

Propensity to tend education under the Arts stream and the unemployment of Arts Graduates



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Content

S/N	Description	Page No.
1	Executive Summary	1
2.	Introduction	3
2.1	Background	3
2.2	Authority for Audit	5
2.3	Audit Approach	5
2.4	Audit Methodology	6
2.5	Audit objectives and criteria	7
2.6	Scope of Audit	9
3.	Audit observations	11
3.1	Educational Policies	11
3.1.1	Being established an educational policy (For school general education sectors)	11
3.1.2	New educational Reform amendments	12
3.1.3	Readiness of the Ministry of Education	13
3.2	University Education	28
3.2.1	Higher Education policies and the University Grants Commission	28
3.2.2	Qualifications for University admission	29
3.2.3	Tend to Arts Degrees	29
3.2.4	Creation and introduction of new courses	31
3.2.5	Sri Lanka propriety framework, establishment of an Accredited and Standards Security Board and the establishment of a Council for non-governmental Higher Education Functions	32
3.3	Employment and Arts Stream	33
3.3.1	The field inclines for jobs	33
3.3.2	The research on employment of the whole graduates	34
3.3.3	National Human Resources and Employment Policy	42
3.3.4	Intervention of Public Intuitions for the implementation of Human Resources and employment Policy.	45
3.3.5	Intervention of the Government on unemployment of graduates	45
3.3.6	Report of the Presidential Commission on Youth	46
3.3.7	National Policy on technical and Vocational Education	47
3.3.8	Maintenance of data on unemployment	47
4.	Recommendations	48

01. Executive Summary

Of the total population of 21.3 million in Sri Lanka, 15.45 million belongs to the age over 15 years, legally suitable age groups for Employment. Nevertheless, about 8.31 people thereof are currently employed. The overall unemployment of young men and women the country takes a high value of about 262,999. Non-availability of suitable job opportunities to those young men and women could pose a national issue in future. Similarly, survey data recorded that 38.4 per cent of the unemployed persons are finding suitable jobs for more than a year. It is typical that many per cent of them represent arts graduates. Meanwhile, about 200,000 persons accumulate to the labour force annually. Even though, about 20,000 vacancies in the public sector and about 120,000 vacancies in the private sector create annually all the unemployed could not absorb into it.

Of the 21 million total population, extremely high dependent rate is observed when about 8.31 million persons are being employed. Since the increase of super annuated population in future there may be a risk that this high dependent rate could not be sustainably bearable and as such it is identified only alternative is to increase employment opportunities immediately. According, to the labour economic surveys, the majority of Sri Lanka's population being a workable age. Demographic dividend of the population composition provides a great opportunity to acquire rapid economic growth as a country and the national human resources and employment policy emphasizes the requirement of its proper management. Accordingly, specially Arts graduates as characterized by various day today medias as well as students who study, under the Arts stream but unable to get the University admission suffer from unemployment. As this, has become a problematical issue, this performance audit has been carried out for the evaluation of intervention of public institutions thereon.

The scope of this audit is to examine, as a sample basis, the stages from the background reason for choosing the art stream by G.C.E.(A/L) students in government schools, until in getting an employment after obtaining the first degree as an art internal student from a government university.

The Art needs to be existed in all social systems in the World and it inevitably necessitates for the existence of human society. Accordingly, a prominent contribution needs to be provided for the procreation of the literary men, actors,

cinematographers musicians and artists at the University level. It is therefore indisputable that the art stream provides a great service to procreate persons with aesthetic thinking.

Nevertheless, education in a developing country such as Sri Lanka which folles the value of economic growth rate as low as 2.7 per cent and the unemployed labour force of 4.3 per cent needs to be directed to economic development and the imbalance between education and employment needs to be minimised. Accordingly, the main observation revealed in this performance Audit include; teaching is carried out with lack of periodically revised educational policies for school and higher education, many students choose Arts stream for Advanced Level due to inequalities of human and physical resources exists in school levels, existence of obstructions for students to learn technology stream, degree courses in Arts have not been periodically revised even in Universities and there are minimum opportunities to improve English language information Technology and Soft Skills development. In addition, even though, a man power planning policy of the country had been revised in the year 2018 and it was anticipated to implement it through two institutions but none of them could be able to identify employment problems and to give practicable solutions.

Under these circumstances 54,824 graduates who passed degree courses during the period from 2012-2018 had been unemployed by 30 June 2018. Steps had been taken by the Ministry of Finance, Economic and Policy Development to offer appointments as graduate trainees only for 19,920 graduates (36 per cent) by 18 September 2019 under 3 stages. Accordingly, it is recommended that the existing education policies need to be immediately revised in order to improve the unemployment, being minimised such complications, having being minimised discriminations of education between provinces in the Island, human and physical resources need to be equally provided increase learning opportunities through the subject stream as Technology through which vocational education skills can be improved, courses and subjects in the universities need to be timely revised and further improve the facilities to students by developing other properties based on job market being taught English, Technology and Soft Skills subject stream.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

(a) Incline to Arts stream within the school level and the higher education facilities available therefore.

In 10,175 government schools 4,215,487 students had studied in the year 2018. Of this, 75 per cent had qualified for G.C.E.(A/L) examination and the overall number of students sat for the GCE (A/L) examination in the year 2018 amounted to 267,111 out of which 105,398 students or 39 per cent thereof had sat for the examination under the Arts stream. Of the total students gain university admission, the total number of students study Arts degree represent approximately 30 per cent. The university Grants Commission (UGC) set up under the universities Act No.16 of 1978 is the foremost institution which monitors the functions of state universities in Sri Lanka and 15 universities have been currently established under the UGC Degree courses in connection with Arts stream are conducted by those state universities under 14 faculties of Arts degrees through 140 Departments.

(b) Expenditure incurs on Arts graduates

Details expenditure incurs by the university Grants Commission for students, study in state universities (except library services, examinations and other expenses) appear below and it is observed that the largest amount of expenses had been incurred on students who study Arts medium. Accordingly, 23 per cent, 22 per cent and 22 per cent of the total expenditure had been incurred on Arts graduates in the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 respectively.

Faculty	2016		2017		2018	
	(Rs.'000)	Percentage	(Rs.'000)	Percentage	(Rs.'000)	Percentage
Arts	4,211,628	23	4,497,595	22	5,396,952	22
Commerce and Management	1,896,404	10	2,104,441	11	2,695,744	11
Science	3,774,005	21	4,091,338	21	4,893,040	20
Medicine	3,322,362	18	3,512,116	18	4,193,628	17
Engineering	2,087,467	12	2,370,864	12	2,956,692	12
Agriculture	1,432,241	08	1,597,041	08	1,869,154	07
Technology	81,360	0.45	292,874	01	613,914	03
Para Medicine	269,091	01	287,864	01	420,846	02
Uneven Faculties	1,049,872	06	1,146,096	06	1,342,253	06
Total	<u>18,124,430</u>		<u>19,900,229</u>		<u>24,382,223</u>	

Source: Statistics of the University Grants Commission

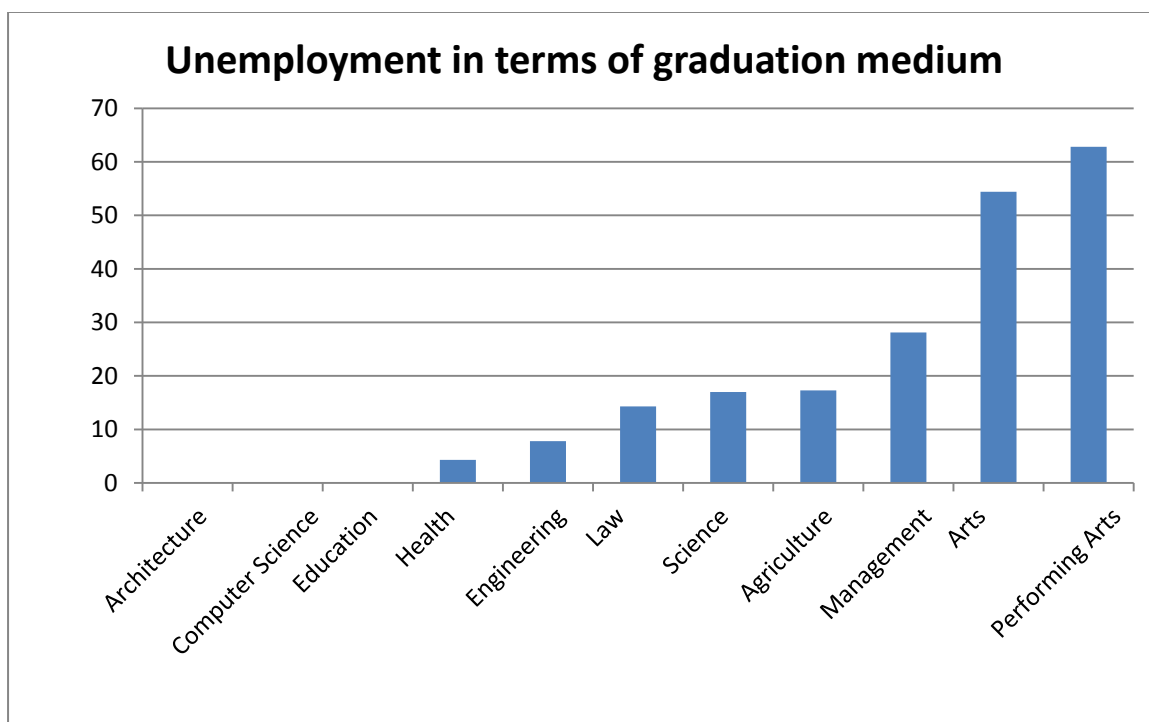
(c) Unemployment Level

A survey conducted by the University Grants Commission in the years 2016/2017 revealed that being employed having being studied under various subject streams, in most cases, unemployment problem is affected. Accordingly, exceeding 50 per cent of the unemployment of Arts graduates became specific matter.

Unemployment of Graduates

Subject Stream Studied	Unemployment Level %
Architecture	Nil
Computer Science/ Information Technology	Nil
Education	Nil
Health	4.3
Engineering	7.8
Law	14.3
Science	17
Agriculture	17.3
Management	28.1
Arts	54.4
Performing Arts	62.8

Source: Investigation study report on graduates conducted by the University Grants Commission in the years 2016 - 2017



2.2 Authority for Audit

This audit was carried out under my direction in pursuance of provisions in Article 154(1) of the constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and in terms of sections 3(1)(b), 5.2 and 12(h) of the National Audit Act No.19 of 2018.

2.3 Audit Approach

Unemployment in Sri Lanka stands at 4.3 per cent, of which 9.1 per cent thereof represents persons who gained GCE (A/L) or higher qualifications. In considering unemployment in terms of subject stream studied at the degree course, unemployment percentage in respect of Science Engineering and Management subject streams taken the value of 27, 8 and 29 respectively whereas the value in respect of Arts stream stood as high level as 54 per cent. Schools and universities carry out a specific task for the development of an effective talented human resource and every government makes an ample financial investment for the development of human resources in Sri Lanka annually through the school and university system. When considered specially universities the expenditure incurred in the year 2018 for the University Grants Commission, Universities, postgraduate institutions and other higher educational institutions amounted to Rs.59,517 million. Accordingly, the percentage of

procreation of arts graduates takes a high value. When considering arts degree separately from other graduates courses conducted by the universities, Arts graduates face difficulties in the job market as their degrees are unmatched to the demand of the job market and caused to unemployed as well.

Thus, a learned crowd who can contribute to the development of national economy has become unemployed and various media frequently report that many other social problems are simultaneously arisen and therefore this caused to choose this topic for a performance audit.

As stated in a report of the research conducted by the university of Sri Jayawardenapura in the year 2019, the position of graduates completed their Arts degrees during the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 is as follows.

Year	Unemployable (%)
2016	52.1
2017	20.9
2018	12.2

2.4 Audit Methodology

The audit inclined to the following approaches

- i. Analysis of information on tertiary education.
- ii. Use of relevant policies, acts and Laws, projects reports, research reports.
- iii. Obtaining information from undergraduates of Arts medium in the Universities by way of questionnaires.
- iv. Obtaining information from undergraduates of Arts Medium and academic staff of the universities through interviews.
- v. Obtaining comments from a representative of the unemployed graduates union.

2.5 Audit objectives and criteria

Main audit objectives

Evaluate whether education given by Arts medium at school and university levels contributes to the job market and social progress.

Sub audit objectives

Audit Criteria

- | Sub audit objectives | Audit Criteria |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ----- | ----- |
| (a) Evaluate the task performs by school education to create a salutary citizen for building future pathway in Sri Lanka. | (i) National education policies and education reforms proposals to be published in terms of the National Education Commission Act No.19 of 1991.

(ii) Project objectives and implementation plans of the Education sector Development Project (ESDP) of the Ministry of Education.

(iii) Strategically methods perused by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of Education Policies.

(iv) Guidelines relate to the development of 1000 secondary schools of the Ministry of Education. |

- (v) Anticipated targets of human and physical resources to be existed in the education sector.
 - (vi) Recommendations stated in the report of the Investigation survey conducted by the University Grants Commission in the years 2016/2017 on graduates.
 - (vii) Recommendations of the Youth Commission report.
- (b) Evaluate whether Arts degree courses in the universities are timely revised.
- (i) Mission and Vision of the Ministry of Higher Education.
 - (ii) Section 3 of the Universities Act No.16 of 1978.
 - (iii) Recommendations of the Investigation survey report on graduates conducted by the university Grants Commission in the years 2016/2017.
- (c) Evaluate the action of government mechanism on unemployed arts graduates
- (i) Mission, vision and function of the Ministry of National policies.
 - (ii) Report of youth commission.
 - (iii) Manpower planning policy.

2.6 Scope of Audit

- (a) The 'Art' is an instrument that balances personal spirit and it is indisputable that the 'Art' also creates a moral, sensitive and qualitative society. Likewise, educate in Arts medium is not only the aim of creating jobs. For a qualitative development of a Society, persons with aesthetic enjoyment and sensitive thoughts need to be prorated. There should be such professionals as the Literati, Authors, Artists Musicians, Dramatists, Actors etc. who educated in Arts stream as well as professional who are voluntarily non-employed. Nevertheless, according to the World Bank ideate in the year 2019, the economic growth rate in Sri Lanka as low as 2.77 and as such the whole education policy needs to be job oriented approach in order to stand up Sri Lanka and the education needs to be inclined to economic development as the basic approach.
- (b) Away from the concept of all students who studied in Arts medium and all Arts graduates need to be employed but assuming that many of the citizen in Sri Lanka should be contributed to the economic development being freed from unemployment of all this audit was carried out. The scope of this audit is targeted from the stage of selecting Arts stream by a student after getting his GCE (A/L) examination result to the stage of being employed after gaining the first degree from a university of this country and concerned about the intervention of relevant government institutions thereon.
- (c) In this audit, attention was paid only for Arts stream conducted by the state universities National and Provincial Schools in Sri Lanka.

- (d) Influence of other factors exterior to the effect on the unemployment of Arts graduates create from school and university education is not considered therein.
- (e) Personal became under employed having being educated in Arts medium is not discussed here.
- (f) Statistical data system on unemployed graduates was not available by the time of Audit. Even though, comments and proposals of the unemployed graduates union had been obtained the correct statistical data could not be ascertained. Since the other research reports on this issue were not presented the report of the investigation study carried by the University Grants Commission on graduates in 2016 and 2017 had been based.
- (g) In building audit observations, required data have been obtained from the whole University system but in questioning proposals and comment of the students study in Arts medium, only the University of Kelaniya and Sri Jayawardenapura have be selected.

3. Audit observations

3.1 Educational policies

3.1.1 Establishment of an education policy (for general school education sector)

Report of the presidential commission on Youth, appointed to recommend step to be taken as remedies, having being inquired into causes for youth unrest and impatient to discourage such attitudes, behaviours and habits (issued in March 1990) stated that education needs to be inclined to economic development and one of the main problems face by Sri Lanka is an imbalance between education and employment. In addition, among the complains frequently made to this commission then, it was stated that the relevant authorities do not have continuity on education policies causing disappointment of student's hopes. Accordingly, this commission had highlighted that a strong requirement of the establishment of a national commission on education policy and the immediate requirement of the formulation of a ten year plan. Details appear below.

- (a) Based on the study conducted by the National Education Commission on education system in terms of National Education Commission Act No.19 of 1991 dated 19 April 1991, general education reforms proposals had been prepared in detail printed and presented to the Hon. President in the years 1992, 2003 and 2016. Nevertheless, they have not been presented to the cabinet of ministers and parliamentarians and not published as policies. However, certain proposals and curriculum reforms included in these educational reforms have been executed by the Ministry of Education but when it is taken as a whole, an accepted education policy had not been promulgated until May 2020. Without doing so, it was observed in audit that education affairs have been planned and implemented in Sri Lanka.
- (b) As stated in this presidential commission report on youth, even though the commission does not believe that one and only aim of education is to create jobs, education policies need to be job oriented and by an effective education plan, demand of the economy needs to be protected. Nevertheless, it was observed in audit that non-formulation of a general education policy to suit for job demand in the current economy is a serious matter.

- (c) As stated in this commission report, it was established that the basic cause for youth unrest in this country is the imbalance between education and employment. Even though, this commission does not intend as reported that an education system is not necessarily inclined to create jobs, by improving vocational training sector in a manner enabling the students to gain non-scholastic practical training, students tend to find a job in the private sector or engage in self -employment.

3.1.2 New education Reforms revisions

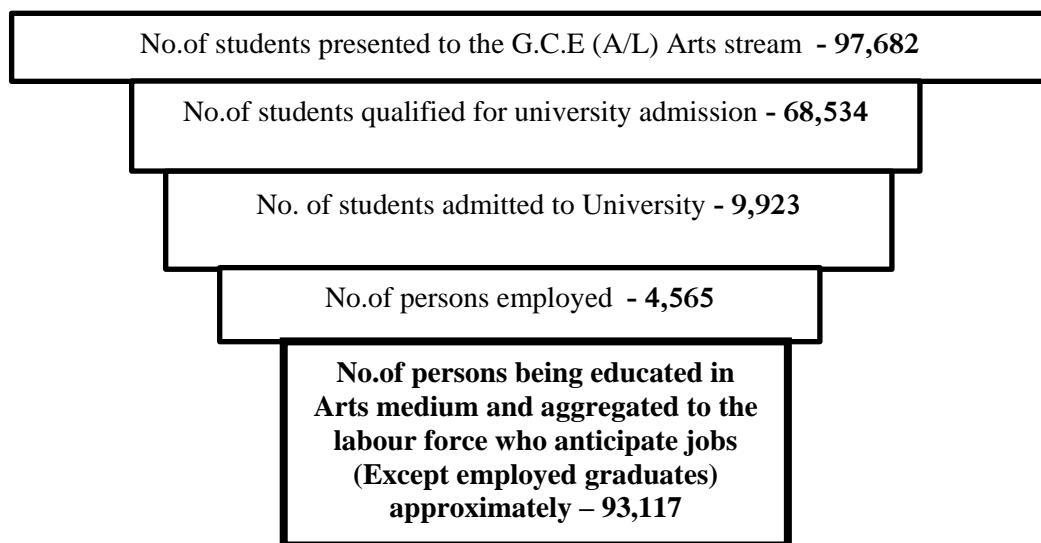
In terms of sections 2(1), 2(3) and 8 i (a), (b) and (c) of the National Education Commission Act No.19 of 1991 the commission had prepared policy proposals for general education in the years 2003 and 2016 but by the date of audit on 31 December 2019, the establishment and legal environment for the implementation of such proposals had not been set. However, the Letter No.ED/05/84/06/01/32 of 14 February 2020 of the Ministry of Education stated that various programmes at schools leave for the implementation of the following proposals to a certain extent. The whole Sri Lankan students community had deprived of enjoying beneficial results being implemented those timely reform proposals.

- (a) Necessitate successfulness within the complex modern society, action for develop soft skills for personal development need to be referred to the curriculum.
- (b) Technology within the subjects require to line up the students with the World in the Junior Secondary stage of the school education needs to be a compulsory subject and encourage practical works and projects.
- (c) Since more than 10 per cent of students leaves the school after GCE (O/L) examination in the Senior Secondary stage, they also should incline to training field with more advantageous in order to join the labour force of Sri Lanka, implementation of the education programme being carried out continuously by the Ministry of Education for 13 years for the introduction of optional subjects which should be connected with the World in order to give them a better fixity and required facilities therefore need to be provided.

- (d) Be compulsory in learning second language continuously, until the completion of G.C.E (O/L) examination for the promotion of second language.

3.1.3 Readiness of the Ministry of Education

The pioneering responsibility is devolved on the Ministry of education to implement the national education frame work effectively relates to the general education field for the achievement of national general objectives, being reconstructed education to suit for the changing world. As disclosed in the examination of data from the selection of Arts stream for Advanced Level by school children to being employed, only 10 per cent of the students who were present under the Arts stream at the G.C.E.(A/L) examination in the year 2017 have got the opportunity of university admission and only 46 per cent of them were employed. Accordingly, particulars of persons who studied under Arts stream and entered the labour force are depicted in the following flow chart.



Source: Data of the Department of Examination of Sri Lanka and data in the report of the investigation study conducted by the University Grants Commission in the years 2016/ 2017

The objective of the education is to procreate a disciplinary society and a group of successful professionals require for the production process. Since there is no connection the job market with education, education is inclined to one side whereas vacancies in the job market inclined to another side. Developed countries uses the education to create skilled persons whereas Sri Lanka used education to create academic persons.

The responsibility to distribute physical and human resources available in the provincial rural and urban schools equally between all schools in Sri Lanka rests with the Ministry of Education.

Even though, the education is decentralized as a provincial subject by the 13th amendment of the constitution, function of monitoring the distribution of resources within the whole school system of the country and to maintain standards therefor is the principal responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, the achievement of this responsibility within the country is questionable. Accordingly, the responsibility to revise the advanced level subject stream, specially Arts stream to suit for the changing world and to minimise the students tend to learn Arts subject streams systematically, since the students study Arts subject stream are comparatively increased, rests with the Ministry of Education.

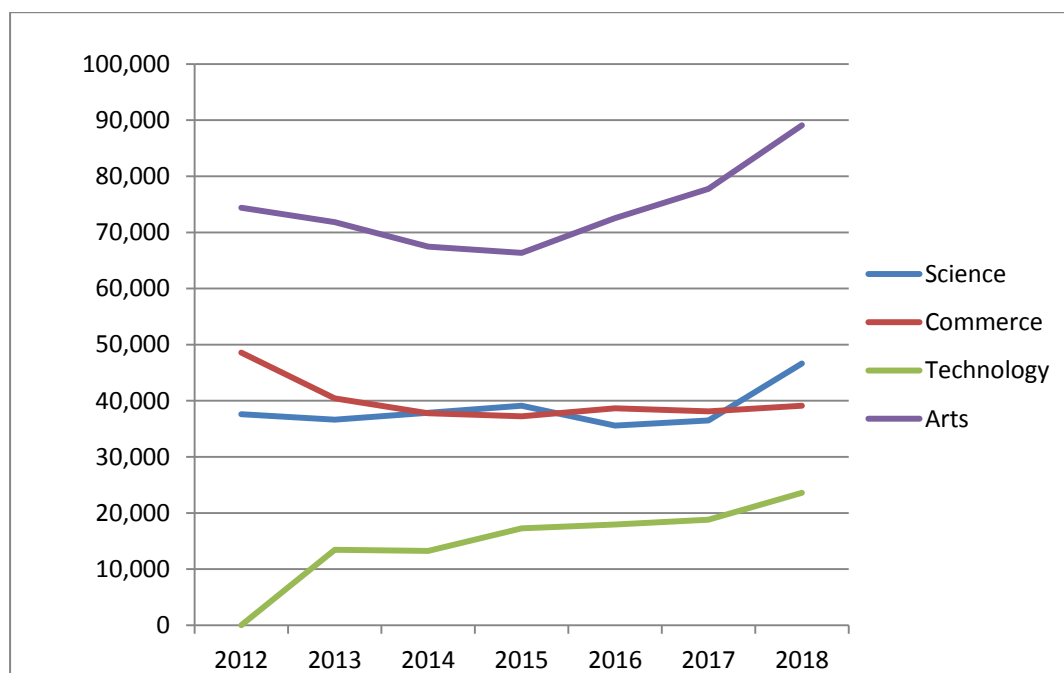
3.1.3.1 Choosing Arts subject streams (for G.C.E A/L)

- (a) In the examination of data for the past 5 years on choosing streams by school students for the G.C.E (A/L) observed that there is a more propensity to choose Arts stream after 2015. According to the particulars on the selection of relevant subject streams under the four streams including Arts, from 2012 to 2014, choosing science stream had improved from 23 per cent to 24 per cent respectively whereas choosing commerce stream had reduced from 30 per cent to 20 per cent. Choosing Technology stream and Arts stream had improved from 8 per cent to 12 per cent and 42 per cent to 45 per cent during that period respectively.

Therefore, it is observed that there is no redid change within the range as per details below.

Year	Total	Science	Percent age	Comm erce	Percent age	Technology	Percent age	Arts	Percent age
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			%		%		%		%
2012	160,580	37,588	23	48,593	30	-	-	74,399	46
2013	162,338	36,637	23	40,430	25	13,452	8	71,819	44
2014	156,332	37,853	24	37,774	24	13,253	8	67,452	43
2015	159,677	39,118	24	37,234	23	17,279	11	66,346	42
2016	164,732	35,570	22	38,656	23	17,955	11	72,551	44
2017	171,160	36,482	21	38,116	22	18,800	11	77,762	45
2018	198,439	46,654	24	39,114	20	23,593	12	89,078	45

Source: Ministry of Education



The following matters are implicated as per the following information and data.

- (i) Gradually minimising tendency in choosing commerce stream
- (ii) Existence of a tendency in studying science in the G.C.E.(A/L) in the year 2018 as compared with the year 2017.
- (iii) Technology stream was started in the year 2017 and there is a good tendency of students inclination therefor.

- (iv) Inclination for Arts streams in the years 2014 and 2015 depicted a backward trend but by the year 2018 students had inclined at a growing trend therefore.
- (b) According to the information received from the officers of the provincial Department of Education of Sri Lanka and principals of provincial schools and National schools, the following causes were presented for the inclination more percentage of students of Art streams than the Science, Mathematics, Commerce and Technology streams.
- i. Willingness of students to study Arts stream.
 - ii. Since the students need to sit for examinations based on mathematical knowledge for Science, Maths and Commerce streams those who gained lesser results for mathematics, choose Arts stream.
 - iii. Even though, the students have strong consent to study technology subject unavailability of technological laboratory facilities and trained teachers.
 - iv. Insufficient results of the G.C.E (O/L) examination to teach other streams in schools and limitation of class rooms in popular schools to the students of external schools who gained higher results science and mathematics subjects streams.
 - v. Low income level of the family and lack of economic strength to attend external classes.
 - vi. Non-availability of credit passes for mathematics and science subjects and minimisation of room to incline other stream on the G.C.E (O/L) results.
 - vii. Since the subjects which can be easily passed at the G.C.E (O/L) examination include in the Arts stream, this stream has been selected.

- viii. Being a stream easy to university admission at the first time and the difficulty to enter popular schools as such Arts stream is selected.
 - ix. Willingness to incline higher executive posts like administrative law etc. by choosing Arts stream, availability of physical and human resources to study Arts stream as compared to other subject streams and reluctance to dedicate on Science and mathematics streams.
 - x. Even though, the construction works of technological laboratory facilities are approved due to non-availability of trained teachers and laboratory facilities in the schools where many students are available to study technological subjects, they have not been commenced and as such students incline to select Arts stream. (e.g. Good shepherd Balika Maha Vidyalaya, Nuwaraeliya)
 - xi. According to the clarification made by the Uva Provincial Director of Education, the reason for setting students mostly for G.C.E.(A/L) arts stream is that many rural and estate related schools have Arts stream subjects and the tendency of being inclined to private classes for Science subject by students is very much more and as such parents with middle income and low income could not bear such expenses.
- (c) Lesser inclination to Arts stream in Nation schools is observed and the principal of the Kandy Girls High School stated that since the Arts stream subjects in sitting the Advance Level examination are not based on the job market and job oriented choosing Arts stream indicated a domination.

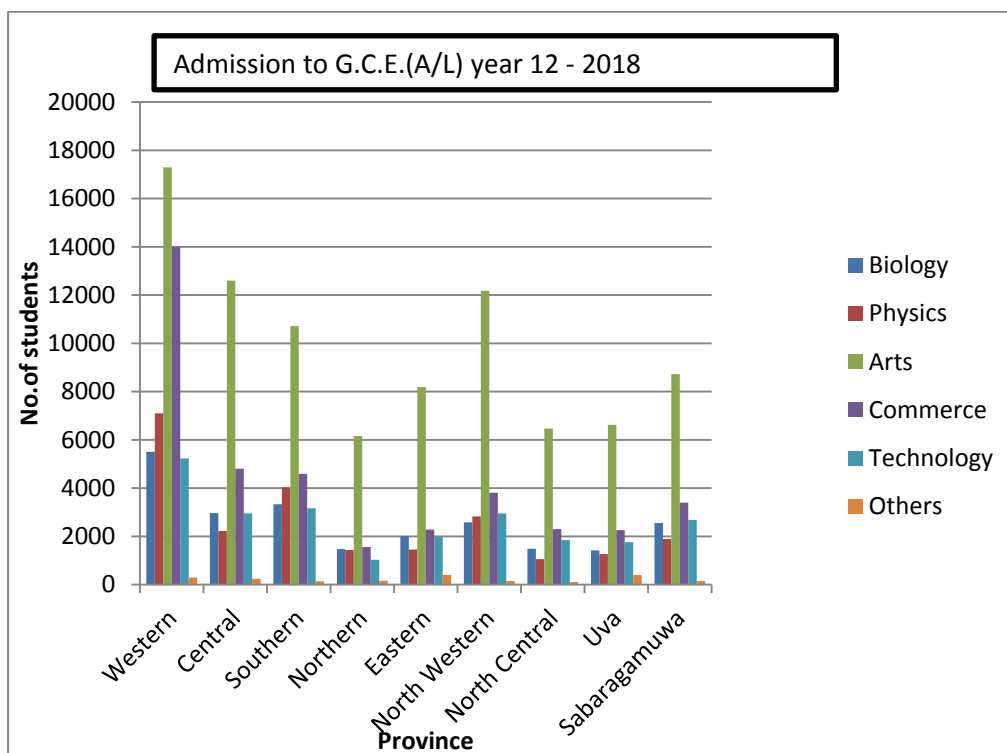
3.1.3.2 Choosing Advanced Level streams in terms of provinces

In the examination of learning advanced level in Arts medium without being chooses such subjects as Science, Mathematics, Commerce etc. in choosing Advanced Level subject streams by students in certain provinces observed that choosing.

Arts subjects during the years 2017 and 2018 in the Western Province out of 09 provinces had improved from 20 per cent to 35 per cent, whereas less than 49 per cent was indicated in the Southern, Central, Sabaragamuwa Provinces (between 42% to 49%). It was indicated an improvement from 50% to 53% in the North, Western, Northern, North Central, Uva and Eastern Provinces. Accordingly, it was observed that a correlation between the choosing of Advanced Level subject streams and the poverty level existed in terms of provinces.

Province	Year	Subject stream appeared for G.C.E (A/L) exam					Percentage in choosing Arts stream
		Maths	Science	Commerce	Technology	Arts	
Western	2017	4362	3862	12003	33592	14125	20
	2018	7101	5506	13991	5230	17297	35
North Western	2017	2111	1907	4032	2636	10606	50
	2018	2824	2582	3811	2950	12178	50
Southern	2017	3646	3049	4731	2298	10157	42
	2018	4027	3331	4589	3166	10717	41
Central	2017	1948	2375	4992	2671	10868	48
	2018	2226	2965	4804	2956	12596	49
Sabaragamuwa	2017	1577	1945	3337	2130	7526	41
	2018	1890	2556	3395	2684	8725	45
Northern	2017	1349	1201	1886	915	5688	52
	2018	1432	1472	1558	1027	6158	53
North Central	2017	1012	1225	2439	1341	6174	51
	2018	1054	1486	2305	1847	6466	49
Uva	2017	879	1152	2269	1304	5715	50
	2018	1271	1418	2259	1760	6622	50
Eastern	2017	1278	1604	2427	1913	6903	49
	2018	1452	2021	2281	1980	8185	51

Source: Department of Examination of Sri Lanka



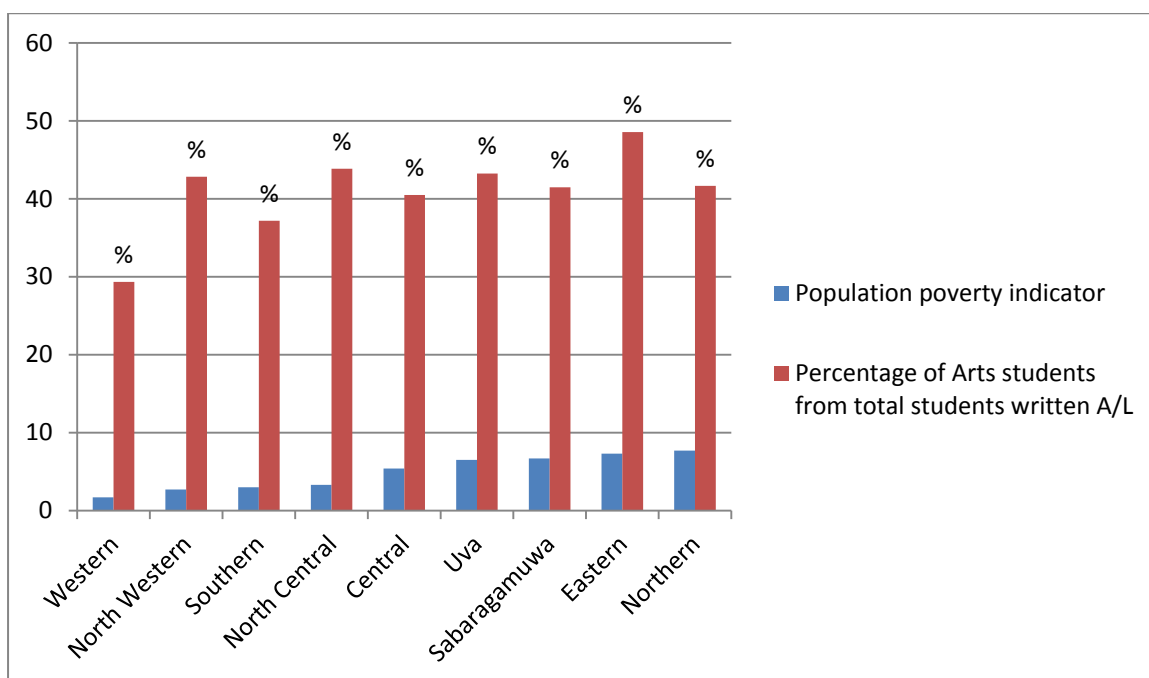
3.1.3.3 Inequality in poverty and education

According to the report of the Presidential Taskforce on general education reforms proposals presented by the National Education Commission physical requirements and resources were not equally provided to schools in each province and district and the implementation of education system depend on those inequalities. Therefore, such inequalities more or less influence on the background of the school children, their participation in the education expression of cleverness attaining education level.

As shown below, it is observed that shortage of resources in these provincial schools and the children have minimum living needs and suffer from poverty. It is also observed that there is more tendencies in choosing Arts stream for A/L by the students in the Uva, Sabaragamuwa, Eastern and Northern Provinces where poverty indicator takes a high value as per details below.

Province	Total No. of students sat for A/L	No. of students chosen A/L Arts stream in 2017/2018 exams	Percentage	No. of schools, available A/L Science stream (IAB)	Poverty indicators (2016)		
					Population poverty indicators	Poor household units %	Inter poverty indicator
Western	65,672	19,268	29.34	207	1.7	1.2	0.3
North Western	28,396	12,161	42.83	106	2.7	2.1	0.4
Western Southern	36,474	13,561	37.18	149	3.0	2.3	0.4
North Central	15,571	6,830	43.86	64	3.3	2.4	0.5
Central	32,151	13,021	40.5	114	5.4	4.1	0.9
Uva	17,301	7,482	43.25	83	6.5	5.4	0.7
Sabaragamuwa	24,726	10,255	41.47	109	6.7	5.1	1.1
Eastern	19,396	9,420	48.57	99	7.3	5.3	1.2
Northern	13,643	5,684	41.66	104	7.7	6.3	1.1

Source: Department of Examination of Sri Lanka Central Bank report of Economic & Social Statistics of Sri Lanka -2019



The above data indicate that many students in provinces in which the poverty level is high incline to Arts stream. The percentage of students chooses Arts stream in the Western Province where poverty level indicates a low value of 1.7 per cent, stands at a minimum level of 29 per cent. Similarly, poverty indicators in the Uva,

Sabaragamuwa, Eastern and Northern Provinces show 6.5 per cent, 6.7 per cent, 7.3 per cent and 7.7 per cent respectively whereas the number of students choose Arts stream represented as high values as 43 per cent, 42 per cent, 49 per cent and 42 per cent respectively. In addition, it was observed as per the above data that the number of schools teach A/L Science stream in the Uva and Eastern Provinces where poverty level is high show a lesser amount school principals explained to audit that in choosing science streams, parents do not have economic capabilities to additional teaching and this is strangely effected parents engage in estate related jobs specially in the central province.

3.1.3.4 Significance of the English subject within the G.C.E (A/L) examinations

According to the investigation study carried out by the University Grants Commission on graduates in the years 2016/2017 the English Language is an essential tool, for the achievement of communication needs nationally and internationally within the competitive economic structure and being professionally established. Therefore the Ministry of Education needs to intervene giving proficiency to students at schools level for education boundaries. Nevertheless, it was observed that failures in English subject at the G.C.E. (O/L) examination during the last few years are more than 45 per cent. Insufficient knowledge in English language is influenced to the unemployment of Arts graduates pass out from the state universities and as such more attention in this regard needs to be paid. Particulars of failures English language for the last 3 years appear below.

Year	Number presented	G.C.E. (O/L)		Number failed	Percentage of failures
		No.of passes	Passing percentage		
2016	285,686	136,851	47.9	148,835	52.1
2017	296,157	151,393	51.12	144,764	48.88
2018	295,744	162,366	54.9	133,378	45.10

Source: Department of Examination of Sri Lanka

3.1.3.5 English subject at the G.C.E (A/L)

The passing percentage from the students study English subject under the G.C.E (A/L) Arts stream is between 50 per cent to 60 per cent students obtain 'A' pass appears to be minimum as compared to the year 2015 and it was therefore observed that special attention in this regard has not been drawn within the job market oriented education. Particulars appear below.

A/L results – English Subject

Year	Number presented	Number of passes	Passing percentage	Number obtained 'A' passes
2015	1,317	794	60%	20
2016	1,350	832	61%	23
2017	1,432	856	60%	39
2018	1,493	750	50%	10

Source: Department of Examination of Sri Lanka

3.1.3.6 Other language – A/L examination – 2018

Of the results of students learn other subjects in Arts stream aimed at international jobs and other inter relations are meritorious except for French. Accordingly, passing percentages of German Russian, Chinese and Japanese had exceeded 61 per cent. The requirement of increasing the opportunities to learn such languages at school level is predominated.

Subject	Number presented	A pass	B pass	C pass	S pass	Passing percentage
French	877	04	24	139	276	51%
German	249	71	51	52	44	87%
Russian	29	8	4	9	7	96%
Chinese	136	67	18	11	20	81%
Japanese	1,211	110	96	239	369	67%

Source :Department of Examination of Sri Lanka

3.1.3.7 Professional guidance within the school

(a) Proposed general education policy framework

As stated in the proposed general education policy framework in the year 2016, professional guidance describes as expected services and activities to assist professional management of persons at any age level and within their lifetime to select education, training and occupation at any time. It is also stated in the above policy framework that since the unavailability professional guidance or counselling in schools many learners find it difficult to find jobs or higher education or training opportunities.

(b) Attention to tend counselling

Even though, professional counselling is implemented in school system the National Education Commission identified that drawing lesser attention thereon arises the following problems.

- (i) Difference between professional advice and educational advice is not understood.
- (ii) Preparation of school system for the future job market by capacity development programme of teachers and trainers in respect of new propensities in the job market being communicated with the Tertiary and vocational Education Commission (NEC)
- (iii) Diminution of sufficient resources for the implementation of effective professional counselling programs and lesser dedication of teachers and principals thereon.
- (iv) Non-availability of teacher service count on professional counselling.

(c) Correct guidance for job opportunities

Since the education reform proposals of 2016 are not approved up to this report, there is no legal effect to implement such recommendations. Non-implementation of the above recommendations encumbers for a proper direction towards the students employment aspirations after G.C.E (O/L) and

G.C.E (A/L) examinations at the school level. Therefore, this issue is further intensified and also observed that such issues would exist in future as well.

3.1.3.8 Creation of the Technology stream for G.C.E.(A/L)

(a) Influence on the study of Arts stream

As mentioned in the guidelines relates to 1000 secondary school development programme of the Ministry of Education the main reason for the introduction of Technology subject stream is to minimise the inequality caused by the selection of 22 per cent from the Science and Mathematics streams, 27 per cent from the Commerce Stream and 51 per cent from the Arts stream of the whole students now study in G.C.E (A/L) suffering the young men who graduated from Universities after passing G.C.E.(A/L) Arts subject, from unemployment could pose social problems and influence the economic development. Therefore, it was anticipated that the number of students who study in A/L and select Science, Mathematics and Technology streams be increased up to 40 per cent whereas the number of students select Arts stream be reduced up to 25 per cent. Nevertheless, in the analysis of proficiency in the Advanced level 2018 revealed that, the expected results had not been reached as per details below.

Year	Total Number	Science	Percentage	Commerce	Percentage	Technology	Percentage	Arts	Percentage
			%		%		%		%
2012	160,580	37,588	23	48,593	30	-	-	74,399	46
2013	162,338	36,637	23	40,430	25	13,452	8	71,819	44
2014	156,332	37,853	24	37,774	24	13,253	8	67,452	43
2015	159,677	39,118	24	37,234	23	17,279	11	66,346	42
2016	164,732	35,570	22	38,656	23	17,955	11	72,551	44
2017	171,160	36,482	21	38,116	22	18,800	11	77,762	45
2018	198,439	46,654	24	39,114	20	23,593	12	89,078	45

Source: Ministry of Education

Accordingly, the percentage of learning Arts stream had increased to 45 per cent by 2018, even though it was intended to reduce the percentage up to 25 per cent.

(b) Asian Development Bank Financial Assistance Project

By the result No.3 connected with the disbursement of this project it was expected to reduce the number of students study Arts stream with the introduction and implementation of Technology for the G.C.E (A/L). Accordingly, the results of the G.C.E.(O/L) is increased by the year 2018 and more students have qualified for G.C.E (A/L). Even though, the number of students apply for Technology stream had increased but it was observed in audit that there was no drawback the number of students apply for Arts stream.

Student's demand for the G.C.E (A/L) grade 12 of Science and Technology stream and Arts stream.

Year	Science stream + Technology stream	Total of Science and Technology streams	Growth percentage	Arts stream	Growth percentage
2013	36,637 + 13,452	50,089	-	71,819	-
2014	37,853 + 13,253	51,106	+2	67,452	-6
2015	39,118 + 17,259	56,397	+10	66,346	-1.6
2016	35,570 + 17,955	53,525	-5	72,251	+9.4
2017	35,482 + 18,800	54,282	+1.4	77,762	+7.2
2018	46,654 + 23,593	70,247	+29.4	89,078	+14.5

Source: Ministry of Education

In considering the years 2017 and 2018 as per the above data students demand for Science and Technology streams had increased by 29 per cent and the demand for Arts stream had also increased by about 14 per cent.

The following reasons in this regard had been identified.

(i) Existence of teachers vacancies

Vacancies of teachers teach Technology stream are as follows.

Subject	Number of vacancies	Date of computation of vacancies
Engineering Technology	35	2019-04-01
Bio systems Technology	14	2018-12-31
Science for Technology	117	2017-12-31

(ii) Inadequately of facilities to Technology Subject

According to the information obtained from school principals, representing various provinces, even though there are students willingness to learn Technology subject in certain provinces, they drop. This subject due to shortage of such human and physical resources as lack of laboratories, teachers etc.

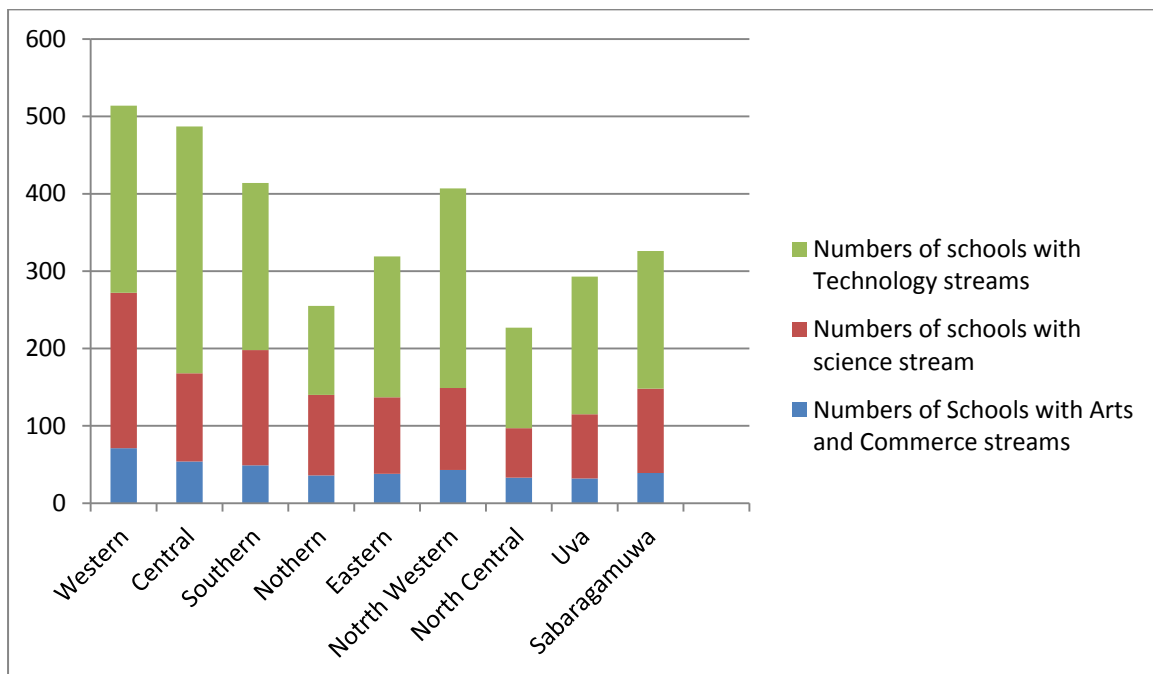
(iii) The minimum number of students require to learn Technology

In terms of Circular No.20/2016 of the Ministry of Education, the minimum number of students available to learn Technology stream amounts to 15 but there were 2 Nation schools and 39 Provincial schools which had less than 15 students.

(iv) According to the following data there are 1029 schools with G.C.E (A/L) Science subject in all provinces in Sri Lanka of which only 395 schools or 38 per cent have technology subject. It was further observed that many of these schools viz, 1818 teach only Commerce and Arts streams for Advanced Level. Even this situation becomes a barrier students to learn Technology stream for A/L and therefore they are reluctant to study Arts and Commerce streams.

Province	Number of schools with Technology subject	Number of schools with Science subjects for A/L	Number of schools with Arts and Commerce streams
Western	71	201	242
Central	54	114	319
Southern	49	149	216
Northern	36	104	115
Eastern	38	99	182
North Western	43	106	258
North Central	33	64	130
Uva	32	83	178
Sabaragamuwa	39	109	178
	<u>395</u>	<u>1029</u>	<u>1818</u>

Source : Ministry of Education



3.2 University Education

3.2.1 Higher Education Policies and the University Grants Commission

The University Grants Commission was established by the Universities Act No.16 of 1978 and in terms of section 3 of this Act, the objects of the establishment of this Commission are as follows.

- (i) The planning and co-ordination of University Education so as to conform to national policy.
- (ii) The appointment of Higher Educational Institutions of the Funds voted by parliament in respect of University Education and the control of expenditure by each such Higher Educational Institutions.
- (iii) The maintenance of academic standards of Higher Educational Institutions.
- (iv) The regulation of the administration of Higher Educational Institutions.
- (v) The regulation of the admission of students to each higher educational institutions.
- (vi) The exercise, performance and discharge of such powers duties and functions as are conferred or imposed on or assigned to the Commission by or under this Act.

Accordingly, it was informed to audit by the Secretary to the University Grants Commission from his Letter No.UGC/1/424 of 12 December 2019 that since the non-existence of a composite Higher Education National Policy, specially to be presented for planning and coordination of university education in accordance with the national policy of the above objectives, the University Grants Commission had not composed University Education.

3.2.2 Qualification for University Admission

Of all applicants presented for G.C.E.(A/L) examination in the past 5 years (2013-2017) it is observed that 58 per cent to 64 per cent have qualified for University admission in Sri Lanka. The following data observed that 17 to 19 per cent of them had admitted to state Universities and higher education institutions.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
No.of students sat for the G.C.E (A/L) examination	247,376	255,191	258,193	253,330	267,111
No. of students qualified for University admission being passed 3 subjects	149,489	155,447	160,520	163,104	167,907
Percentage of students qualified for University admission from students sat for the examination	60.43	60.91	62.17	64.38	62.86
No. of students admitted to Universities	25,643	29,055	30,662	31,415	Data not received
Percentage of students who got the opportunity of admitting University from the qualified students	17.15	18.69	19.10	19.26	-

Source: Department of Examination of Sri Lanka, University Grants Commission

3.2.3 Incline to Arts Degrees

In the consideration of academic year 2017/2018 applicants for University admission amounted to 78,894 and the selected number of students for universities amounted to 31,415 therefrom of which 9,923 students admitted to universities for Arts stream. In considering the closest 4 academic years the following information observed that the number of students study Arts degrees amounts more than 30 per cent of the total number of students selected for University admission.

Academic Year	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Number of students applied for University Education	58,716	68,299	71,106	78,894
Total Number of students selected for University admission	25,643	29,055	30,662	31,415
Number of students selected for Arts degrees	8,617	9,891	9,418	9,923
Number of students study Arts degrees as a percentage of total number students selected for University admission	33.6	34	30.7	31.5

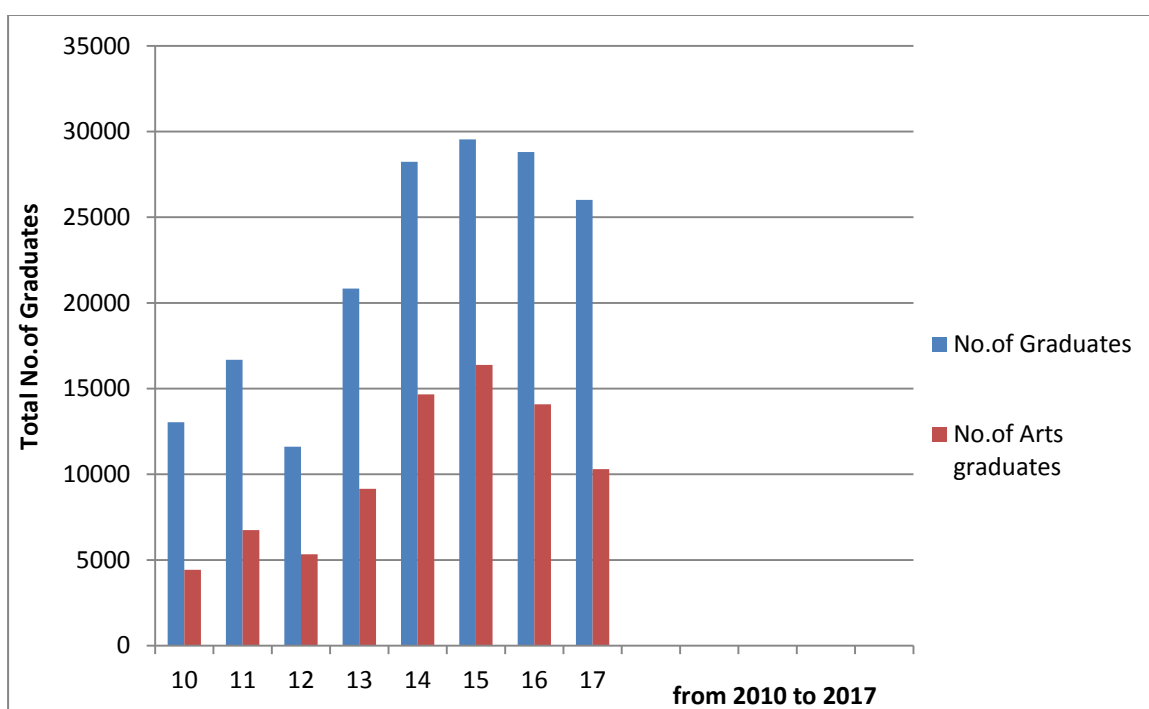
Source: University Grant Commission

The following observations are made in this regard.

- (a) Unemployment rate of 9.1 per cent of students qualified at the G.C.E(A/L) or above categories includes graduates pass out from state University system in Sri Lanka being unemployed as short term or long term. About 26,000 graduates are passing out from Universities annually and the number of Arts graduates study in 140 Departments in 12 Universities. Which have Arts faculties amounts to 10,305.
- (b) The number of total graduates passed out from the Universities during the past 8 years and the particulars of Arts graduates included therein appear below. According to the details of total graduates to the years 2017. One of forty graduates were Art graduates.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
No.of Graduates	13042	16686	11614	20839	28231	29545	28808	26015
No.of Arts graduates	4432	6940	5330	9156	14651	16387	14082	10305
Number of selected Arts degree Applicants percentage of Arts graduates from the whole graduates	33.9	40.3	45.8	43.9	51.9	55.4	49.0	39.6

Source: University Grant Commission



Based on this information, employment of graduates who completed degrees has been evaluated under the following components.

3.2.4 Introduction to create new courses

When it is reckoned the number of courses introduced within the last 10 years by each University, three universities had not introduced any new degree course whatsoever and the introduction of new courses by other universities as well had been at a least level, as detailed below.

	University	No.of new courses introduced	Year in which new courses were introduced and No.of courses
i	Peradeniya	Nil	
ii	Kelaniya	09	2013/2014 – 02 2014/2015 – 01 2015/2016 – 04 2016/2017 – 01 2017/2018 – 01

iii	Ruhuna	08	2009/2010 – 02 2011/2012 – 02 2015/2016 – 03 2017/2018 – 01
iv	Colombo	03	2016/2017
v	Sri Jayawardanepura	05	2011/2012 – 01 2015/2016 – 04
vi	Aesthetics	0	
vii	Moratuwa	03	2009/2010 – 01 2010/2011 – 01 2016/2017 – 01
viii	Jaffna	03	2013/2014 – 01 2015/2016 – 01
ix	Agnidiga	02	2015/2016
x	Uva wellassa	02	2015/2016
xi	Rajarata	04	2010/2011 – 01 2015/2016 – 03

- (b) Graduate courses relate to Arts Stream in 11 universities and other Higher Education Institutions are conducted under 13 Arts Faculties. In the examination of the progress of introducing new courses relating to these Arts graduate courses, 49 new degree courses relating to the course conducted by Universities from the academic year 2009/2010 to 2017/2018 have been introduced but the new courses introduced in respect of Arts stream amounted to two only. (Translation studied film and Television Studies)

3.2.5 Establishment of the Sri Lanka Qualifications Frame Work, Accreditations and Quality Assurance Board and Establishment of Non-State Higher Education Council

The cabinet memorandum No.HE/AD/2011/12 of 31 January 2010 emphasised the requirement of a comprehensive legal framework to achieve such objects as widening the opportunities available for higher education and improvement of its quality in setting a suitable environment to become Sri Lanka a centre for knowledge. In order to make legal provisions therefore it is stated therein that the establishment of a propriety framework. Accredited and standards security Board and a Council for Non-Governmental Higher Education Functions. In this, connection the Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation had taken various steps but its legal frame work had not been enforced even by 17 February 2020.

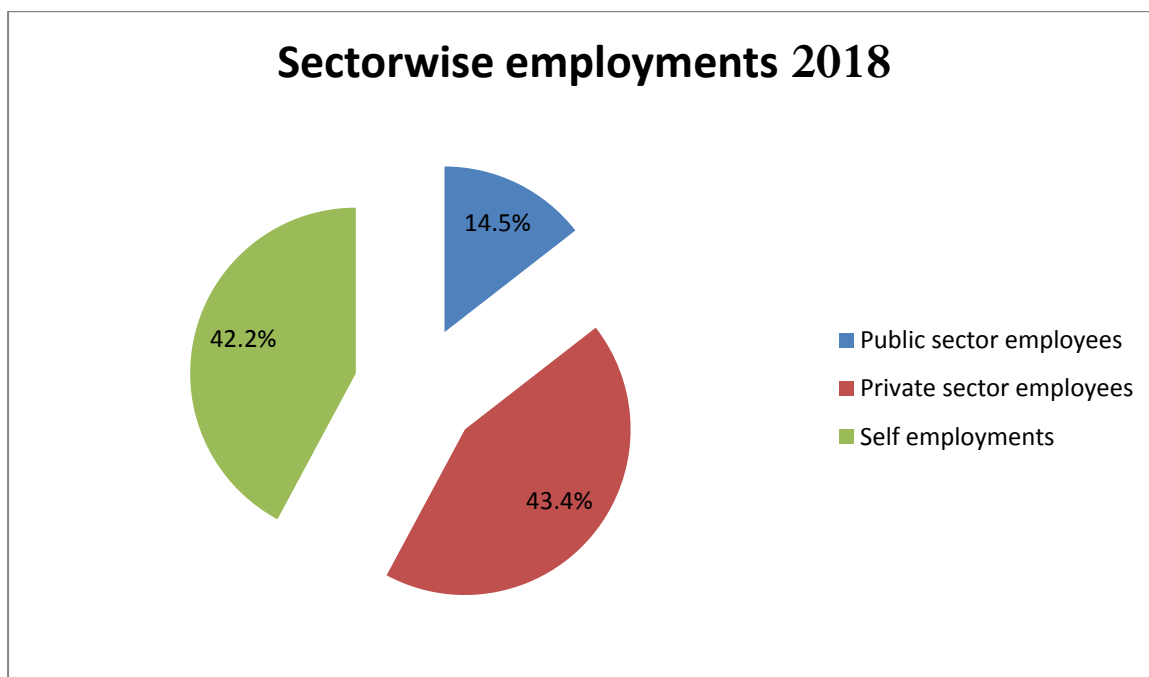
3.3 Employment and Arts subject stream

3.3.1 The sector inclines to jobs

The quarterly labour force survey conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics reported that the private sector is the main job creation sector continuously in Sri Lanka and the report of the Central Bank for 2018 stated that the maximum contribution of 43.4 per cent made to the overall employment by the private sector in the year 2018 as per details below.

Sector wise employment – 2018

Public sector employees	-	14.5
Private sector employees	-	43.4
Self-employments	-	42.2



According to the above data, when incline to employment sectors more occasions are available in the private sector and a similar percentage has inclined to self-employment. Public sector employment approximated on third of the public sector employment. However, Arts graduates had preferred public sector jobs that ensured as follows.

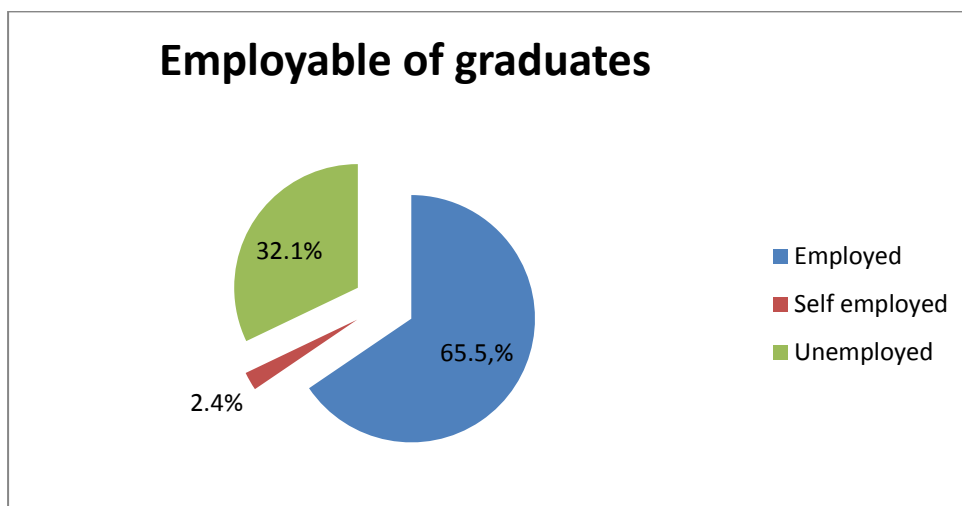
- (a) Even though, job opportunities are plenteous in the private sector, the existence of such issues as knowledge and skills require thereon, it was observed that Arts graduates seemed to be unemployed for a long time being expecting a government job based on job security and pensions right in the public sector employment. However, it was observed that there are not broad employment opportunities for Arts graduates both in the private sector as well as in the public sector.
- (b) When inquiring from selected students on sample basis about reasons why they select Arts stream to study Advanced level, the reply is that their objective is to do a government job.
- (c) When inquiring from the students study Arts degrees in the Kelaniya and Sri Jayawardenapura Universities through a questionnaire the reasons why they study in Arts medium and future job expectations, the reply of many student is that they expect government jobs after the University Education.
- (d) When inquired from a representatives of unemployed graduates in this regard revealed that they suffer from unemployed being aimed at a government job. Accordingly, since the selection of public sector for future job expectations at school level and University level, they have to wait being unemployed aimed at limited number of job opportunities (about 20000 jobs) in the public sector. Therefore, they do not contribute to the private sector which represents production/ industrial sector strongly contributed to the economic development of the Country. Accordingly, attention had not been paid to popularise the message by the primary and secondary education that opportunities are available to build the life through the private sector jobs in getting economic benefits from their attempts know-how and dedication.

3.3.2 Research on the employable of whole graduates

More attention was drawn in audit in respect of the research conducted by the University Grants Commission in the academic year 2016/2017 on the employability of University graduates and the following observations are made, based on data included therein.

3.3.2.1 Employable

Only the employment of graduates graduated from state universities is taken into consideration in this audit 65.5 per cent of all graduates subjected to survey had engaged in permanent jobs and 2.4 per cent had been self- employed. The unemployed percentage is 32.1



It was observed that this employment level depends on the following few matters.

3.3.2.2 Job classification of Arts graduates

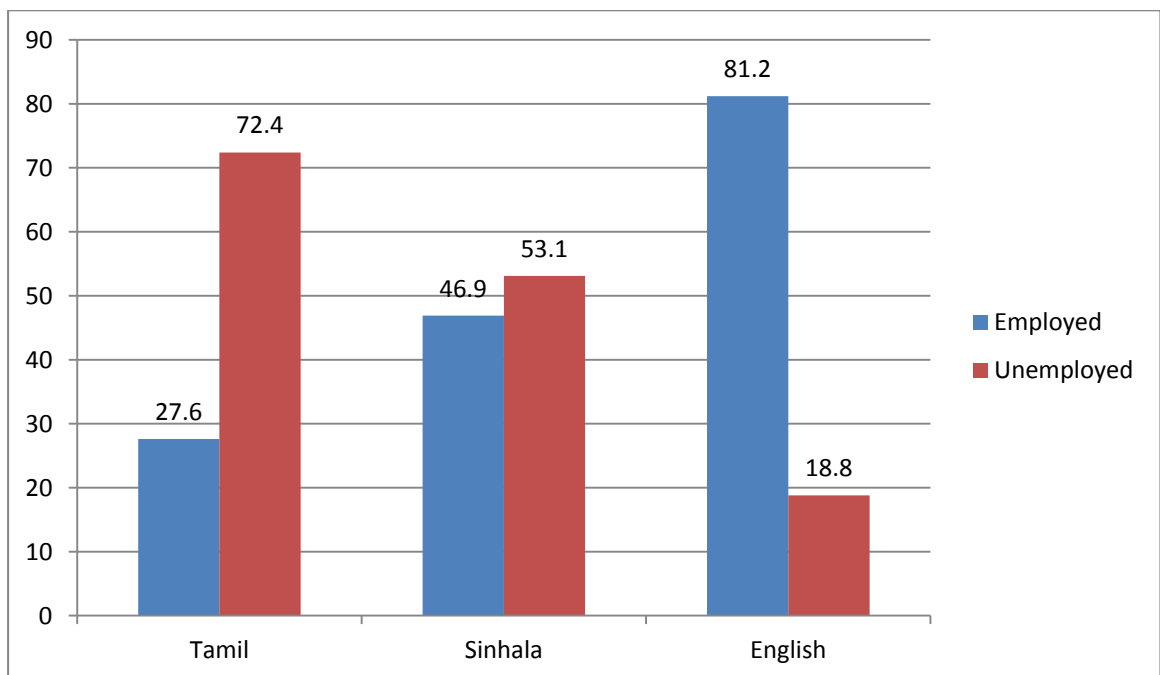
As far as the employment of Arts graduates is concerned, 52.7 per cent in the public sector and 31.2 per cent in the private sector had employed. The report of the research conducted by the University Grants Commission revealed that 32.9 per cent of those public sector employees represented teachers.

According to the survey conducted based on the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 in the University of Sri Jayawardenapura 63.6 per cent 43.1 per cent and 37.2 per cent in the public sector and 32.1 per cent 47.7 per cent and 57.3 per cent had respectively employed. It was also revealed that because of lack of basic management knowledge, many Arts graduates dislike to engage in self -employment.

3.3.2.3 In terms of medium of learning degrees

- (a) According to the above research, employment of English medium graduates had been at a high level 81.2 per cent whereas employment of Sinhala and Tamil medium graduates remains at a low level as 46.9 per cent and 27.6 per cent respectively.

Employable in terms of learning medium of degrees



- (b) Even though, English medium graduates have opportunities to enter a higher level employment, the following information observes that the number of courses conducted by 11 universities in English medium low level as compared with other courses.

University	Total number of Arts courses conducted	Number of Arts courses conducted in English Medium
Kelaniya	69	16
Sri Jayawardenapura	27	22
Peradeniya	22	19
Colombo	19	17
Sabaragamuwa	15	07
Eastern	13	All courses in Tamil Medium
Uva wellassa	20	-
Ruhuna	12	05
Rajarata	16	04
Agnidiga	19	09
Jaffna	25	All courses in Tamil Medium
	<u>257</u>	<u>99</u>

Source: University Grant Commission

Of 257 Arts degrees conducted by 11 universities under 13 faculties, number of courses conducted in English medium by 31 December 2018 amounted to 99.

- (c) The report of the research conducted by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Sri Jayawardenapura University in respect of this issue revealed the following matters.
- (i) According to this research it was identified that the employable of the students study subject streams like English Literature, Information Technology degree courses etc. had been at a very high level. Introduction of the information technology special degree course and Social Statics course by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science in the year 2017 had caused the arts graduates to incline high employment level.

- (ii) The surveys revealed that opportunities had been given to study 8 subjects in the English medium since the academic year 2011/2012 by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayawardenapura and the employable of those who completed such degree courses had recorded a high value.
- (iii) Therefore, it is observed that since more undergraduates enrolled to the Arts faculties are women and the majority study in Sinhala medium, the job opportunities in the private sector are fallen short.

3.3.2.4 Completion of internship training

- (a) The above research had disclosed that being employed by graduates with internship training becomes helpful. Accordingly, about 74.3 per cent of the graduates who trained internship period had engaged in employment and 53.6 per cent of graduates not trained internship course had engaged in employment. The survey had further observed that non-availability of internship training to opportunities to Arts graduates cause to reduce employment opportunities. As a result, of internship training programme implemented by the Sri Jayawardenapura University since 2017 the number of graduates engaged in jobs information technology field in the year 2017 had increased from 0.6 per cent to 10.2 per cent.
- (b) According to the comments obtained in audit from the students study in Arts Faculties of Kelaniya and Sri Jayawardenapura Universities about the requirement of an internship training programme while being studied in universities the current internship training period is insufficient and commented by them as follows.

University	Degree Course	General comments made by the students
University of Kelaniya	Translation studies	The existing training period is insufficient and it needs to be at least 06 months
	Mass Media	-do-
	Peace and conflict theory	Practical training is required
	Development studies (Special)	Practical training insufficient
	Political Science (Special)	Training period insufficient and it should be at least 06 months
	Library and Information Science	Practical training is needed
University of Jayawardenapura	Sri Degree courses conducted under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Practical training and Vocational Training needed.

- (c) In considering the entire graduates, number of graduates who gained vocational training had been at a low levels as 23.8 per cent of the whole Arts graduates, and it caused to decline job opportunities.



3.3.2.5 Availability of job opportunities on computer ability

- (a) Computer ability and experience is recognized as a deciding factor in obtaining an employment. According to the information taken from undergraduates in Arts degrees of the University of Kelaniya, it was recognized that English and computer Literacy need to be included in the syllabuses of degree courses as a compulsory subject.
- (b) According to the report of the research conducted by the University Grants Commission it was clearly observed that connection between the employable and the use of English language within the University academic period had existed. Research findings in this report disclosed that the employable of the undergraduates who view English Films and sending telephone messages in English medium had been at a high level as 79.7 per cent.

3.3.2.6 Unemployed graduates

Of all graduates, 40 per cent and 18 per cent of men and women graduates respectively have to wait 2 to 3 years to find jobs after graduation.

Identified number of unemployed Arts graduates amounts to 50.4 per cent out of which 83 per cent represented women graduates. Enrolment a large number of women under graduates by universities as Arts graduates had mainly caused thereto. Further examination identified the following factors to become graduates being unemployed.

- (i) Lack of working experience
- (ii) Unable to find a suitable job
- (iii) Non-availability of professional qualifications
- (iv) Lack of communication with employers
- (v) Expecting a government job
- (vi) Tend to further studies
- (vii) Personally dislike to engage in a job
- (viii) Lack of communication skills

- (b) In the test check carried out in respect of the above matters associated with questionnaire presented to 105 undergraduates of the University of Sri Jayawardenapura disclosed the following.
- (i) As commented in respect of the revision of syllabus 10 per cent of students stated that syllabus need to be adjusted in terms of job market and 22 per cent of the sample stated that syllabuses need to be updated and it should include the statistics subject as well. Similarly, 30 per cent of the sample expect information technology and practical training and 09 per cent stated that vocational training needs to be included five per cent had stated that extra-curricular activities should be added to the syllabus.
 - (ii) Only 25 students stated that the contribution of the University in respect of soft skills including computing, English Language and Leadership Skills is inadequate but rest of students said that it was sufficient.
 - (iii) Sixty two per cent of students stated that they do not satisfy with awarding special and general merits from the degree.
 - (iv) The majority of 40 per cent of the sample expected a job fitting to the degree they studied, when they leave the University as a graduate and the balance of 14 per cent, 03 per cent, 06 per cent, 17 per cent and 20 per cent had expected a government job, private sector job, government or private sector job, executive grade job and any other job respectively.
 - (v) According to the information obtained from undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Sri Jayawardenapura through a questionnaire issued to them, 28 students had stated that a suitable guideline or a patronage is not received in respect of getting a job opportunity.

- (vi) According to the information obtained from undergraduates and Arts undergraduates through questionnaires, the view of 60 per cent is that the knowledge in Information Technology and English to match the labour market is not received through their degree courses.
- (vii) Undergraduates commented that there should be a relationship between the employer of the employment sector and the universities so that it helps to exchange information on job market and enabling to have an idea about the attraction of courses.

3.3.2.7 Attitude of graduates towards on University Education

In considering the knowledge gathered from University education, how far it matches to the labour market and the opinion holds the labour market on graduates, the researchers report of the University Grants Commission had reported that the degrees of 44.7 per cent of Arts graduates lack coherence with their jobs and the Arts degree generally do not consider a base degree for doing an employment. The report also stated that 84 per cent of graduates needs to have the following Skills to find a job.

- (i) Skills in English Language
- (ii) Communication Skills
- (iii) Presentation Skills
- (iv) Leadership Skills
- (v) Others

3.3.3 National Human Resources and employment policy

- (a) The perfect policy framework, by controlling human resources development activities and action taken by the governments to provide complete, fit and effective employment to Sri Lankans is the national human resources and employment policy. Based on the whole government policy, the national human resources and employment policy has been formulated. The National human resources and employment policy covered a number of fields, significant to human resources development and employment promotion affairs.

- (b) Implementation responsibility of the National Human Resource and employment policy is entrusted to several institutions and authorities and such work is co-ordinated by the Ministry of labour and trade union relations.
- (c) Objects of the national human resources and employment policy are as follows.
 - (i) Encouragement to provide ability for acquiring complete, effective and freely selected jobs to all men and women in Sri Lanka.
 - (ii) Building an effective labour force with high capable, globally competitive and multiplex skills.
 - (iii) Improvement of income and livelihood of working people in various sectors and areas.
 - (iv) Provision of integral opportunity to every employee without unfair treatment, use of employees possessed of skills, quality for more suitable jobs in a manner that maximises employees motivation and productivity.
 - (v) Protection of fundamental rights and needs of the employees in accordance with National labour laws and main international labour standards.
- (d) The national requirement of implementing such a policy is identified as follows.
 - (i) According to the annual (2016) labour force survey data of the Department of Census and statistics, of the total population of 21.3 million approximately in Sri Lanka, 15.45 million belongs to persons over 15 years of age within the legally suitable age groups for employment. Nevertheless, the employment at present is half of that, representing about 8.31 million.

- (ii) Even though, the overall unemployment of the country amounts to 362,999, the unemployment within the age group of 15-29 belongs to young labour force is about 21.6 per cent which indicates a very high percentage. Non-availability of suitable job opportunities to young men and women was identified nationally as a matter of arising an immoral result in future. Special attention needs to be drawn as the survey data reported that 38.4 per cent of unemployed persons were finding jobs for more than a period of year.
- (iii) Furthermore, it appears that half of the working age population amounting to 7.14 million does not actively contribute to the national economy. Of them, 20.2 per cent engages in formal education and vocational education 19.8 per cent represents aged persons and 7.8 per cent represents total disable persons. When separated them most of the youth and women appear to be not actively contributed to the economy. It was reported that specially about 750,864 young men and women do not engage in any formal education and vocation education. Some of these people are depends or keep their livelihood from illegal sources of income and identified as a group at highly risk level being inclined to different anti-social activities.
- (iv) Of the population of 21 million only 8.31 million is employed resulting that a very high dependent rate is already observed. with the increase of aged population in future there will be a risk that Sri Lanka would not be able to bear such a high dependent rate sustainably. The one and only alternative is to increase employment forthwith.
- (v) According to the labour economic analyst, enormous population in Sri Lanka passes in working age and the demographic dividend of population composition provided a precious opportunity for rapid economy growth as a country. The National Human Resources and employment policy has emphasized the requirement of its proper management.

3.3.4 Intervention of public institutions for the implementation of National Human Resources and Employment Policy

The Department of manpower and employment has been established for the implementation, evaluation and monitoring the National Human Resources and Employment policy by gazette Notification Extra ordinary No.1640/31 of 02 February 2010. Accordingly, the National Human Resources and Employment Policy had been set in the year 2012 in accordance with the then government policy. According to the instruction of the government came into power in 2015, this policy had been again revised and the approval of the cabinet of ministers had been obtained therefore in the year 2017.

In respect of the implementation of this policy, the Department of Manpower and Employment and the Sri Lanka Council for Human Resource Development as well take action since 2017.

However, since the responsibility of monitoring function of this policy has been changed from time to time and non-establishment of monitoring committees properly it was observed in audit that the implementation evaluation and monitoring this policy remains at a weak level and there no properly implemented Human Resources Development Policy.

3.3.5 Government intervention on the unemployment of graduates

Objectives of the then Ministry of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Rehabilitation Northern Province Development and Youth Affairs, included; to get rid of unemployment and under employment and creation of a human resource with proficiency by paying special attention to young community with the intention of providing opportunities to access beneficial jobs to young men and women after school/ vocational/ university education and to increase the income level of the people, this Ministry had been established in the year 2015.

- (i) According to the statistics of the Ministry of National Policies and Economic Affairs, 54,824 graduates consisting of 26,683 external graduates and 28,141 internal graduates had been unemployed as at 30 June 2018 within 25 Districts. It was also observed that they have graduated during the years 2012-2018.
- (ii) In terms of Letter No.MNPEA/AD/E13/A.Q./2019 dated 27 February 2020 of the State Secretary to the Ministry of Finance, Economic and Policy Development which currently performs the functions in this regard, appointments as graduate trainees had been given to 19,920 internal and external graduates with a monthly allowance of Rs.20,000 under 3 stages (20 August 2018, 01 August 2019 and 18 September 2019). Accordingly, unemployment has been resolved only for 36 per cent of the whole unemployed graduates.

3.3.6 Report of the Presidential Commission on Youth

- (a) According to the recommendations presented in respect of mismatch between the education and employment stated in chapter 4 of the report of the Presidential Commission on Youth, non-availability of manpower plans and projections, an actual count on jobs available in national level and international level could not be carried out.
- (b) Since non-availability of a manpower projection and an employment policy, it was stated that obstacles exist in respect of changes of subjects, curriculum and planning the education to be made. Even though, the one and only aim of education is not to create jobs, it is stated that the education needs to be job sensitive/ oriented.

3.3.7 National policy on Technical and Vocational Education

(a) In order to set a labour force with proficiency for the social economic development of Sri Lanka, the National Education Commission performed the function formulating the national policy on Technical and Vocational education subjects to its provisions in the years 2017 and 2018. As stated in its chapter 06 of the Ministry of Education operates an education programme now, certified for 13 years to provide opportunities for all students to register vocational stream after the G.C.E.(O/L) examination.

(b) Education programme certified for 13 years

Under the introduction of vocational stream for (A/L) grades 12 and 13 by this programme, opportunities have been given to all students who sat for the G.C.E (O/L), irrespective of whether they passed or failed with the objective of providing vocational education, vincible to future challenges a new subject stream including 26 vocational subjects has been introduced. Since this is a seasonable concept, it is the point of view in audit that it should be properly continued.

3.3.8 Maintenance of unemployment data

Quarterly labour force survey of the Department of Census and Statistics acts as a basic data source on labour supply and demand. National Human Resources and Employment Policy mentions that the present sample, consisting of approximately, 25,000 houses expanded geographically island wide, employment analysis Human Resources planning and the information on labour force in a manner, enabling to use or job counselling and estimates are insufficient to apportion and supply profession and industries as sub divisions. Accordingly, it is observed that correct and quantitative data need to be supplied as required.

4. Recommendations

- (a) Since the general education system is an essential part of the national development process it influences to all lives of Sri Lankans, the national policies on school education needs to be expeditiously revised and implemented at this moment during which economic development in Sri Lanka needs to be accelerated.
- (b) Even though, the National Education Commission had submitted proposals for the national policy on general education in Sri Lanka in the year 2016, it is under draft level even up to the date of audit. It is recommended that the following proposals therein to be implemented expeditiously.
 - i. Collection of information in respect of organizations and clients which can supply services at national level, distribution, analysis implementation and monitoring need to be carried out and there should be a coordination between government institutions such as Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, Vocational Training Authority, Universities and Department of Labour and the chamber of commerce interested in the promotion of vocational education, employers organizations in the Industrial sector and schools.
 - ii. Vocational counselling and education instructor's unit in the Ministry of Education need to be set up and it should be linked with similar provincial/ zonal education officers.
 - iii. Awareness programmes for parents on challenges of students education counselling and existing occupational opportunities needs to be conducted by schools. Conducting national level programmes by the Ministry of Education via printed electronic media in collaboration with Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, Universities chambers of commerce and other national level institution as industrial entities.

- (c) Being further popularized science education by teaching ‘STEM’ education (Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Via a broad integrated methodology, being joined practical living experiences and diversification of streams being included Arts and literature subjects as well.
- (d) The audit further observed that the attention of the following recommendations out of the recommendations to be implemented in the short term and long term stated in the report of the research study carried out by the Ministry of Education, need to be paid.
 - i. In taking policy decision on entrance qualifications subjects of G.C.E (O/L) mathematics and Science need to be considered.
 - ii. Implementation of awareness programme for the popularization of Technology stream.
 - iii. Being a backup to the students who learn Arts stream, introduction of basic mathematics and Science to be considered.
- (e) Provision of human and physical resources as required to promote Technology stream in all provinces.
- (f) With the diversification of subjects on behalf of students study G.C.E(A/L) Arts stream a wide programme, consisting of business English and ICT application for Arts subjects definitely to be launched.
- (g) Audit recommends that the following recommendations stated on school education in the proposed Sri Lanka Human Resources and Employment policy.
 - i. During the period of learning, the students in secondary schools, alternative ways and subject streams need to be identified for their option. Of this not only from the traditional G.C.E (O/L) and G.C.E.(A/L) ways, alternative ways can reach future progress. Similarly, vocational guidelines in respect of technological education within the school itself should be introduced to all those who leave the

school. Vocational guideline facilities need to be provided to identify students with special skills and to improve such skills and to provide soft skills and abilities to students.

- ii. Further, strengthening English teaching to facilitate communication skill improvement.
 - iii. In order to facilitate the alternative learning in English medium from selected subjects to secondary grade students under the bilingual education policy room for bilingual education in selected schools island wide needs to be further disseminated. It should be the responsible of the authorities to recruit teachers to provide the opportunity to students to present at the G.C.E (O/L) and G.C.E.(A/L) examinations from any language they prefer.
 - iv. Since other foreign languages are becoming significant within the local and foreign employment field opportunities to learn other languages at the secondary level, in addition to English language need to be provided to all school students in the country.
 - v. Establishment of schools in non-urban areas, with similar facilities available in urban schools with high demand. Establishment of at least 3 secondary schools for each Divisional Secretarial area with full facilities, set up a mechanism enabling to use laboratory facilities available in the improved schools by the students of other schools paying attention to improve the capacity of primary schools, so as to succeed in the secondary schools.
- (h) The following recommendations mentioned in the Sri Lanka National Human Resources and Employment Policy on higher and Vocational Education needs to be implemented soon.
- i. Having being changed the traditional methods of following graduate courses enabling to maximum use of Human and Physical Resources available in universities, higher educational opportunities need to be increased so as to enter more students to such higher educational institutions. In this, context higher education opportunities provided by

distance education system and online methods can be used and higher educational courses to be promoted by using various methods. Having being flexible in respect of location and admission times higher education needs to be provided by distance education method.

- ii. Being further improved the relationship between the educational institutions and industries in a manner matching international standards as well as employment requirements, academic courses not updated up to now and conducted by universities and other higher educational institutions need to be updated. Academic courses needs to be designed in a manner fulfilling the requirement of working world and further strengthening the activation of programmes which improve the quality of courses already commenced from provisions World bank and other agencies.
- iii. Action needs to be taken by the universities to minimise mismatches of skills levels exist in the expectations of learned young crowd who expect job opportunities. Internship training programmes, organized with the contribution employers societies should be included thereto. Likewise, all students should be trained to acquire common skills soft skills various life skills and positive skills on works to fulfil the job market demand as appropriate.
- iv. Non-governmental universities and other Degree awarding institutions need to be encourage with control systems to monitor the requirement of quality and accreditation and the legal provisions have to be instituted to set up them.
- v. Relationship between the local universities and the foreign universities needs to be promoted enabling the students university lecturers and researches to get continuous foreign experiences. Encourage to improve the relationship between local universities in one hand and between local universities technology and vocational education institutions industries and vocational institutions on the other hand in order to improve the learning results of students and employment.

Through these relationships formation of a process to distribute resources available in the country such institutions.

- vi. Research facilities in universities need to be improved to train students for conducting researches and to do their learning freely and also to improve the knowledge of scholarship in significant areas. In order to extend the findings of the research works widely, skills like communication ability requires to researches needs to be improved. University students should have the opportunity to gain access to academic resources by providing laptop computers on interest free loans, establishment of WIFI zones in every university premises by which students can be able to study practically with a certain monitoring and through internet facilities.
- vii. Many individuals accept that the dominant wiliness of young men and women is to get a government job and it is the cause of long term unemployment at a high level. In addition, to attract private sector jobs more action needs to be taken to change the attitudes of youth and parents in attracting jobs more in certain sectors. Action plans need to be designed through the following sectors.
 - Building a national wise analogy on the number of jobs available in the public service in accordance with various job categories (As per international comparison number of employees in public sector takes a high value as a percentage of population.)
 - Being emphasized in qualification and training levels number of persons expect to enter public service need to be reduced having being reconstructed the practices of recruiting to public service.
- viii. Enforcement of recommendations on the establishment of a strong institution with sufficient statutory and administrative powers for the coordination of the affairs of collection and distribution of job market

information in terms of proposed Sri Lanka Human Resources and Employment Policy.

- ix. Universities should have the ability to reproduce a crowd of graduates consisting with globally competitive proficiencies for the improvement the practicability of information and Communication Technology (ICT) and to encourage international participation to Sri Lanka economy.
- x. So far as the international standards and historical standards of Sri Lanka are concerned, allocations of recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure for higher education by the government are at a low level today. Corresponding to that modern facilities in universities have been improved insufficiently and slowly. Therefore, human resources training functions in those institutions for employment had failed. Declining the quantity arisen as a result, had been more intensified due to internal management and students unrest problems. Therefore, attention needs to be drawn in this regard.
- xi. Of the degree courses unemployment problem of Arts graduates in the faculties of Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities and Commerce are repeatedly arisen Employment of these unemployed graduates in the public sector jobs has become a critical issue. As those graduates believe that they will be given government jobs, persuasiveness of university students have minimised to fund jobs after graduation and to gain skills within the universities itself to suite market demand. In a period the efficiency of public service is considered and extraction of all unemployed graduates to public service is not a sustainable solution, quick attention in this regard needs to be paid.
- xii. It is very clear that the demand for under graduates study in the faculties of Humanities, social sciences and commerce in the job market is less than the supply. As a short term solution market surveys have to be conducted in a manner enabling to absorb into the labour market in the scope of certain subjects and to develop curriculums accordingly soon.

- (i) Consider the room for the establishment of an accredited Authority for the monitoring and coordinating between the university Grants Commission Government Institutions and Non-governmental organizations in order to plan the graduate courses awarded by universities to suite the job market requirements.
- (j) In the design of recruitment procedures in the public sector, private sector and non-government organizations, awareness of the graduate courses awarded by universities is very important and as such an appropriate monitoring system needs to be designed.
- (k) To design a methodology to assess the overall man power requirements in the government sector, non-government and private sectors under the government integral supervision (Intellectuals, professionals, researches and Entrepreneurs)
- (l) Creation of a national higher education policy to reproduce exclusive intellectuals and professionals on the overall manpower requirement for the Ministry of Education by the policy makers, (National policies and Economic Affairs) and the provision to gain access to effective job opportunities to graduates created from each sector number of graduates and fields born through the university system annually operated under the University Grants Commission by the national higher education policy.

W.P.C. Wickramaratne

Auditor General

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