greater influence on student drop out. For this factor the item number 3 (Children having unnecessary influences at school due to the deficiency of teachers) had the highest mean value of 3.11 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out and moderate level of perceptions with mean value of 3.13 of the drop out students.

The results of this study found that traditional teaching methods also influenced for student drop out with moderate level with mean value of 2.80 and 2.62 for not drop out and drop out student respectively. For this factor the item number 1 (Becoming the classroom an unpleasant place due to teacher centered learning process) had the highest mean value of 2.91 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out student and item number 3 (Exam oriented learning process) had the highest mean value of 2.84 with the moderate level of perception of drop out student. Normally, regular education and traditional teaching method alone cannot possibly meet the need of student. Teachers must seek out new and more effective way to accomplish learning for all students. This findings also consistent with the study of Centrall (1999), which stated that traditional teaching methods were not always working successfully and alternative methods of education must be implementation to student success. Education Fact Sheet (2010) also mentioned that teachers must use alternative teaching methodologies, curricula, learning activities, and diagnostic and assessment procedures to meet the students' needs, abilities, talents, and interests. Also found that educational programs must also provide character development and law education, and related services to support program goals and lead to a student's improvement in academics, attendance, and discipline.

5.2.4 Social factors

The research result found that the perception level of not drop out students and drop out students on affecting of social factors for the student drop out was in moderate level with the mean values of 2.90,2.40 respectively. From interviews it was found that socioeconomic barriers prevented the young person from fully participating in schools. Due to lacking of money, some students enabled go to school regularly. Some of related studies found the same result too. This result is consistent with the findings of Shannon & Bylsma (2002) which stated that some schools promote the values of the majority culture and not that of the minority child". - School dropout may occur in rich areas too and affect well-off families.

There were two major variables studied under the school factors. They are high risk peer group and, high risk social behaviors. Out of two variables of social factors, high risk peer group was the highest affected factor for the student drop out was moderate level with mean values of 2.95, 2.40 for not drop out students and drop out students respectively. The findings were also in line with the findings of TES Report (1998) which stated that peer group pressure influenced to continue or discontinue their education and most drop-outs said they dropped out from the schools "because everyone else did". For this factor the item number 2 (Addicting to bad habits of peer groups) had the highest mean value of 2.96 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out and moderate level of perceptions with mean value of 2.45 of the drop out students.

In term of the results of this study, it was found that the high risk peer social behavior also influenced for student drop out with moderate level with mean value of 2.85 and 2.40 for not drop out and drop out students respectively. Normally in rural areas many students living under the poverty thus they were tending to earn money through commonly existing employment opportunities but that are not suitable for their age. When engaged with the jobs they are getting wrong attitude from the peer and finally decided to give up schooling. This is in line with the findings of Buttin (2000) which found that early antisocial behavior, such as violence, substance use, or trouble with the law, caused student drop out. Also the same study revealed that having close friends who were involved in antisocial behavior or who had dropped out increases the risk that a youth will also drop out. For this factor the item

number 1 (Tending to earn money through commonly existing employment opportunities that are not suitable for the age of the school children) had the highest mean value of 2.90 with the moderate level of perception of not drop out and item number 2 (Getting wrong attitudes due to misuse of media) had the highest mean value of 2.52 with the moderate level of perception of drop out students. According to the findings of Battin (2000) emphasized children and adolescents may also have general attitudes and behaviors that increase the likelihood that they will not graduate. Early antisocial behavior, such as violence, substance use, or trouble with the law, has been linked in a number of studies to dropping out of school.

5.3 Comparison of student drop out with family, student, school and social factors.

5.3.1. Family factors

Independent sample t-test was carried out to test whether there was a significant difference between the means of not drop out and drop out students. According to the findings of this study it was found that there was significant difference of perception levels between not drop out and drop students on family factors for student drop out. This result is aligned with the study of Macgregor (2007) which was found that family factors were highly affected for student drop outs. Family factors included economic status, education level of parents and siblings has dropped out. Research revealed that these variables had greater influenced on student drop out in Badulla educational zone. Interviewees also highlighted these family factors for their discontinuations of their schooling. Out of these three variables economic status of family had highest mean value and it proved the most of the drop out students were living under the poverty.

5.3.2. Student factors

According to the findings of this study it was found that there was no significant difference of perception levels between not drop out and drop students on student factors. The reason why this occurred, because of both not drop out and drop out was living in same area and had same experience at the schools. Thus, perception level on attendance and achievement of both not drops out and drop out students was similar and not significant. Grade retention was significant and it was affected factor for the student drop out. This matter was pointed out by interview participants too. According to Melissa (1995) emphasized that grade retention had more influence on student drop out and there was indeed a strong association between grade retention and student drop out. This finding also aligns with Convissor (2006), he emphasized being held back (retention), linked to academic difficulty, students who are held back and who are older than the kids in their grade also tend to drop out.

5.3.3 School factors

According to the findings of this study it was found that there was significant difference of perception levels between not drop out and drop students on school factors for student drop out. School factors included lack of teachers, difficult to access to schools and traditional teaching methods. Independent sample t-test was carried out to test whether there was a significant difference between the means of not drop out and drop out students. Both of the groups' students experienced with the same difficulties of lack of teachers and traditional teaching methods. Thus, these variables were not significant. Some drop out students mentioned that they discontinued their schooling because of difficulties in access schools. Research results also align with this matter and it was found that difficult to access to schools was significant. The same finding showed that DFID report (2009), emphasized younger children and girls were particularly at risk of drop out where schools are located at a distance.

5.3.4 Social factors

The results of this study revealed that there was statistically significance difference of perceptions between not drop outs and drop outs students on student drop out. But highest mean value reported from the not drop out student. Since the idea of that most of not drop out student think that there is a strong association between student drop out and their family factors.

This chapter discussed the research findings in related to concepts and previous researches. After critically studying the results, this chapter attempted to associate to previous studies done in the same field and related the findings to the Sri Lankan context which the study was situated.

The following chapter would conclude the study and include the suggestions and recommendations in relation to research findings and recommendation for future study.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research aimed to study factor for the student drop out of government secondary schools in Badulla educational zone, Sri Lanka. This chapter concludes the overall study and recommendations to reduce student drop out and recommendations for further research to learn more about student drop out. This chapter shall be presented as follows

6.1 Conclusions

6.2 Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

As mentioned in previously, the study focused on to find out factors for the student drop out, undertaking the case of student drop out of government secondary schools in Badulla educational zone, Sri Lanka. It explored student's perception towards factors for the student drop out and comparison of factors between not drop out students and drop out students.

The research was conducted by adopting mixed methods. Qualitative approach was primarily employed through questionnaire to survey overall results. Once the questionnaires were collected and classified, qualitative approach through interviews with drop out students subsequently adopted. Questionnaire items were developed after reviewing related literatures and in line with factors for the student drop out in Sri Lanka. Interview focused on the aspects of the student drop out and obstacles faced by the drop out students when they were schooling. Interview questions were developed in order fulfill some information which questionnaire failed to clarify clearly. Beside it was meant to confirm the answers and verify its validity of the research.

The study conducted with 362 not drop out students selected from the entire population of 3802 students who were studied grade 10 at government secondary schools and 31 dropout students in Badulla educational zone, Sri Lanka. Ten drop out students was interviewed at their home premises. 100% of the students who were surveyed returned the completed questionnaire which would be helped to add more validity for the findings. The survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, standard deviation and percentages. Independent sample t- test was used to compare the students perception level based on their family factors, student factors, school factors and social factors and to find out whether there was any significant difference between those factors and student drop out or not.

The results of the study summarized as follows.

6.1.1 General Information of students

According to analysis, Majority of the students (83.5%) were age between 14-15 years older while the rest of the students (16.5%) were age above 15 years. There were no any students of age below 14 years.

Analysis showed that, 52.2% of the students were female and 47.8% were male students. This result represented the general condition that there were no gender disparities among the students in Sri Lanka.

“Stay with family” status of the students was categorized as stay with family and stay away from family. According to the analysis, 94.4% stayed with their family while the rest (5.6%) stayed away from their family.

6.1.2 Perception on student drop out

Perceptions on student drop out measured under four main domains such as family factors, student factors, school factors and social factors.

6.1.2.1. Family factors

Family factors were meant to the issues that were affected to children education at their home. Research results showed that level of perception of family factors on student drop out in the Badulla educational zone was moderate level

and significant. Family factors were divided into three major variables. They included economic status of the family, education level of parents, and siblings has dropped out.

Economic status of the family covered areas related to student drop out such as low monthly income of the family, not having permanent houses and inability of obtaining daily needs like food and clothing. Level of perception of low monthly income of the family was perceived high and overall level of perception in this variable was high.

Under, education levels of parents attempted to acquire student's perception by covering not having a permanent job for the father or mother, not receiving the support of the parents for the children's education and illiteracy (reading & writing) of parents. Overall level of perception in this area was moderate.

Siblings has dropped out covered areas related to student drop out such as brothers and sisters doing jobs giving up their education, having married brothers and sisters who haven't completed their education and wrong attitudes of the dropped out brothers and sisters. Level of perception on student drop out of siblings has dropped out in the Badulla educational zone was rated moderate.

All above three variables were significant. It can be conclude, influence of these factors for the student drop out was high.

6.1.2.2. Student factors

Perception level of student factors was measured in terms of three variables which included attendance, achievement and grade retention. In accordance with the results of the research the overall perception level of the students in Badulla educational zone was moderate and not significant.

Attendance was meant to the average number of days attending to school and less participation in studies due to irregular attendance of school, facing problems in associating peers at school due to irregular attendance and getting punishments at school due to irregular attendance were covered under this variable. The students in Badulla educational zone perceived their level of perception in this variable was moderate.

Achievement meant the average marks of students get their term tests and condemned by the teachers due to their low achievement levels, low

literacy level (reading & writing) of the children and school becoming an unpleasant place as the children are humiliated by the students due to their low achievement levels were covered under this variable. The students in Badulla educational zone perceived their level of perception in this variable was moderate

Grade retention referred to students who retained in the same grade more than one year time period and failing in the same grade reduces the desire to attend school, classroom becoming an unpleasant place due to the departure of close friends and associating friends who are unpleasant for their age and becoming humiliated in the classroom were covered under this variable. The students in Badulla educational zone perceived their level of perception in this variable was high.

Out of three variables Grade retention was significant. Thus can be concluded there was a strong association between grade retention and student drop out.

6.1.2.3. School factors

School factors were meant to the issues that influenced student drop out due to school climate. Research results showed that level of perception of school factors on student drop out in the Badulla educational zone was moderate level and significant. School factors were divided into three major variables. They included lack of teachers, difficult to access to schools and traditional teaching methods.

Lack of teachers was meant that there were no adequate teachers in the schools. This variable covered area related to student drop out such as tendency to make unnecessary friendships when they waste time due to the deficiency of teachers, refusing the school thinking that attending school is a useless thing when they are enable to get the education they expected from school and children having unnecessary influences at school due to the deficiency of teachers. Level of perception of lack of teachers on student drop out in the Badulla educational zone was perceived moderate level.

Under, traditional teaching methods attempted to acquire student's perception by covering areas such as becoming the classroom an unpleasant place due to teacher centered learning process, exam oriented learning process and school becoming an undesirable place due to the punishments given in the traditional

learning process. Level of perception on student drop out of this variable was perceived moderate level.

Difficult to access to schools meant difficulties that was faced by student when access to their schools this would be geographical difficulties, lack of transport difficulties, more distance to schools, natural treats etc. Difficult to access to schools perceived high perception level and it was significant. Majority of interview participants also emphasized that they discontinued their schooling due to the access difficulties to the schools regularly.

6.1.2.4. Social factors

Perception level of social factors was measured in terms of two variables which included high risk peer groups and high risk social behaviors. In accordance with the results of the research the overall perception level of the students in Badulla educational zone was moderate and significant.

High risk peer groups were meant to colleagues associated with students who had mal disciplinary. Addicting to bad habits of peer groups and school becoming an unpleasant place due to the acceptance of wrong attitudes of peer groups towards education were covered under this variable. The students in Badulla educational zone perceived their level of perception in this variable was moderate

High risk social behaviors were referred to risky social trends such as drug abuse, child labor, affect of mass media. High risk social behaviors covered areas related to student drop out such as getting wrong attitudes due to misuse of media and tending to earn money through commonly existing employment opportunities that are not suitable for the age of school children. The students in Badulla educational zone perceived their level of perception of this variable was moderate.

6.1.3 Comparison of student drop out with four factors.

Factors for the student drop out were compared between not drop out students and drop out students. Independent sample t-test was used to compare the means to test whether there was a statistically significant difference between the not drop out students and drop out students for the student drop out.

Family factors were divided in to three variables such as economic status of the parents, education level of parents and siblings has dropped out. Research results showed that there was statistically significant difference between the not drop out students and drop out students on student drop out.

Student factors were grouped in to three variables such as attendance, achievement and grade retention. The results showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the not drop out students and drop out students on student drop out.

Student factors were divided in to three variables such as lack of teachers, difficult to access to schools and traditional teaching methods. Research results revealed that there was statistically significant difference between the not drop out students and drop out students for student drop out.

Social factors were grouped in to two variables such as high risk peer group and high risk social behaviors. The results showed that there was statistically significant difference between the not drop out students and drop out students on student drop out.

6.2 Recommendations

In this section recommendations were suggested based on the research findings. Also the limitations of this study were discussed. In addition to recommending areas for further research.

6.2.1 Recommendations based on the findings of this research

1. Interview with the drop out students and analyzed data revealed that poor economical background was vastly affected for their discontinuation of school. Therefore, it is recommended that there should be provincial level assistance service to students those who were faced with extreme economic problems.

2. Research findings showed that education level of parents and their support to education affect to student drop out. It is recommended that zonal education

office should provide more counseling and psychosocial intervention programs to the parents.

3. Interview participants mentioned that difficult to access to schools regularly was crucial problem to them. Thus it is recommended that provincial ministry of education should be arranged school bus service at least in the morning and school closing time and restructure the schools system , to access schools easily for all students.

4. Research findings indicated that grade retention was high level. Interviewees also mention that failing in the same grade affected for their student drop out. It is recommended that every school should have a special program to support low achievement students.

5. Interview participants mentioned that lack of teachers and poor educational facilities were caused problem for their education. Thus zonal education office should provide adequate teachers and facilities to schools.

6.2.1.1 Recommendations for policy makers/ educational authorities

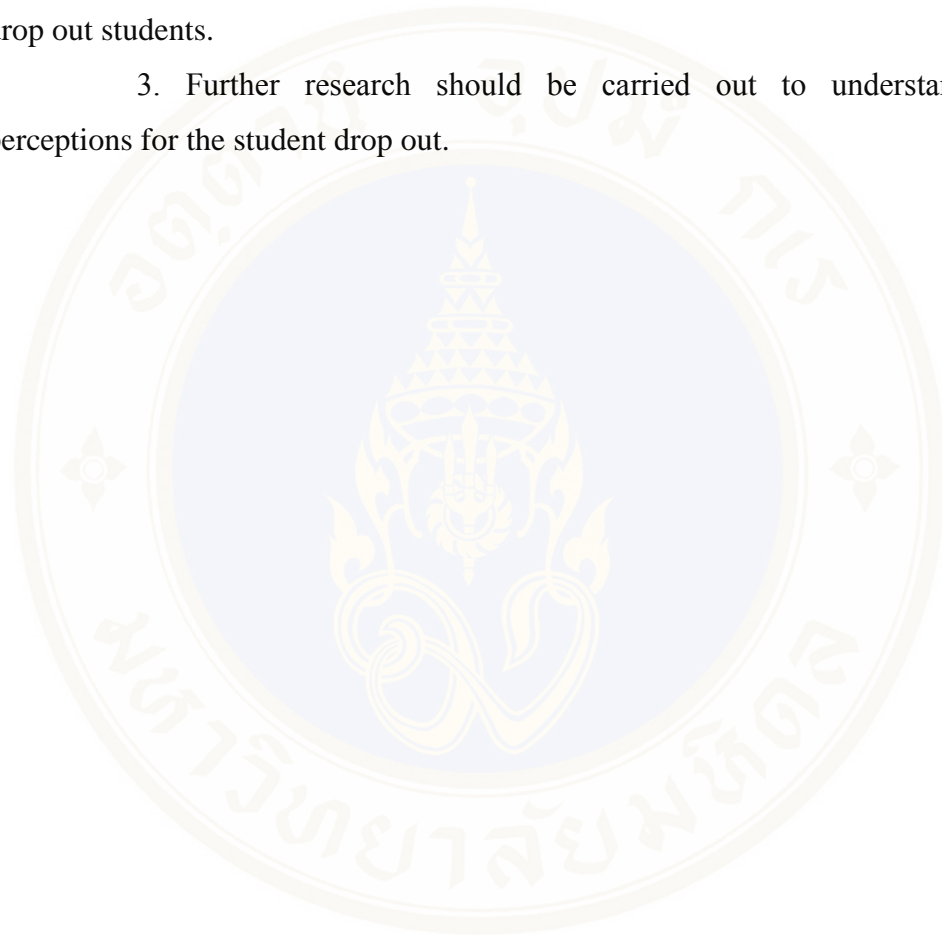
1. Restructure the school system to ensure easily access to every student.
2. Develop a program to distribute required physical recourses adequately and equally.
3. Develop proper counseling and career guidance program for students.
4. Ensure the implementation of compulsory education rules.
5. Provide required teachers for all schools.

6.2.1.3 Recommendations for parents

1. Try to send all children to school until they complete the education.
2. Help to children to attend the schools regularly.
3. Avoid the association with unmatched peers.
4. Try to get rid of attend to mal disciplinary actions.

6.2.2 Recommendations for further study

1. Due to the limited time the present study was bounded to only two educational divisions out of the five. To learn student's perception deeply and to add high validity for the findings, the same study can be expanded to other divisions.
2. The research in future should also focus on in – depth interviews with drop out students.
3. Further research should be carried out to understand parent's perceptions for the student drop out.



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RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDENTS DROP OUT OF GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS: BADULLA EDUCATIONAL ZONE, SRI LANKA

PART 1 General information

Instruction: please place a check \checkmark in square \square that matches your answer.

1. Age:

Below 14 years

14 to 15 years

Above 15 years

2. Gender:

Male

Female

3. Study status:

Study

Not study

4. Stay with family

Stay with family

Away from family

PART 2 Perception of students

Instruction

- (1) The following statements describe the individual information of you. Please take time to consider each statement and express your idea by placing a check in the square that matches your most correct answer.

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Economic status					
1.Low monthly income of the family					
2.Not having permanent houses					
3.Inability of obtaining daily needs like food and clothing					
Education level of parents					
4.Not having a permanent job of the father or mother					
5.Not receiving the support of the parents for the children's education					
6.Illiteracy (reading & writing) of parents					
Sibling has dropped out					
7.Brothers and sisters doing jobs giving up their education					
8.Having married brothers and sisters who haven't completed their education					
9.Wrong attitudes of the dropped out brothers and sisters					

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Attendance					
10.Less participation in studies due to irregular attendance of school					
11.Facing problems in associating peers at school due to irregular attendance					
12.Getting punishments at school due to irregular attendance					
Achievement					
13.Condemned by the teachers due to their low achievement levels					
14.Low literacy level (reading & writing) of the children					
15.School becoming an unpleasant place as the children are humiliated by the students due to their low achievement levels					
Grade retention					
16.Failing in the same grade reduces the desire to attend school					
17.Classroom becoming an unpleasant place due to the departure of close friends					
18.Associating friends who are unpleasant for their age and becoming humiliated in the classroom					

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Lack of teachers					
19.Tendency to make unnecessary friendships when they waste time due to the deficiency of teachers					
20.Refusing the school thinking that attending school is a useless thing when they are enable to get the education they expected from school					
21.Children having unnecessary influences at school due to the deficiency of teachers					
Difficult to access					
22.Getting discouraged to attend school regularly due to the distance between the school and home					
23.Difficulties of attending school caused by natural disasters					
24.Not having proper transport facilities to attend school					
Traditional teaching methods					
25.Becoming the classroom an unpleasant place due to teacher cent red learning process					
26.School becoming an undesirable place due to the punishments given in the traditional learning process					
27.Exam oriented learning process					

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
High risk peer group					
28.School becoming an unpleasant place due to the acceptance of wrong attitudes of peer groups towards education					
29.Addicting to bad habits of peer groups					
High risk social behavior					
30.Tending to earn money through commonly existing employment opportunities that are not suitable for the age of school children					
31.Getting wrong attitudes due to misuse of media					

Interview guide line

1. What are the causes of students drop out?
2. What is the main cause for students drop out?
3. How long have you been stopped your schooling?
4. Did you ever dropped out before grade 10 and join to school again?
5. What are you doing after drop out?
6. Do you remember any dropped out friends in your school time?
7. Did you ever punish or arrest by police for any misbehaviors?
8. What are the recommendations for stop student drop out?

Thank you for your time, effort and thought in completing this questionnaire.

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