

**Title:** Obtaining the learning outcomes of the subject of Civic Education introduced to justify the CRC at the Secondary Level of the school system in Sri Lanka.

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**Keywords:**

1. Civic Education
2. Child Rights
3. Secondary Schools

**Purpose:**

1. To identify the level of achievement of expected learning outcomes of the subject of Civic Education at secondary level of the school system.
2. To recommend and implement possible alternatives to obtain optimum outcome from the subject of Civic Education to justify the CRC at school level.
3. To monitor the outcome of the project work for sustainable development with a view to producing good citizens to the Global Village.

**Abstract:**

In Sri Lanka, Civic Education has been introduced as a subject to the secondary school curriculum (Grade 6 – 11) since 2005 following the recommendation of the National Education Commission in 2003. The aim of the Civic Education subject is to achieve sustainable peace by the year 2020. Further the subject has been developed to understand and enhance the practice of Democracy, Child Rights, Human Rights and responsibilities, Law and Justice, Multiculturalism, Social Cohesion, Social Integration, Good Governance etc. in society under slogan “from self(own) family to universal family’. Therefore, this project was conducted to check how far the system of education in Sri Lanka could obtain the learning outcomes of this subject and it inevitably paves the ways to identify the assuring of demands of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) in Sri Lankan Context. Further, it was identified the strategies and challenges to strengthen the existing teaching learning process at school level.

## **Obtaining the learning outcomes of the subject of the Civic Education introduced to justify the CRC at the Secondary Level of the school system in Sri Lanka.**

Based on the suggested strategies on final report to overcome the problems that students face related to Child Rights, awareness programmes were conducted for students and teachers. For that well planned “Student’s Parliament” was established at the school and allowed them to discuss CRC concept free and fair. And started maintaining a “Wall News Paper” on CRC and introducing the “Thought for the Day” programme to promote positive thinking abilities on relevant concepts on CRC. On the other hand to emphasize and enhance the Child Rights in Sri Lanka, teacher training programmes and In-service training programmes were conducted several times Island wide. Parents meetings were held each and every term and discussions were conducted to empower the parents regarding Child Rights and built the very good relationship among parents, Teachers and students.

In Sri Lanka, Civic Education has been introduced as a subject to the secondary school curriculum since 2005 and the subject carries the following objectives in line with the National Goals and Basic Competencies for Education.

- Understanding the role of Citizens, their rights and duties, Good Governance at local and central level and the need of a vibrant participatory democracy.
- Awareness of international norms of Human rights and specially the Rights of the Child related to political, civil, economic and social rights.
- Respect for the diversity of cultures and learning to live with others in harmony.
- An issue based and activity based approach in classroom and field.

To fulfill the above objectives Curriculum was implemented in grade 6-9 as compulsory and 10-11 as optional.

After sending the final report of the project to Lund University, children were allowed to affirm human dignity as expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Project was started in the year 2009 and the target groups left the school in year 2010 and 2011 respectively. It was important that school administration allowed continuing the project to the next batch with teachers those who teach Social Sciences. In the school Students’ Parliament was allowed to continue the discussions of the concepts of Child Rights and “Thought for the Day” programme.

All students at this level were in adolescent age and they had to overcome many problems physically and mentally. After continuing the project bullying, harassments and corporal punishment were decreased at alarming speed. This proves the success of this programme. Furthermore, teachers' willingness of listening to the students to solve their problems also was increased. Peer understanding to solve their problems themselves also positively increased. These are the very successful results of the project. On the other hand there were some problems with parents and teachers due to unwillingness of teaching Child Rights in the classroom. Teachers were reluctant to teach Child Rights in the classroom openly because they were afraid of teaching them as they felt that they would not be able to take disciplinary action against the children when they know their Child Rights. On the other hand parents were also reluctant to make the children aware of the Rights of the Child as they would not be able to punish for their wrong doings, as children have the ability to complain against the parents to the Police.

There was a big issue of understanding the concepts of Rights of the Child in the classroom teaching. To recommend and implement possible alternatives to obtain the expected outcome from the subject of Civic Education to justify the CRC at school level is one of the purposes of this project. So, National curriculum on Civic Education has to be revised from grade 6 - 11 to give better understanding of the CRC concepts and to add more practical activities. To address the above mentioned issues, supplementary reading materials were developed in collaboration with the Centre for the Study of Human Rights, University of Colombo and National Institute of Education. Training programmes were accelerated to empower the teachers and In-service Advisors Island wide.

Unexpectedly, Sarvodaya National Movement (One of the NGO) and German Technical Corporation (GIZ) together with National Institute of Education started another training programme to train resource persons regarding Child Rights to nurture ethnic values in children needed to learn to live together in plural society. This programme was covered by the academic officers in the National Institute of Education, Pre-service Lecturers, In-service Advisors and Teachers. Still it is going on and there will be a very good productive programme near future.