PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS ON Information & Communication Technology SUBJECT: With special reference to high school students in Ampara district, Sri Lanka

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Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has to turn out to be an essential cause of invention as well as the expansion of efficacy for various segments all over the globe. The implementation of ICT has become an interpretative portion of the education progression for schoolchildren mutually outdoor and indoor the classroom background. As a result, the Sri Lankan government has incorporated ICT subject to school education in 2006 and has launched a new stream for GCE Advanced Level (A/L) called as technology course in 2015. Therefore, this study was performed using a stratified random sampling technique by chosen up samples from the respective stratum of 5 corresponding high schools in the Ampara district. A total of 300 questionnaires were issued among the students by written and via email survey and out of these, usable questionnaires were 200. Thus, the sample size was 200. This study has been carried out to analyze the student’s awareness in ICT subject, the influence of computer facilities on students’ choice of ICT subject, the influence of factors and parents’ influence in ICT subject selection. Also, descriptive test statistics were applied and the necessary statistical analysis was performed using SPSS software. Further, 5% of the significant level was used in this study. This study reveals that the majority of respondents were males (56.5%), at the age of 18-20 years old category and they say very negatively regarding the perception and attitude towards on ICT subject. Also, they strongly agree with that individual interest (42%) and pursue a career (34.5%) are the main reasons to select the ICT subject. 60.5% of students say ICT subject prepares them to a great extent for their future career. 57% of them reveal that they have no computer laboratories and the equipment for teaching ICT (59%) is not adequate. Most of them have an internet facility in their schools (60%) and it has influenced them tremendously to select the ICT subject (33.5%). Phone usage, technology adoption, computer laboratory, availability of desktops and modems have significant influence for their subject selection. Teachers and parents have given more guidance for their subject selection but the principals have poor influence on providing valuable guidance. They agree on subject selection criteria orientations were very helpful in ICT subject selection (53.5%). Parents/guardians’ attitude towards ICT subject is positive (36%). Furthermore, parents/guardians’ education level and their financial status are significantly related to the ICT subject selection. Therefore, this study recommends that the school principals should contribute their valuable support and guidance for their schoolchildren’s subject selection criteria. Moreover, they should find ways to bring the computer laboratory and equipment for their schools. Also, the government should consider on providing computer laboratory facilities and internet connectivity for all high-level schools. Indeed, it is recommended and necessary that, school principals and teachers should arrange the ICT subject awareness programs for students and parents/guardians for the betterment of better society.

***Keywords****: Ampara, High School, ICT, Influence, Parent, Students*