

Wijethunga, W.T.A.W., & T.M.S.P.K.Thennakoon
Dept. of Geography, University of Sri Jayawardenepura

Paper: Sustainability

Issues and challenges of rural educational development with special reference to Education Division in Mawanella

Education receives a prominent place in society among other social concerns, due to its significance from the social development perspective. Although there were many efforts taken by the government to develop education, yet many issues and challenges in rural educational sector should be addressed. Educational improvement and then rural development cannot be expected, without identifying these issues and solving challenges particularly in rural school education. Therefore, the present study is specifically geared to identify the current issues and challenges towards the improvement of rural school education, illustrate the spatial distribution of rural schools in the study area and suggest the feasible solutions for the identified issues.

Two schools in Mawanella Educational Zone were selected for this study. Stratified random sampling was used to cover 6% of the students, 20% of their parents, and teachers were also selected. Six different methods were employed to collect data: pilot survey, interviews, discussions, case studies, observations and questionnaire survey and photographs.

The findings of this study were in close relationship with factors such as number of members in the family, parent's occupation, income and educational attainment of the student etc. Further, the study ascertained the way in which attitudes of parents and students influence the development of rural education. Problems related to student learning process and their adverse effects on educational development were also identified. Close proximity among schools, decreasing demand for rural schools, reduction of student's performance level, lack of resources, relationship of parents and teachers, poor functioning of school development societies and negative attitudes towards rural schools, were also highlighted as challenges of rural educational development.

Keywords: Rural Education, Challenges, School Education, Development