



SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CONTEXT OF CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

4.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the context in which civic education is delivered in schools in Sri Lanka and the relationship between school and classroom factors and civic knowledge.

The first section reviews the status of civics and civic related subject teaching in the national education system in Sri Lanka prior to and since 1972. In the second section, teachers' and Principals' perceptions on civic education in general, and goals of civic education for students is presented, relative to student perceptions of what a good adult citizen is or does, and what a student should learn, in order to be a good citizen. The third and last section presents data on various characteristics of the classroom context, the methods and activities used in classrooms and the overall climate of the school in which learning takes place.

4.1 A review of civic related subject teaching in the national education system in Sri Lanka

Prior to 1972, Civics was taught as a separate subject in the national secondary school curriculum. In 1972, as part of a comprehensive educational reform initiative, and in keeping with global trends, subject integration was introduced in the school curriculum. Civics along with the subjects History and Geography were integrated as Social Studies. Considerable efforts were made to institutionalize the integrated subject Social Studies in the school system. For example, necessary changes were made in teacher education provision to ensure that teachers were equipped to bring about the desired transformation. Some of the constraints to effective

implementation of subject integration persisted however, in spite of concerted efforts to facilitate a meaningful transformation to an integrated approach to learning teaching, from the conventional subject orientation.

The integration of these content areas in the social studies curriculum, however, never took place and many teachers continued to confine themselves to their own areas of subject specialization, thereby undermining the expected outcomes of subject integration. Criticism grew over the years that there were significant gaps in knowledge in what was perceived to be an amorphous subject (NEC, 2003, p.170).

Dissatisfaction with subject integration, particularly with the integration of History in Social Studies, in time resulted in some changes being effected such as in the name of the subject to Social Studies and History in 1988 and, writing the textbook for History separately while continuing with the subject integration. In civic education, the dissatisfaction, particularly in more recent times has been equally strong, in respect of student learning outcomes.

A policy decision has been taken by the government of Sri Lanka on the recommendation of the National Education Commission (NEC, 2003) that the subjects History, Civics and Geography be reinstated, in the secondary school curriculum. Civics will be taught as a separate subject starting in Grade 7 in 2005 and subsequently in other grades. Syllabuses have been drafted, and textbook writing for Grade 7 is in progress.

4.1.1 A critique of the role of civic education through school curriculum

The concern that in Sri Lanka schooling has been a potential catalyst for the outbreak of identity-based conflict is succinctly stated in the NEC report (2003), in setting out its proposals for a policy framework for general education, *envisioning education for human development*.

“In a plural society riven by ethnic and religious divisions, education has failed conspicuously to promote nation building by fostering mutual understanding and tolerance for the rich cultural diversity of Sri Lankan society, and in this process has made little contribution to ensuring social cohesion and stability. The intense emotions generated around these issues, the divisive macro policies and armed ethnic conflict appear to have overwhelmed the education process. Hardly any efforts have been made to eliminate ethnic stereotypes in the curriculum to emphasize the common elements of different cultures and to promote respect for diversity within the framework of national unity. Textbooks have continued to be mono-ethnic based or to transmit prejudices. Segregation of schools on a linguistic basis was a heritage of the past but students have tended to be segregated even in multi ethnic schools, moving in disparate worlds. Education policies pertaining to language and quotas for admission to tertiary education

institutions created resentment. Conflict resolution programs were developed belatedly in the wake of armed conflict and disruption. Consequently, the need to promote reconciliation and national harmony in the current political context has emerged as a critical issue in the education sector.

The aims of education to contribute to the development of good citizens and caring individuals with exemplary character and values have been reflected in official documents over the years. But an examination-dominated curriculum has encouraged rote learning and has failed to promote a multiplicity of generic skills that are germane to the development of a balanced personality. Religious education has been compulsory since 1947 but the erosion in values in contemporary society reflected in the lack of respect for life, gender based violence, corruption, consumerism, excessive individualism and lack of civic and social responsibility, point to lacunae in the curriculum and in the activities in the 'hidden curriculum' that pervades the social climate of the school. Reports and policy statements in the 1980s and 1990s have increasingly referred to the promotion of human values and respect for human rights and dignity but education has tended to function more as an agent of social reproduction, reinforcing unequal social relations (pp11-12).

Education has failed adequately to promote quality in education and relevance in terms of social stability, national unity, human values ... (p. 15).

In the Case Study of Sri Lanka ((Perera et al, 2003), in a seven country report on 'Curriculum change and social cohesion in conflict affected societies' (IBE, UNESCO, 2003), educational reforms since 1972 were reviewed, to identify conscious efforts if any, to address the issue of social cohesion and national integration through curriculum change and other aspects of the reforms. The authors conclude that at the levels of conceptualization, design and implementation, the various reform initiatives in 1972 and 1981

...did not seek to address either directly or indirectly the major divisive systemic features such as segregation of children by ethnicity, the need to enable children become bilingual and thereby facilitate communication among them, and, the need to introduce a multi-cultural perspective in designing curriculum (IBE, 2003, p.397).

In response to the worsening socio-political crises, more conscious efforts were made in the 90s to address the most critical issues directly through educational reforms.

The Presidential Commission on Youth Unrest report (1990), which became the basis for both the 1992 and 1994 National Education Commission Reports and the 1997 reforms, highlighted some of the systemic features that had not been addressed in the education system or any of its introduced reforms. The National Education Commission Report of 1992 proposed nine national goals, which were also considered to be the goals of education. The goals reflect the expectations of the nation. Three of these goals (numbers one, two and six) specifically aim at the achievement of social cohesion:

- the achievement of national cohesion, national integrity and national unity;
- the establishment of a pervasive pattern of social justice; and

- the active participation in nation building activities to ensure the continuous nurturing of a sense of deep and abiding sense of concern for one another.

Five basic competencies on which education was to be founded were also identified. The competencies related to communication, ethics and religion, in particular complemented the three national goals mentioned above and, if consciously pursued, would address the most critical concerns of social cohesion (IBE, 2003, p. 397).

A comprehensive proposal for reform was presented in 1997, covering the entire spectrum of general education from primary to junior and senior secondary levels, with the expected outcome of achieving the national goals and five competencies. To what extent the reforms (as conceptualized, designed and implemented) consciously address the national goals and competencies with regard to social cohesion needs to be researched systematically (IBE 2003, pp. 397-398).

The present research study on civic education, conducted in the latter part of 2003 is therefore timely, at completion of the reform cycle initiated in 1997 and in place since 1998. The effectiveness of implementation of this set of reforms has already been researched with focus on numerous aspects of the effectiveness of reform implementation, since 1999. However, none of these research studies have focused specifically on civic related student learning outcomes of the 1997 reforms. Nor has any comprehensive and national level research been conducted in Sri Lanka on more generalized student learning outcomes of civic education gained in the school and classroom and, home and out of school contexts. The present study seeks to assess these learning outcomes in 14-year-old students in Grade 9, studying in the national school system in Sri Lanka.

4.2 Curriculum policy and process

Curriculum development for the school system in Sri Lanka was streamlined in the late 1960s with the establishment of the Curriculum Development Centre, prior to which the Ministry of Education was responsible for curriculum development, as part of its routine work. With the establishment of the National Institute of Education (NIE) in 1986, curriculum development and design became the responsibility of the NIE. National Education Policy is formulated on the consideration of recommendations and advice made to the President by the National Education Commission (NEC), set up in 1991. Included in National Education Policy are all matters pertaining to the aims, goals, and content of education including curricula, textbooks and learning materials.

A document titled The National Curriculum Policy and Process Plan (2000) provides a nationally accepted framework and guidelines to all school curriculum developers as well as all education

practitioners in Sri Lanka. The National Curriculum Policy and Process Plan takes into consideration definitions of curriculum such as “structured series of learning outcomes”, “all contrived experiences within the school environment” and, from a more comprehensive and practical perspective, defines curriculum as “a course of study provided in school to include aims, objectives, content, teaching strategies, evaluation and essential learning resources facilitating learning and teaching of a given discipline”.

In a section indicating main principles and considerations, it is stated that the broad curriculum framework should serve the needs of a multi-cultural, pluralistic but nationally integrated society, learners from varying home and community environments. In content, there can be no bias in relation to ethnicity, religion, gender or economic deprivation.

4.2.1 Time Allocated to civics related subjects in the secondary school curriculum

In Sri Lanka, a centrally designed national curriculum is taught in all schools falling within the national system, from which the representative sample of students was drawn. The primary civic related subject Social Studies is taught from Grades 7 to 11 at the secondary level of schooling. The sample of students in the present study had therefore studied three years of Social Studies curriculum when they answered the student questionnaire. The number of hours per week and, per school year (in Grade 9) of civic related subject learning was calculated using data provided in the Ministry of Education *Circular No.* 1998/45. Additionally, 71 percent of the schools in the present study on Civic Education – Sri Lanka (CESL) participate in special programs or projects related to civic education, as reported by the Principals of schools.

4.2.2 The scope and content of civics education

The scope and content of civic/civics education in the national school curriculum prior to the 70s and since 1972 is shown in Table 4.1 (annexe 4), relative to a list of 20 topics identified in the IEA CIVED study.

In the proposals for a national policy framework on general education in Sri Lanka, the National Education Commission (NEC, 2003, pp.173-174) proposes that civic education or civics needs to incorporate four major aspects in the present context.

- (i) As in the pre 1970s syllabus, the role of citizens, their rights and duties and governance at local and central level, but working towards changing the existing political culture in the country, starting with respect for the rule of law and moving purposefully towards a vibrant, participatory democracy and coping with globalization.
- (ii) Strengthening this process through awareness of international norms of human rights, and specifically, political, civil, economic and social rights, including women's rights and the rights of the child.
- (iii) Meeting the immediate need for social cohesion through learning to live with others in harmony.
 - respecting the diversity of cultures in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural society
 - promoting egalitarian social relations including class and gender relations, in the family, community, workplace, society and polity.
 - sensitivity to differences, preventing and resolving conflict through discussion, and rejecting violence.
- (iv) Using an issue based and activity based approach in the classroom and in field activities such as a critical study of governance at local level in the environment of the school as a project, and at central level through debate and discussion, open discussion of current issues, problem solving sessions, role play in exercising the franchise, community service projects.
- (v) Promoting writing textbooks in this area in a challenging task to encapsulate theory and practice with objectivity

A glance through the civic education topics listed in the national school curriculum over the past few decades and, the curriculum to be in place from the year 2005 onwards indicates that the scope and coverage has been relatively consistent over time. The generic goal of educating children for citizenship in a democratic society by familiarizing them with the institutions, principles and practices of governance in democratic and other systems has been pervasive, with increasing stress on educating children for global citizenship, in more recent times. Equally pervasive is the stress on civic virtues, which are more or less synonymous with basic human values. In the present context in Sri Lanka, it is widely acknowledged that through the civic education curriculum, the school should contribute to social and civic reconstruction, a priority

national concern in the aftermath of decades of violent identity based conflict. The demand that the subject civics be reinstated in the school curriculum was fuelled by this strongly felt need expressed by stakeholders.

In Table 4.1, (annexe 4) the topics covered in the Civics syllabuses in secondary grades prior to 1972, topics incorporated in the subject Social Studies since 1972, and topics identified to be covered through the proposed stand alone subject Civics/Citizenship education to be introduced from 2005 are listed, in parallel with a list of 20 topics from the teacher questionnaire of the International CIVED study. The topics covered areas such as history, political systems, citizens' and human rights, economic affairs, international affairs and media. Other than a few, most topics in this list of 20 have been featured in the Civics/Social Studies syllabuses in the secondary school curricula, over the period reviewed. A few topics such as migrations of people, environmental issues, dangers of propaganda, media have not been included in the respective syllabuses as separate topics; however, some of these issues are covered under other topics such as 4, 12 and 13. Within the integrated subject Social Studies, only some of these specifically civic related topics are covered up to Grade 9. Some of the other topics are covered in Grades 10 and 11, depending on the appropriateness of subject content for the respective age groups. This is reflected in teacher responses shown in Table 4.2 to items in Section H of the teacher questionnaire, indicating 'How much opportunity up to and including Grade 9 have students had to learn these topics?.'

Teachers were asked to rate each topic in the list of 20, to indicate i) how important they think these topics are for civic education, ii) how confident they feel to teach these topics and, iii) how much opportunity the students have had to learn these topics up to and including grade 9. The results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Percentage ratings by teachers for topics, in combined response categories

Section H: Teacher Questionnaire What topics do you teach?		How important do you think these topics are for civic education		How confident do you feel to teach these topics		How much opportunity up to and including grade 9 have students had to learn these topics	
		Not impt/ Little Impt	Impt / Very Impt	Not at all/ Little confident	Confident/ Very confident	Not at all/ Little	Considerable/ very much
H1	National constitution and state political institutions	5	95	18	82	61	39
H2	Citizens rights and obligations	1	99	9	91	55	45
H3	Different conceptions of democracy	9	91	18	82	64	36
H4	Different /Comparative political systems	19	81	36	64	78	22
H5	Election and electoral systems	10	90	19	81	60	40
H6	The judicial system	3	97	31	69	66	34
H7	Human and civil rights	2	98	19	81	58	42
H8	Important events in the nation's history	4	96	16	84	51	49
H9	International organizations	9	91	23	77	64	36
H10	International problems and relations	10	90	31	69	69	31
H11	Migrations of people	26	74	40	60	67	33
H12	Economic issues	5	95	23	77	59	41
H13	Social welfare	3	97	24	76	65	35
H14	Trade/labor unions	26	74	49	51	77	23
H15	Equal opportunities for women and men	16	84	29	71	70	30
H16	Cultural differences and minorities	10	90	26	74	60	40
H17	Environmental issues	3	97	14	86	45	55
H18	Civic virtues	3	97	16	84	54	46
H19	Dangers of propaganda and manipulation	17	83	36	64	71	29
H20	Media	4	96	25	75	61	39

Teachers rated 15 of these topics as important / very important, with response percentages in the 90-99 range; the responses to ten of the topics range between 95-99 percent and to the other 5 topics, between 90-94. In the international study, teachers ranked national history, citizens' and human rights as well as environmental issues at the top of the list of important topics. They deem topics in the areas of international and economic affairs less important, and in most

countries, international migration and labor unions are topics very low in importance relative to other topics.

In the CIVED study, for each country a score based on teachers' sense of confidence in teaching the 20 different topics was computed. The score was calculated by averaging the national means for each topic, and by computing an average across all topic means. The scale arrived at ranged from 1 to 4. The confidence scores show that in most countries teachers feel fairly confident imparting civic education. However, while 16 topics in the list of 20 received 3.0 or higher mean ratings in importance, using the same mean criterion, teachers describe themselves as confident in teaching only five of these topics, and believe that students have had considerable opportunity to learn only one of these topics - national history.

In Sri Lanka 26 percent teachers rated five topics as not important /little important, with response percentages ranging from 26-14; it is noteworthy that these 5 topics are among the eleven rated by teachers as topics they were not at all / little confident to teach, with response percentages ranging from 49-23.

Some of the topics that teachers rated as not important / little important have not been included as separate topics in the syllabuses (Table 4.1); Migrations of people, Dangers of propaganda and, Media are three such topics. In the present context both nationally and globally, all three topics are of critical significance, and should be incorporated in Civics syllabuses. The topics that teachers were not quite confident to teach should also be taken note of, by providers of Civics in-service for teachers; for six topics the responses in the category not at all / little confident of teachers ranged from 49-31 percent and for another six topics, from 29-23.

The enhancement of the knowledge base of teachers by provision of supplementary source materials, in-service provision, to enable teachers critically examine these topics with students in Civics classrooms is suggested, to meet these felt needs of teachers.

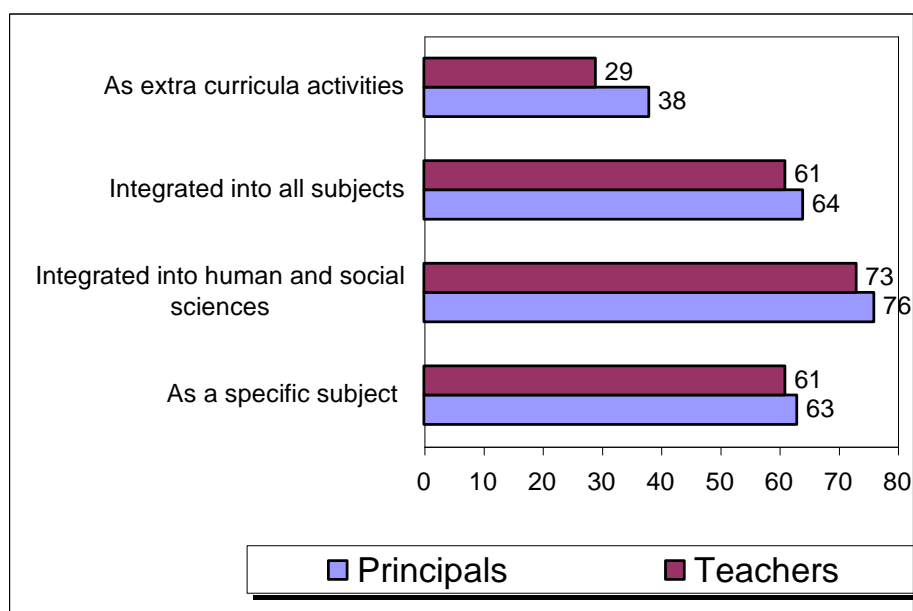
The responses of teachers on how much opportunity students have had to learn these topics up to and including Grade 9 indicate that some of these topics have either not been offered at all, or studied in a limited manner, depending on the spread of topics over the Grades 6 -11 in the secondary school curriculum and, the depth of treatment to suit students' age ranges. In interpreting civic achievement, attitudes and behaviors indicated by 14 year olds in response to

the student questionnaire, one needs to be cognizant of the opportunities students have had up to and including Grade 9 to engage in direct civic related learning of these topics.

4.3 Teachers', Principals' and students' views on different aspects of civic education

The questionnaires administered to teachers and principals asked them the question 'how should civic education be taught'. Should it be taught as a specific subject, integrated into subjects related to human and social sciences, integrated into all subjects in the school curriculum or, be an extra curricular activity? In the context of the curriculum decision already taken and will be implemented with effect from 2005, this question posed to teachers and principals in the respective questionnaires may seem superfluous. Although in Sri Lanka curriculum decisions such as these are generally in the hands of policy and curriculum developers, it was a most appropriate question to pose, to teachers and principals who are the implementers of curriculum policy.

The data in Graph 4.1 indicates the percentage responses of teachers and principals in the category Agree/Strongly agree to the 4 statements in Section A in the teacher questionnaire, and in question 9, in the school questionnaire. This set of data is presented in Table 4.3, annexe 4.



Graph 4.1: Percentage responses of teachers and principals indicating how civic education should be taught

The teachers and principals seem to have considered the merits of each option offered and the widest possible exposure to be obtained for students in light of the complexity of the task at

hand. The highest response in the combined response categories of strongly agree and agree, of both teachers and principals was for integrating civics education into some subjects related to human and social sciences, followed by a relatively high percentage of both teachers and principals also agreeing with an across the curriculum integration. With a history of Civics having being taught as an integrated subject since 1972, first integrated in Social Studies and subsequently as Social Studies and History, teachers and principals are apparently more comfortable with the teaching of civics as an integrated subject, and their responses are probably a reflection of the preference for the familiar.

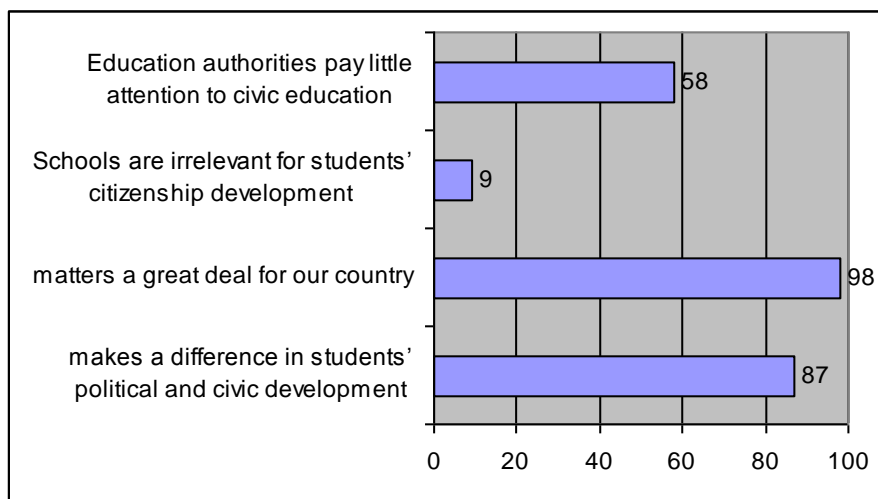
However, the dissatisfaction with civic related student learning outcomes of the subject Social Studies may be reflected in the responses of teachers and principals indicating agreement with the statement that Civics should be taught as a specific subject. There is a felt need for curriculum focus on civic virtues and responsibilities in particular within the school system, with increasing school disaffection and violence on the part of students, no doubt a direct reflection of what significantly characterizes the social milieu outside the school.

According to the findings of the CIVED international study too, the model that integrates civic education into other social sciences is the most popular among teachers. The report indicates that overall, the support for civic education as its own subject is overshadowed by teachers' support for the integration model. It is also commented on that generally, when respondents envision a place for civic education in the curriculum, they in some respects reflect the institutional status quo in their countries. In Sri Lanka, the preference indicated by teachers for the same model is understandable, even though most teachers were aware of the change envisaged.

In Section C of the teacher questionnaire, four statements probed teachers' perceptions on 'How much does civic education matter'. The percentage responses of teachers in the category Agree/Strongly agree is presented in Graph 4.2 (see also Table 4.4 in annexe 4). There is very high consensus on the part of teachers that civic education in school matters a great deal for our country. They also endorse clearly that teaching civic education would make a difference in students' political and civic development by relatively high percentage responses in the combined category strongly agree/agree and, that school has an important role to play in citizenship education by indicating very high percentage disagreement with the negatively worded statement that schools are irrelevant for students' citizenship development.

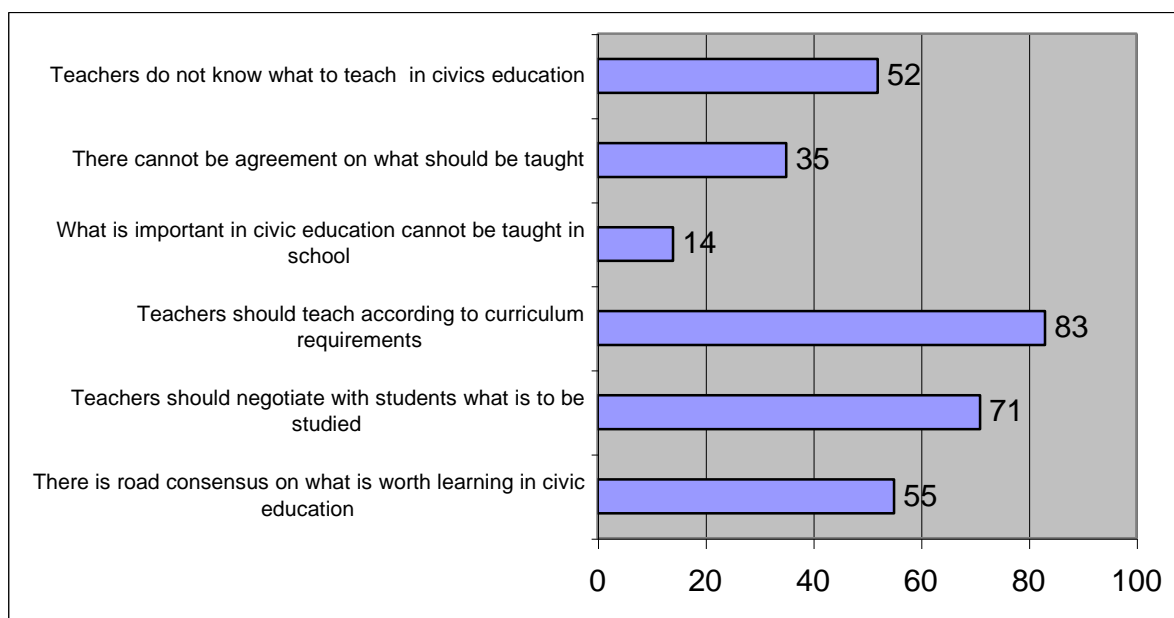
Similarly, in summarizing the findings of this section in the CIVED study, the report states that fairly uniformly across countries, students are taught by teachers who strongly affirm that schools are places where civic education ought to be taught and can be taught effectively. For large proportions of respondents, civic education matters a great deal in facilitating students' civic development and teachers therefore fulfill an important role in their country.

It is noteworthy that 58 per cent teachers in Sri Lanka agree with the statement that education authorities pay little attention to civic education, indicating perhaps that more support is needed for the school system to forge ahead with this task of the school.



Graph 4.2: Percentage responses of teachers indicating how much civic education matters

In Section B of the teacher questionnaire, teachers' opinions on 'What is worth learning in civic education' were solicited in response to six statements. Their responses to these statements in the category Agree/Strongly agree are presented in Graph 4.3 (see also Table 4.5 in chapter annex).



Graph 4.3: Percentage responses of teachers indicating what is worth learning in civic education

Teachers (45 per cent) are cognizant of the fact that there is no consensus in society on what is worth learning in civic education (B1) and, 52 per cent agree that due to rapid changes in recent years teachers do not know what to teach in civic education (B6). However, teachers are by no means despairing. A significant majority (86 per cent) do not agree with the contention that what is important in civic education cannot be taught in school (B4) and 65 per cent disagree that due to conflicts and different opinions in society there cannot be agreement on what should be taught in civic education (B5). While 83 per cent of the teachers are in favor of conforming to curriculum standards (B3), it is heartening to note that 71 per cent agree that teachers should negotiate with students what is to be studied in civic education (B2). The message being communicated by teachers therefore is positive. They firmly believe that school has a role to play in students' civic education, and are willing to negotiate with students on what is to be studied in civic education, a very progressive outlook indeed.

Similarly, in the CIVED study, teachers tended to doubt societal consensus, but skepticism notwithstanding, they believe that agreement on what is worth learning is nevertheless possible. The great majority stress official curriculum as points of orientation, but this orientation does not stand in the way of teachers' willingness to negotiate with students over what is to be studied in civic education.

In Section L of the teacher questionnaire, a list of 15 skills, attitudes and goals for civic education 'that may be controversial' were presented, and teachers asked to rate 'how important it is to you that students learn' these.

Table 4.6: Percentage responses of teachers indicating how important it is to him/her as teacher, that students achieve these learning goals

TQ	How important is it to teachers that students learn these skills attitudes and goals	Never/ Sometimes %	Often / Very Often %
L1	To recognize the value of our nation	07	93
L2	To criticize nationalism	73	27
L3	To follow the rules/regulations	21	79
L4	To develop honesty	08	92
L5	To develop consciousness about the needs of the whole world	29	71
L6	To be aware of the dangers of technological progress	26	74
L7	To develop industriousness	08	92
L8	To fight against social injustice	39	61
L9	To recognize one's own interests	23	77
L10	To accept conflict and make the best of it	25	75
L11	To develop orderliness	08	92
L12	To understand that civil disobedience is sometimes necessary to achieve better conditions	64	36
L13	To ensure opportunities for minorities to express their own culture	39	61
L14	To stand up for one's opinion	39	61
L15	To strengthen national culture against foreign influence	35	65

In this list of 15 more or less generic civic goals for students, over 90 per cent teacher responses in the combined category 'very often and often' were received for items 1, 4, 7 and 11. Developing personality qualities of honesty (L4), industriousness (L7), orderliness (L11), and valuing of one's nation (L1) are the four civic goals for students that teachers have given the highest positive responses to. The more conventional citizenship goal - 'to follow rules and regulations' (L3), somewhat controversial goal - 'recognize one's own interests' (L9), are next in teachers' priority order, having 79 and 77 per cent responses respectively. Some of the more 'need of the hour' yet sensitive goals for students in Sri Lanka such as to 'criticize nationalism' (L2), 'accept conflict and make the best of it' (L10), to 'ensure opportunities for minorities to express their own culture' (L13), to 'fight against social injustice' (L8), to 'understand that civil disobedience is sometimes necessary to achieve better conditions' (L12), to 'strengthen national culture against foreign influence' (L15) have perhaps been tempered with caution, for these have received lesser percentage responses from teachers. It is heartening to note, however, that items L10 and L13 have received 75 and 61 per cent responses, for these are two civic goals that need to be nurtured consciously in Sri Lanka.

It is interesting to note that teachers have exerted caution in responding to items L2 and L12. Only 27 per cent teachers apparently consider even constructive criticism of nationalism an important civic education goal for students. Likewise, understanding that civil disobedience is

necessary to achieve better conditions is favored by only 36 per cent as an often-valued civic goal. The more pro-active and interventionist goals of 'to fight against social injustice' and 'to stand up for one's opinion' are among the items that have received relatively fewer response percentages of 61 per cent respectively.

A percentage of teachers in their preference for civic skills, attitudes and goals for students seem to be exerting considerable caution and steering clear of the controversial or non-conventional goals that require taking a more proactive interventionist stand. In the present crucial socio political context in Sri Lanka however, students need to be guided to confront issues, analyze them objectively and draw their own conclusions. If teachers withdraw passively from enlightening and engaging students in objectively deliberating on burning issues, the student outcomes of civic education through school curriculum will only be superficial.

In Section F of the teacher questionnaire, teachers were presented a set of questions to be rated on a scale 'Strongly Disagree/Disagree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree' (SD/D/A/SA), considering 'what students should learn to become good citizens. The same set of questions were presented to students in the student questionnaire, asking them to rate how important they believe each is, on a scale 'Not Important/Somewhat Unimportant/Somewhat Important/Very Important' (NI/SU/SI/VI) respectively, for explaining what a good adult citizen is or does. The responses of teachers to this set of questions is presented relative to those of students, to assess what congruence there is between the two response sets.

Teachers' views on what students should learn to become good citizens may strongly influence civic education instruction. The value that teachers place on specific behaviors may translate into learning goals and objectives that teachers pursue in their classrooms. Some of these behaviors refer to conventional forms of political allegiance and participation while others imply a more activist stance.

The response patterns of teachers and students are mostly similar, with significantly fewer percentage responses in the two categories strongly disagree/disagree and, not important/somewhat unimportant, combined as composite categories respectively.

Table 4.7: Percentage responses of teachers on what students should learn to be good adult citizens, relative to the comparable responses of students

To be a good adult citizen students should learn to recognize the importance of (TQ)		TQ: Strongly disagree/disagree		TQ: Agree/ Strongly agree	
An adult who is a good citizen ... (SQ)		SQ: Not important/ Somewhat unimportant %		SQ: Somewhat important/ Very important %	
		TQ	SQ	TQ	SQ
B/F 1	Obedying (...obeys) the law	02	05	98	95
B/F 2	Voting (...votes) in every election	12	11	88	89
B/F 3	Joining (...joins) a political party	50	42	50	58
B/F 4	Working (...works) hard	06	06	59	94
B/F 5	Participating (...would participate) in a peaceful protest against a law believed to be unjust	23	30	77	70
B/F 6	Knowing (...knows) about the country's history	03	07	97	93
B/F 7	Being willing (...would be willing) to serve the country's military to defend the country	28	13	72	87
B/F 8	Reading about (...follows) political issues in the newspaper, on the radio or on TV	03	09	97	91
B/F 9	Participating (...participates) in activities to help people in society	01	07	99	93
B/F10	Showing (...shows) respect for government representatives (leaders/officials)	06	09	94	91
B/F11	Taking (...takes) part in activities promoting human rights	02	08	98	92
B/F12	Engaging (...engages) in political discussion	27	33	73	67
B/F13	Taking (...takes) part in activities to protect the environment	01	06	99	94
B/F14	Being (...is) patriotic and loyal (devoted) to the country	16	24	84	76
B/F15	Ignoring /disregarding (...would be willing to disregard) a law that violated human rights	56	35	44	65

There is 90 per cent agreement of both teachers and students to 8 of the items in Table 4.7, over 67 per cent agreement to 5 other items, and the difference in agreement between teachers and students to each of these items ranges between 2 to 8 percentage points. The lowest agreement is with items 7 and 15 to which the difference in agreement is 15 and 21 percentage points respectively. Being willing to join the country's military to defend the country (B/F7) seems to have appealed more to 14 year olds than to their teachers and, the negatively worded statement in B/F15 is rejected by more teachers than students. However, it is a cause for concern that 44 percent teachers did consider it important that students, to be good citizens, should learn to recognize the importance of ignoring a law that violated human rights!

In the international study, there was nearly unanimous approval among teachers across all countries for 'knowing about the country's history', with lesser importance given to history by students than teachers. Both students and teachers give priority to 'the importance of obedience

to the law’, ‘protecting the environment’ and ‘promoting human rights’. ‘Joining a political party’ is the item universally perceived as least important among the 15 choices, by teachers and students. Responses to ‘willingness to serve the military to defend the country’ differ among countries.

Table 4.8: Percentage responses of students, teachers and principals on what students learn in school

SQ Section K: (School Curriculum) In school I have learned ... TQ Section E: In our school students learn ... SCHQ Section 10K: Students in this school learn ...		Strongly disagree/Disagree			Agree/Strongly Agree		
		SQ	TQ	SCH Q	SQ	TQ	SCH Q
K/E/K1	to understand people who have different ideas/points of view	17	18	4	83	82	96
K/E/K2	to cooperate (work together) in groups with other students	5	5	1	95	95	99
K/E/K3	to contribute to solve problems in society	13	21	11	87	79	89
K/E/K4	to be patriotic and loyal (committed) citizens of the country	7	13	3	93	87	97
K/E/K5	how to act to protect the environment	6	6	3	94	94	97
K/E/K6	to be concerned about what happens to other countries	14	14	10	86	86	90
K/E/K7	about the importance of voting in national and local elections	21	17	18	79	83	82

A set of 7 statements were presented to all three categories of stakeholders, students, teachers and principals respectively, soliciting their opinions on what students learn in school. A very high consensus is noted in the responses of all three groups indicating that in school students learn to work together in groups with other students and, how to act to protect the environment. The composite responses of all three groups to each of these items, in the combined category agree/strongly agree is 96 and 95 per cent respectively. A percentage of both students and teachers strongly disagree/disagree that in school students learn to understand people who have different ideas/points of view, to contribute to solve problems in society and, to be concerned about what happens to other countries; the teachers and students composite response to these three statements in the combined category strongly disagree/disagree is 18, 17, 13 per cent respectively. The principals seem to be relatively more idealistic in their responses to most items in this set, indicating the highest percentage agreement to almost all statements.

The responses of teachers to these items are very similar, in the international CIVED study. When asked to assess specific attitudes and skills that make up civic education instruction, the majority of teachers attest to their own effectiveness. They agree that students learn to understand people, to cooperate, to solve problems, to protect the environment, to develop concern about the country and to know the importance of voting.

In Sri Lanka, the students' disagreement with the statement that in school students learn about the importance of voting in national and local elections, is recorded by 21 per cent, in the combined category strongly disagree/disagree. In SQ item M1, when asked what they expect they would do when they are adults, 24 per cent of this sample of students said 'I will certainly/probably not vote in national elections', and in response to item B2, 11 per cent students considered 'voting in every election' as not important/somewhat unimportant for a good adult citizen.

The pertinent question to ask here would be, 'in reality, what impacts on students' attitudes and perceptions most, school learning, or the system of government by representation as implemented?' The National Youth Survey 1999/2000 provides answers to this question. In this sample of youth, 49 per cent responded in the category 'not at all' to the question 'How much trust do you have in elected representatives?' (number of respondents to this item:1836) The disenchantment of Sri Lankan youth with participating in electing their representatives seems to polarize further, with age. In the sample of the National Youth Survey, 50 per cent belonged to the age category of 15-19, of whom 63 per cent were still schooling, a set of youth who have graduated from Grade 9 to higher Grades in the school system (see also *Table...*, Sample of the National Youth Survey).

4.4. Classroom context of civic education

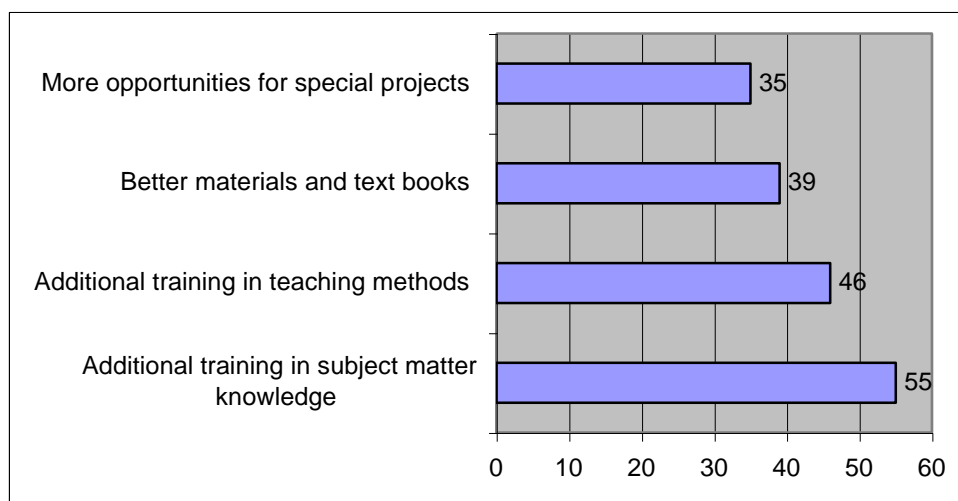
Part 3 of the teacher questionnaire probed the classroom learning teaching context. Teachers were asked how they plan for civic education, from what sources they draw, how often the different activities listed are used in their classes, how they assess students and, what in their view needs to be improved about civic education in their school.

Table 4.9: Percentage responses of teachers indicating from what sources they draw in planning for civic education

TQ G	How do you plan for Civic Ed? From what sources do you draw?	Not impt/ Less important	Impt/ Very important
G1	Official curricula or curricula guidelines or frameworks	03	97
G2	Official requirements (standards) in the area of civic education	05	95
G3	Your own ideas of what is important to know in civic education	07	93
G4	Original sources (such as constitutions, human rights declarations)	06	94
G5	(Approved) text books	05	95
G6	Materials published by commercial companies, public institutes or private foundations	36	64
G7	Self-produced materials	06	94

Other than from materials published by commercial companies, public institutes or private foundations from which 64 per cent of the teachers draw, over 90 per cent of the teachers draw from all other sources listed, including their own ideas of what is important to know in civic education. In Sri Lanka, what is important to know is very much curriculum and syllabus delineated and extending students' learning to incorporate a wider sweep of civic related issues, facilitate skills and attitude development is the challenge for the school and teachers. In the international CIVED study findings, it is reported that the extent to which teachers draw from externally generated materials (official curriculum and textbooks) and, from internally generated materials (teachers' own ideas, self-generated materials) is in balance.

Teachers were requested to indicate the three most needed improvements from among those listed (see Table 4.10 in chapter annexe for the full list and response percentages to each). The three need areas teachers prioritized were additional training in subject matter knowledge and teaching methods, better materials and textbooks.



Graph 4.4: Teachers' responses on what needs to be improved about civic education in their schools

The responses of teachers substantiate the findings regarding teacher confidence to teach topics (Table 4.2), and their reported use of the more traditional methods and approaches to teaching and assessment of student learning (Tables 4.6, 4.14).

A majority (64 percent) of the Principals (Table 4.11) on their part indicate that the school is affected some / a lot by shortage / inadequacy of teachers trained specially for civic education,

although earlier, in response to item 6 in the school questionnaire, 97 percent of the principals did indicate that in their schools, there were teachers who have specialized in a civic related subject.

Better materials and textbooks are in constant demand and 39 per cent teachers endorse the need for improvement in these quality inputs; 30 percent of the teachers indicate that more materials and text books are needed (Table 4.10) while 82 percent of the principals (Table 4.11) indicate that the school is affected some/a lot by the shortage or inadequacy of materials such as text books. Shortage / inadequacy of library infrastructure and audio-visual materials to enhance civic related learning teaching is also reported by 64 percent of the principals.

In the CIVED study, the top ranked needs indicated by teachers encompassed ‘better materials and textbooks’ followed by ‘additional training in content’ and ‘more time for instruction’. Thus in many countries, teachers’ more urgent needs refer to core activities of the subject, and more strongly to concerns relating to content than to instructional methods.

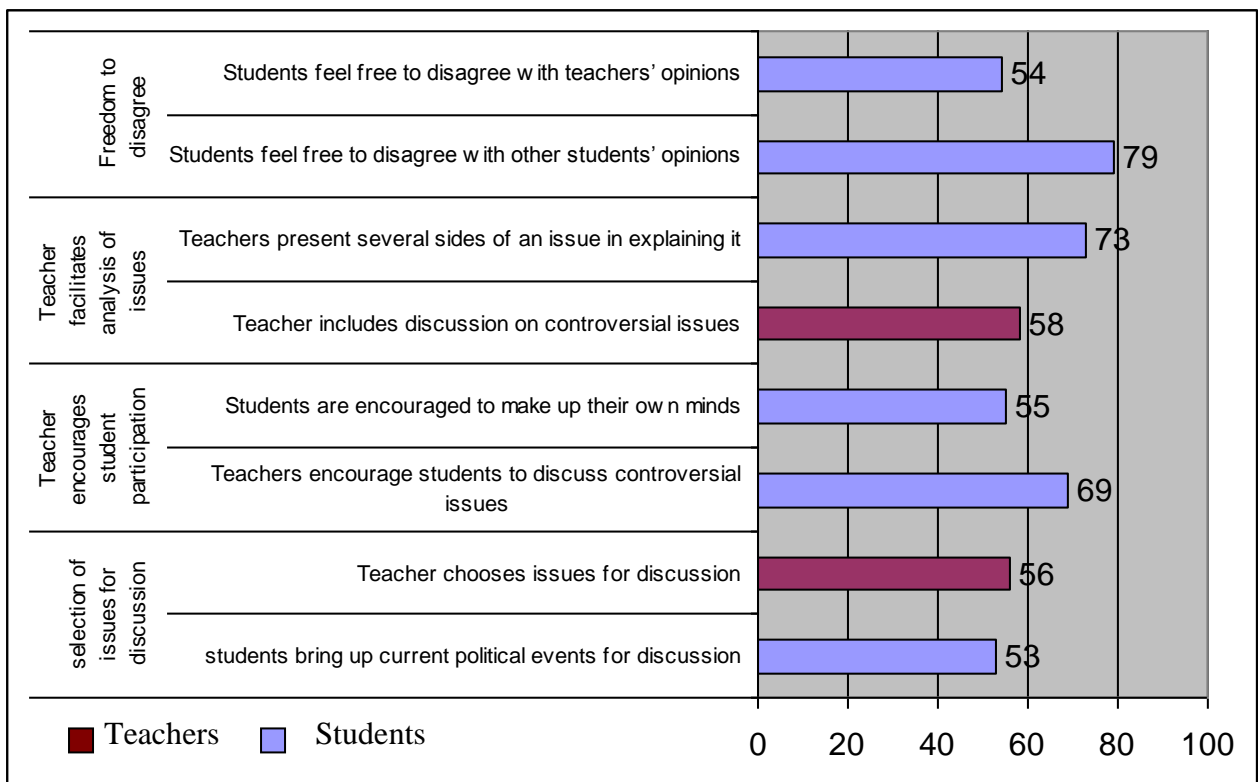
It is noteworthy that in Sri Lanka, only 14 percent teachers (Table 4.10) have selected ‘more autonomy for school decisions’ as a need area, although local variations within the national Curricula are possible and school projects are an innovative feature introduced by the system. Approximately a third of the teachers have indicated the need for more opportunities for special projects, more resources for extra curricular activities and more cooperation among teachers in different subject areas (Table 4.10). For civics education to be meaningful experiential learning, the adoption of inter disciplinary approaches, pooling of teacher resources, conduct of projects and extra curricular activities, cooperation with external experts should be encouraged.

Table 4.11:Percentage responses of Principals on effects of shortages/inadequacies on civic education

SCHQ 19	How much is the school affected by shortage / inadequacy of:	Not at all %	A little %	Some %	A lot %
A	Instructional materials (e.g. text books)	-	18	64	18
B	School buildings and grounds	03	44	42	11
C	Library infrastructure and audio-visual resources	11	25	52	12
D	Teachers trained specially for civic education (related subjects)	14	22	55	9

4.5 Climate of the classroom

In the student questionnaire Section N: Classrooms - was designed to obtain a measure of the climate of the classroom for student participation. How democratic was the climate of the classroom? Did students have the freedom to discuss freely political and social issues, even of a controversial nature? Could they bring issues up for discussion in class, express opinions freely even if different from those held by other students and, teachers? Some of these statements were presented to teachers as well, in Section I in the teacher questionnaire, soliciting their responses on how often these activities were used in their classrooms. In the analysis that follows, the responses to these data sets in the two questionnaires, presented in Tables 4.12 and 4.13 (see chapter annexe), are triangulated.



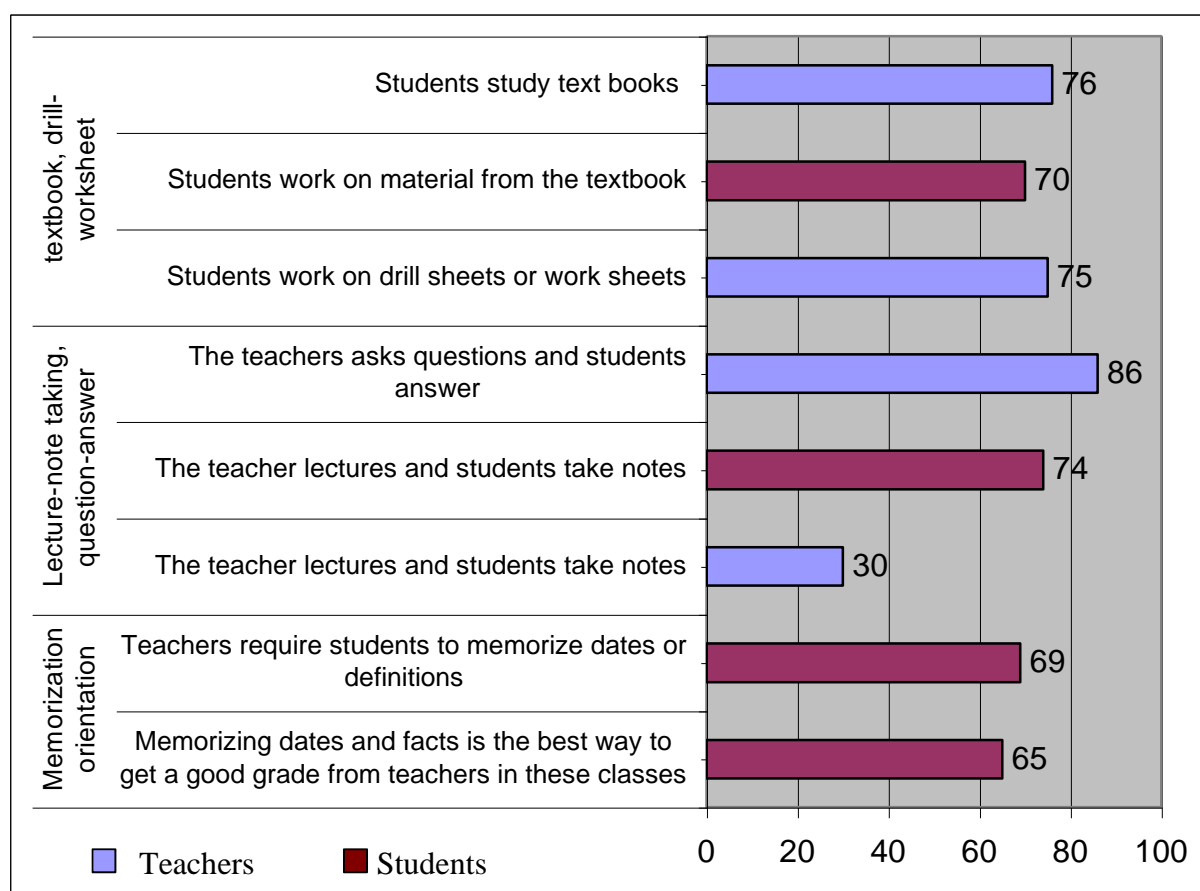
Graph 4.5: Classroom climate in the perception of students and teachers

Classroom learning teaching climate for civic education, in the perception of both students and teachers, is democratic. Students have the freedom to bring up current political events for discussion in class. Teachers encourage students to discuss and to make up their own minds about controversial political and social issues. To enable this, teachers initiate discussion on controversial issues and present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class. However, students are somewhat reluctant to openly disagree with teachers about political and social issues whereas they feel relatively more secure to express their opinions even when differing from those

of most of the other students. This is understandable, given the teacher-pupil relationship based on deference to teachers on the part of students, a value that is culturally ingrained.

4.5.1 Learning teaching methodologies and activities

In Part 4 of the teacher questionnaire on Instruction, in Section I, ten activities were listed, and teachers asked to indicate how often these activities were used in their classrooms. Similarly, in Section N of the student questionnaire on Classrooms, twelve statements were presented among which were included some of the activities listed in the teacher questionnaire. The responses of teachers and students to items indicating activities used in civic education (Social Studies and History) classrooms are presented in Graph 4.6 (see also Tables 4.12 and 4.13 in chapter annexe). The teacher responses in the combined category Often/Very often, and student responses in the combined category Sometimes/Often have been clustered in three broad sets; activities focused on textbooks, drill and worksheets, on lecture-note taking and question-answer routines, memorization oriented activities.

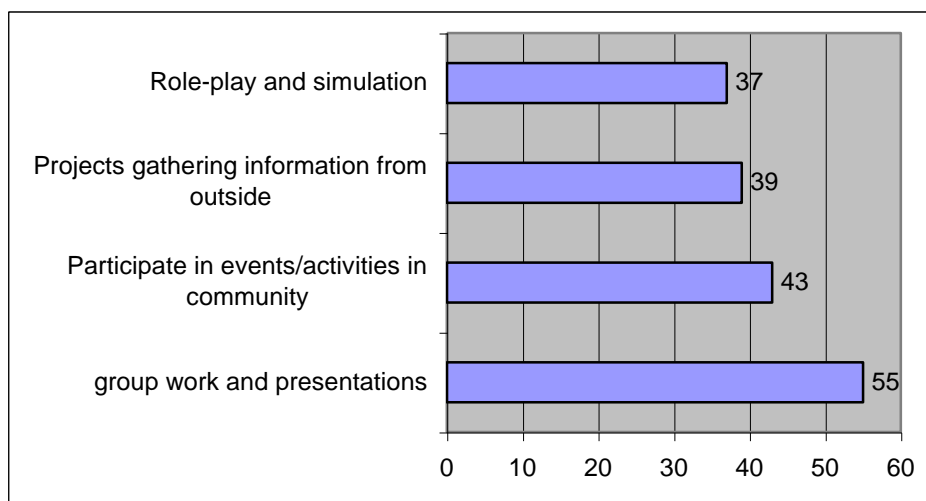


Graph 4.6: Activities used in civic education classrooms as reported by students and teachers

The activities often used in classrooms are the question answer routines commonly encountered, the lecture note taking routines - although only 30 percent of the teachers acknowledge that they lecture and give notes, whereas 74 percent of the students say that this routine takes place, studying and working on materials from the textbook, on drill and work sheets. In addition, students have indicated that teachers expect students to memorize dates and definitions. The conclusion that can be drawn therefore is that the classroom continues to be teacher and didactic teaching focused than learner initiated, inquiry based learning focused.

4.5.2 Inquiry based and student interactive approaches

In the teacher questionnaire, four activities that promote inquiry based student interaction oriented classroom learning were listed, and teacher response percentages to these items in the combined category Often/Very often are presented in Graph 4.6 (see also Table 4.13 in chapter annexe).



Graph 4.7: Inquiry based and student interactive approaches used in classrooms as reported by teachers

Other than for group work and presentations in class by students, for the other three methods listed, the percentage responses were significantly lower, relative to the responses to the more traditional and less interactive approaches presented in Table 4.13. By working on projects, participating in events or activities in the community, taking part in role-play and simulations, student learning becomes more meaningful and experiential. For civic education, these and other inquiry and experiential learning approaches are more appropriate than the traditional teaching focused methodologies.

It is noteworthy that the findings in the international study are very similar to these findings. In 26 of the 28 countries, there is evidence of a preponderance of teacher-centered formats. A combination of textbooks with recitation and sometimes worksheets is used with the highest frequency. In some of the countries, students are also taught using group work. Across countries teachers testify to a fairly frequent occurrence of discussions of controversial issues in their civic education classrooms, and a far less frequent occurrence for role-plays and projects.

To assess civic related subject learning outcomes, teachers use multiple-choice tests, oral and other forms of assessments. The evaluation of the system of School Based Assessment at level of implementation has focused on the somewhat routine and mechanical fulfillment of SBA requirements by teachers. The use of inquiry based and student interactive approaches to learning would challenge teachers to assess students' learning outcomes using more innovative and diagnostic methods of assessment. Across the countries in the CIVED study too, the most common form of assessment is a combination of written composition and oral participation, with multiple choice tests a popular feature in some of the countries.

Table 4.14: Percentage responses of teachers on use of different methods of assessments

TQ	How do you assess students	TQ
K1	Written compositions or essays	31
K2	Multiple choice tests	56
K3	Oral assessments	42
K4	Oral participation	30
K5	Other forms of assessment (please specify)	41
K6	No specific assessment	04

4.6 The climate of the school

The climate of the school in general would impact significantly on students' civic education through all formal, informal processes transacted in the life of the school. A measure of the climate of the school could be obtained from student responses to statements in Section J: School, in the student questionnaire; seven statements on students' participation in school life were listed and the respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each. Table 4.15 presents the responses of students to these seven items.

Table 4.15: Perceptions of students on their own participation in school life

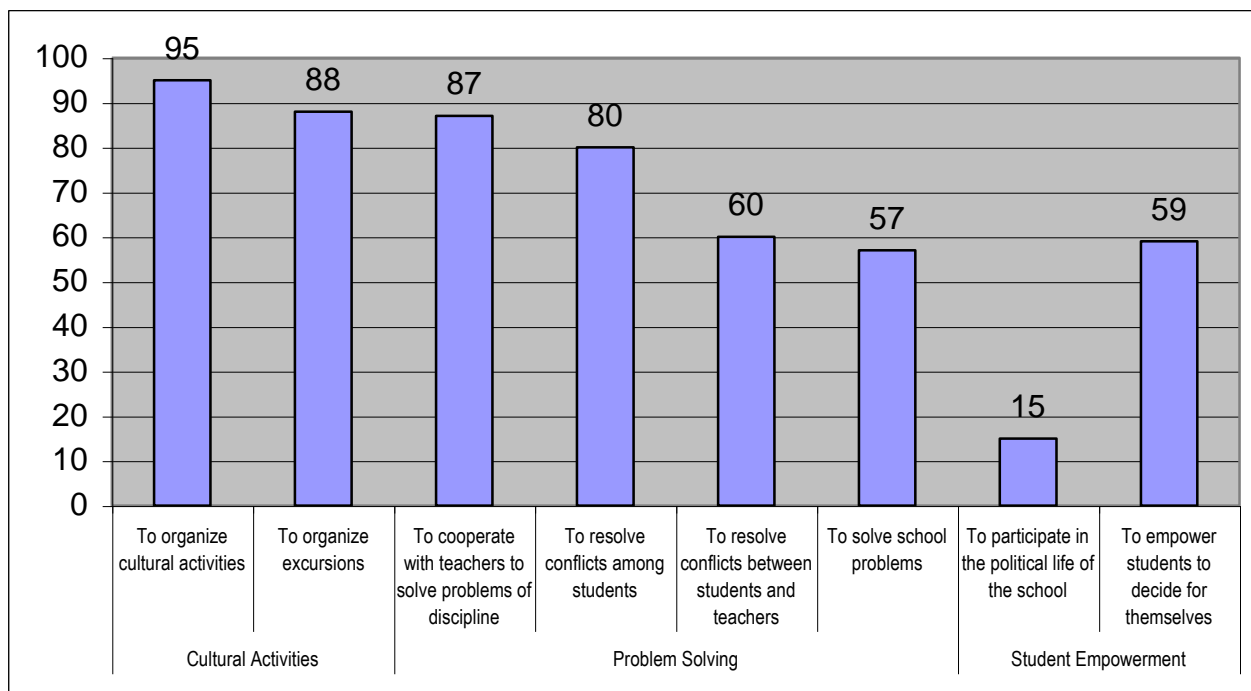
SQ		Strongly disagree/Disagree	Agree/Strongly agree
J1	Electing student representatives to suggest changes in how to solve school problems makes school better	12	88
J2	Lots of positive changes happen in this school when students work together	11	89
J3	Organizing groups of students to state their opinions could help solve problems in this school	10	90
J4	Students acting in groups can have more influence on what happens in this school than students acting alone	13	87
J5	I am interested in participating in discussions about school problems	10	90
J6	If members of my class felt they were unfairly treated, I would be willing to go with them to speak to the teacher	09	91
J7	When school problems are being discussed I usually have something to say	12	88

Student perceptions were solicited on the effectiveness of student participation in school affairs such as in contributing to solve school problems, in bringing about positive changes, in claiming student rights. How inclined they were to participate actively in school affairs, and how secure they felt to do so could be gauged from the responses of students to these items. Student responses to all the statements in this data set were extremely positive.

4.6.1 The function of student assemblies in schools

Whether the school had a formal institutionalized structure to enlist such student participation in the conduct of the school's affairs was investigated by a data set, Section M in the teacher questionnaire (see Table 4.16 in chapter annexe). Teachers were asked what the function is, of student assemblies in their schools? In Sri Lanka, the concept of student council/student government [class or school parliament] at school level is unfamiliar and rarely practiced. In Q13 in the student questionnaire, 'student council/student government' was therefore removed from the list provided to students to indicate the memberships they held.

The responses of teachers to the items listed have been grouped into three broad clusters - cultural activities, problem solving and student empowerment.

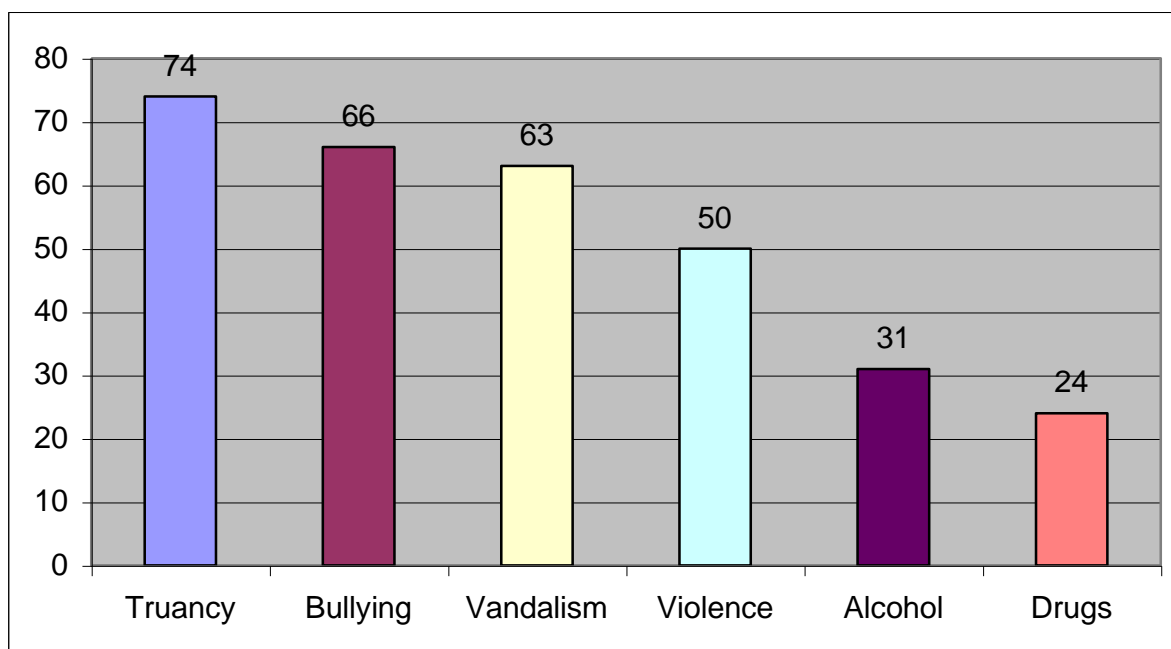


Graph 4.8: Function of student assemblies in schools

The highest percentage responses indicated, 95 and 88 per cent are for organizing cultural activities (M7) and excursions (M8), typical of the role student assemblies in Sri Lankan schools have played over time. With escalating indiscipline and school violence, apparently student assemblies are being called upon to cooperate with teachers to solve problems of discipline (M5), resolve conflicts among students (M9), and those between students and teachers (M6), as indicated by 87, 80 and 60 per cent responses to these items respectively. Fifty nine percent responses indicate that a function of school assemblies is to empower students to decide for themselves, but participation in the political life of the school is considered a function of school assemblies by only 15 percent of the teachers.

4.6.2 How civic conscious are students as school citizens?

In the school questionnaire, item 15 listed eight negative behaviors and, the principals were asked to indicate how frequently each of these occur in their schools. Responding to this item, 74, 66, 63 and 50 per cent of the principals reported that truancy, bullying, vandalism and violence respectively occurs sometimes in their schools (see Table 4.17 in chapter annexe).



Graph 4.9: Percentage responses of principals indicating the frequency of student negative behaviors in school

As reported, negative behaviors such as truancy, bullying, vandalism and violence occur sometimes in more than half the schools in sample and in a few schools, these occur often. Alcohol and drugs occur in 31 and 24 percent of the schools respectively. It is heartening however that religious intolerance and racism are reported by only a v few of the principals.

Making provision for student participation in the political life of the school in a responsible and accountable manner than the minimal participation indicated by 15 per cent responses to item M4 in the teacher questionnaire, accompanied by empowerment of students to decide for themselves (M2), which is reported by 59 per cent of the teachers as one of the functions of student assemblies, may facilitate schools transform into democratic institutions promoting self-governance on the part of students. The opportunities schools provide for meaningful participation, self-government and respect for rights are among the factors potentially influencing students' attitudes and behaviors, as school citizens and, of society outside. In addressing student negative behaviors reported by principals in response to item 15 in the school questionnaire (Table 4.17) for example, students' active participation as responsible members of the school community, to bring pressure on peers who engage in these deviant behaviors has proven to be effective.

4.6.3 Parental involvement in school

The parental involvement in school and student learning is positive, as reported by principals in response to items 11 and 20 in the school questionnaire. In Sri Lanka, admission to schools preferred by parents is mostly competitive, and parents go to extreme lengths to get their children admitted to such schools. In response to item 16 in the school questionnaire, 77 percent of the principals indicated that not all who apply get admitted to their schools. Irrespective of whether or not it is a high prestige school, most parents generally take an active interest and involve themselves with the school. Parental involvement in school and in the child's academic progress is high, as reported by the majority of principals; parents follow up on student progress and report learning problems, according to 86 percent of the principals (Table 4.18); 63 percent of the principals say parents make sure that their child completes homework assigned by school, and 79 percent acknowledge that parents support student achievement (Table 4.19). Most principals in this sample (81 percent) characterize students' achievement orientation as positive and, 91 percent characterize students' attitude toward school similarly. Over 90 percent principals also characterize teachers' commitment, and relationships between students and teachers as positive.

Table 4.18: Percentage responses of principals indicating parental involvement in school

SCH Q11	In your school how do parents become involved?	%
A	Notify the school about learning problems of their children	86
b	Makes sure that their child completes his/her homework	63
C	Raise or contribute funds for the school	62

Table 4.19: Percentage responses of principals indicating their characterization of the attitudes of key school stakeholders

SCH Q 20	How would you characterize each of the following in your school?	Very negative /Somewhat negative %	Positive/ Very positive %
A	Students' attitude toward academic achievement	19	81
b	Students' attitude toward school	09	91
C	Teachers' commitment	09	91
D	Parental support for student achievement	21	79
E	Students' respect for school property	21	79
F	Relations between students and teachers	05	95

The school climate for learning, as reported, is therefore positive and supportive of academic achievement. The variation in civic achievement between school types however is a finding that is substantiated by numerous other research findings, and for which a multiplicity of school related and, home and other out of school factors contribute.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter, an overview of civic education through the school curriculum over the last few decades, including curriculum content was presented, with a critique of the aborted ‘curriculum integration’ at implementation level and, unsatisfactory learning outcomes. With effect from 1971 civic education was integrated in Social Studies curriculum. However, as stated in the NEC report (2003), the integration of these content areas in the social studies curriculum, never took place and many teachers continued to confine themselves to their own areas of subject specialization, thereby undermining the expected outcomes of subject integration. Criticism grew over the years that there were significant gaps in knowledge in what was perceived to be an amorphous subject.

Likewise, the failure in translating the aims of education to contribute to the development of good citizens and caring individuals with exemplary character and values reflected in official documents over the years has been highlighted, drawing on recent analysis in the literature. In spite of reports and policy statements in the 1980s and 1990s that increasingly refer to the promotion of human values and respect for human rights and dignity, the lack of civic and social responsibility is considered as pointing to lacunae in the curriculum and in the activities in the ‘hidden curriculum’ that pervades the social climate of the school. The indictment that education has failed adequately to promote quality in education and relevance in terms of social stability, national unity and human values is a strong critique on civic instruction in classrooms.

The timeliness of the present research is highlighted, in the backdrop of the proposed re-introduction of civic instruction with civics as its own subject in the secondary curriculum. The need to research the civic related student learning outcomes of the 1997 reforms, and for comprehensive and national level research in Sri Lanka on more generalized student learning outcomes of civic education gained in the school and classroom and, home and out of school contexts is focused on, to inform civic instruction in formal classroom contexts as well as in out of school contexts.

The coverage of secondary school civic related curriculum, the importance accorded to a list of 20 topics by teachers, their level of confidence in teaching these topics, and the opportunities Grade nine students have had to study these topics has been discussed, providing a contextual basis to interpret the findings of the present research.

The model that integrates civic education into other social sciences is the most popular among teachers, in indicating how civic education should be taught. The support for civic education as its own subject is overshadowed by teachers' support for the integration model, which may be a reflection of the familiarity of teachers with the status quo in the country, for over three decades. The more important finding however is that students are taught by teachers who strongly affirm that schools are places where civic education ought to be taught and can be taught effectively. For large proportions of respondents, civic education matters a great deal in facilitating students' civic development and teachers therefore fulfill an important role in their country.

Teachers believe that agreement on what is worth learning in civic education is possible although tending to doubt societal consensus. The great majority stress official curriculum as points of orientation, but this orientation does not stand in the way of teachers' willingness to negotiate with students over what is to be studied in civic education.

When asked to assess specific attitudes and skills that make up civic education instruction, the majority of teachers attest to their own effectiveness. They agree that students learn to understand people, to cooperate, to solve problems, to protect the environment, to develop concern about the country and to know the importance of voting. In general, teachers seem to favor inculcating the more conventional forms of political allegiance and participation over attitudes and skills that imply a more activist stance, in the future citizens they teach.

Teachers in Sri Lanka reportedly draw both from externally generated materials such as official curriculum and textbooks and, from internally generated materials such as teachers' own ideas and self-generated materials, in preparation for teaching. The three need areas that teachers prioritized, to improve civic related subject teaching were additional training in subject matter knowledge, in teaching methods, and better materials and textbooks. One contrast in the findings of the international study is that in many countries, teachers' more urgent needs refer to core activities of the subject, and more strongly to concerns relating to content than to instructional methods.

The teaching learning methodologies used more frequently in civic education classrooms in Sri Lanka are teacher and didactic teaching focused than learner initiated and inquiry based learning focused. Student interactive and approaches are used sparingly. In classrooms across the countries participating in the international CIVED study too, the findings were similar. The methods of assessment used in civic education classrooms too were similar, such as written compositions, oral participation and multiple-choice tests. A redeeming feature however, is that across countries, teachers testify to a fairly frequent occurrence of discussions of controversial issues in their civic education classrooms.

In Sri Lanka, students were inclined towards proactive participation in school life. They also had very positive perceptions on their own capacity to bring about change and to democratize the way schools function, by participation in groups in particular, in the life of the school. However, aside from engaging in problem solving, such as cooperating with teachers to solve problems of discipline, resolving problems among students, between teachers and students and school problems in general, the participation of students in the political life of the school is minimal.

Making provision for student participation in the political life of the school in a responsible and accountable manner than the minimal participation indicated, accompanied by empowerment of students to decide for themselves, may facilitate schools transform into democratic institutions promoting self-governance on the part of students.

As reported, negative behaviors such as truancy, bullying, vandalism and violence occur sometimes in more than half the schools in sample. In addressing student negative behaviors, students' active participation as responsible members of the school community, to bring pressure on peers who engage in these deviant behaviors is suggested.

The opportunities schools provide for meaningful participation, self-government and respect for rights are among the factors potentially influencing students' attitudes and behaviors, as school citizens and, of society outside.

The school climate for learning as reflected in students' and teachers' attitudes, and in parental involvement, is positive and supportive of academic achievement.