



SECONDARY TEACHING WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT IN SRI LANKA

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ABOUT THE LEARNING CYCLE ON SECONDARY TEACHER WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

This case study is a result of the KIX EMAP Learning Cycle "Secondary Teacher Workforce Management". Facilitated by the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), this Learning Cycle ran from 24 September to 30 November 2024. Across 10 weeks, it equipped participants with the necessary theory and practical techniques to plan and analyse data on their secondary teacher workforce in relation to teacher requirements, deployment, and utilisation and to identify potential policy options. Thirteen national teams took part in this Learning Cycle, including Bhutan, Cambodia, Egypt, Lao PDR, Maldives, Moldova, Mongolia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tunisia and Ukraine.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANT	Actual number of teachers
GCE (O/L)	General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level)
IIEP-UNESCO	International Institute for Educational Planning, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
GPE KIX	Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
EMAP	Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Asia and Pacific
MoE	Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka
NCoEs	National Colleges of Education
OUUR	Overall under-utilisation rate
RNTN	Real number of teachers needed
STT	Statutory teaching time
SUUR	Subject under-utilisation rate

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Knowledge Report, produced by the Sri Lanka team during the KIX EMAP Learning Cycle on Secondary Teacher Workforce Management, facilitated by IIEP-UNESCO, examines the current status, challenges, and policy directions for managing secondary teachers in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's education system is based on a free education policy from primary through first-degree levels, supported by a nationwide school network and government-appointed teachers. Education is a devolved subject, administered by the national Ministry of Education and nine provincial ministries. The country has 10,096 schools and a teacher–pupil ratio of 1:17.

Key Challenges

Teacher management faces persistent obstacles, including political interference, uneven entry qualifications, subject shortages (notably in science, mathematics, and English), high absenteeism, and rural–urban imbalances in teacher deployment. Rural and hard-to-staff schools frequently experience vacancies, while urban and advantaged schools may have teacher surpluses. Disparities are especially visible when comparing well-resourced areas such as Colombo with disadvantaged provinces like Uva.

Teacher Demand and Allocation

Teacher demand is calculated using pedagogical group allocations as outlined in policy circulars. Although both local mechanisms and course-based formulas produce similar national estimates, significant mismatches occur at the provincial and school levels. For example, in 2025, the Monaragala district is projected to have shortages in science, English, and Buddhism, despite excesses in other subjects.

Utilisation Issues

Average learning coverage rates range between 30% and 60%, with absenteeism and underutilisation affecting efficiency. In the Uva Province, science teacher utilisation is around 60%, with approximately 41% underutilisation due to staffing structures, administrative duties, and monitoring roles.

Current Policies and Strategies

Measures such as the 06/2021 circular, mandatory rural service for new teachers, financial incentives, preferential school admissions for teachers' children, and rotational transfer policies aim to improve the equitable distribution of teachers. Schools also have some flexibility under school-based management to hire temporary staff, and initiatives are in place to promote multidisciplinary teaching.

Conclusion

Although Sri Lanka has introduced policies to optimise teacher deployment and utilisation, practical barriers – political influence, administrative decentralisation, and geographical disparities – limit their effectiveness. Female teachers make up the majority of the workforce, and accurate, up-to-date data on teacher numbers remains a challenge.

Policy Recommendations

The report proposes the following:

1. **Centralised Education Administration** – Establish a national teacher database, centralise recruitment, and deploy digital solutions to ensure fair allocation.
2. **Strict Adherence to Policies** – Enforce recruitment and transfer regulations, prevent political interference, and implement a national oversight body.
3. **Equitable Deployment** – Introduce a needs-based policy with incentives, housing, and gender-sensitive measures for rural postings.
4. **Performance Evaluation** – Develop a robust system linking evaluations to promotions and professional growth.
5. **Professional Development** – Conduct mandatory training during school vacations and promote hybrid learning approaches.
6. **Teacher Licensing** – Require periodic license renewal aligned with international standards.

By addressing these areas, Sri Lanka can strengthen its secondary teaching workforce, ensure equitable teacher distribution, and enhance the quality of education nationwide.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 An Overview of the Education System in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka, located in South Asia, has a unique educational structure based on a policy of free education from grade 1 through the first university degree. This policy has contributed to the country's high literacy rates and favourable human development indicators.

The government's policy is to provide free education from the primary level through the first degree level of university education. To ensure that every child has access to schooling, a network of schools has been established across the island, with resources provided to support them. All teachers are appointed and paid by the government. Currently, the teacher–pupil ratio stands at 1:17 (National Education Commission, 2023).

1.2 Education Administration

Education is a devolved subject in Sri Lanka, administered by a line ministry and nine provincial ministries. In line with the free education policy, the government provides free textbooks and uniforms to 3,882,688 pupils enrolled in government and recognised private schools. Figures 1 and 2 depict Sri Lanka's current education structure, which is overseen at the national level by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology.

At the provincial level, there are nine education departments headed by a provincial director of education, who holds a dual administrative role, acting on behalf of both the provincial education authority and the line ministry authority. To support these functions, there are 100 zonal education offices and 311 divisional education offices that facilitate resource distribution and supervision.

Figure 1. Administrative and provincial divisions of Sri Lanka

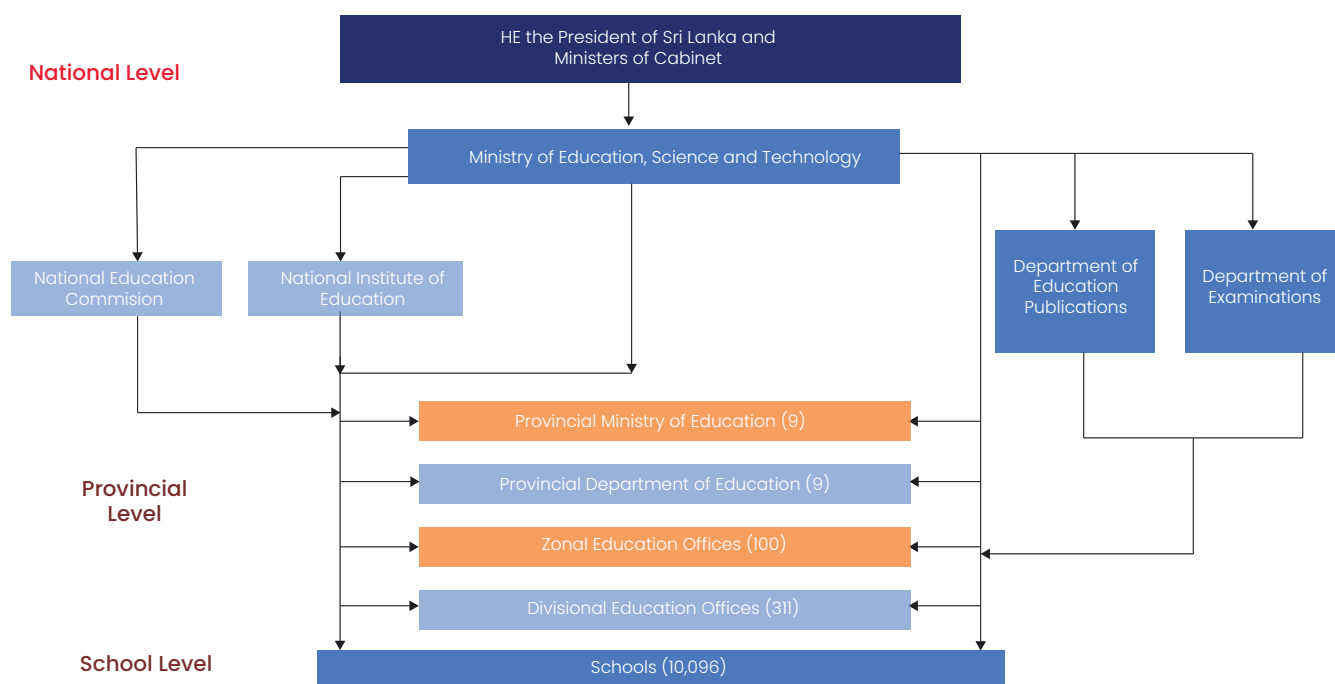


Source: UN Cartographic Section / Nations Online Project

Sri Lanka has 10,096 schools, comprising 396 national schools administered by the line ministry and 9,700 provincial schools under the nine provincial ministries. Table 1 presents the

distribution of students and teachers across these 10,096 schools in nine provinces.

Figure 2. Administrative structure of education in Sri Lanka



Source: Ministry of Education (MoE), 2012

Table 1. Basic statistics of schools in Sri Lanka

13. Basic Statistics of National and Provincial Schools by Province - 2023											
Province	No. of Schools			No. of Students				No. of Teaching Staff			
	Total	National	Provincial	Total	National	% of Students in National Schools	Provincial	Total	National	% of Teachers in National Schools	Provincial
1. Western	1,344	79	1,265	854,071	223,848	26.2	630,223	44,568	10,885	24.4	33,683
2. Central	1,508	56	1,452	513,899	89,867	17.5	424,032	33,094	5,086	15.4	28,008
3. Southern	1,101	70	1,031	499,921	160,344	32.1	339,577	29,224	7,599	26	21,625
4. Northern	974	24	950	207,568	30,559	14.7	177,009	18,396	2,103	11.4	16,293
5. Eastern	1,124	42	1,082	368,237	67,949	18.5	300,288	23,055	4,007	17.4	19,048
6. North Western	1,243	39	1,204	485,740	85,396	17.6	400,344	28,320	4,420	15.6	23,900
7. North Central	808	17	791	295,156	41,116	13.9	254,040	16,343	1,803	11	14,540
8. Uva	893	38	855	284,020	53,439	18.8	230,581	19,816	3,264	16.5	16,552
9. Sabaragamuwa	1,101	31	1,070	374,076	77,503	20.7	296,573	24,971	4,133	16.6	20,838
Total	10,096	396	9,700	3,882,688	830,021	21.4	3,052,667	237,787	43,300	18.2	194,487

Source: School Census Report, 2023

1.3 Teacher Management and Challenges in Sri Lanka

Teacher management is administered by line ministries and the provincial governments. Recruitment is primarily based on qualifications. Secondary teachers are largely recruited through national institutions of education. Approximately 4,000 teachers are registered in 19 National Colleges of Education (NCoEs). After completing the national diploma in teaching and meeting the required standards, they are deployed to national schools or provincial authorities, which then assign them to provincial schools based on available vacancies.

In addition, graduate teachers are recruited by both administrative bodies for senior secondary classes according to demand, typically through a competitive examination and interview process.

Providing quality education has become a central challenge in improving educational outcomes. Teachers serve as the frontline implementers of policy. According to the MoE's School Census (2023), Sri Lanka had 10,096 government schools, including 396 national schools and 9,700 provincial schools, with a total of 112,555 teachers at the secondary level (grades 6–11).

Sri Lanka's education system has faced the following key obstacles:

- Political and external interference
- Variations in entry qualifications
- Complaints about content and quality
- High costs of maintenance, monitoring, and staffing
- Additional requests or interventions
- High teacher absenteeism

Due to regional discrepancies, deploying and training teachers in rural or remote schools remain particularly difficult. Although teachers are initially appointed to fill vacancies in such schools, many transfer to urban or semi-urban schools through political influence, leaving rural posts unfilled and creating an oversupply in more accessible areas.

The MoE sets service rules for public education employees, principals, teachers, teacher educators, and education administrators in national schools and oversees all aspects of human resource management (Raju, 2017). There are two entry paths into public teaching: recruitment by the provincial councils and recruitment by the MoE, both generally based on subject-specific vacancies. However, political cycles have often introduced irregularities in recruitment, deployment, and promotion, which create perceptions of unfairness. This may discourage higher-calibre candidates from entering the profession and undermine the morale of incumbent teachers (Aturupane, 2009; Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka [IPS], 2014; Liyanage, 2014; Pillay et al., 2015).

Another significant challenge is the shortage of subject-specialist teachers. Acute and chronic deficits persist in key specific secondary-level subjects, particularly English, mathematics, and science. Many schools either lack subject teachers altogether or rely on underqualified teachers (Pillay et al., 2015). These shortages directly affect student performance, contributing to high failure rates in the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) (GCE [O/L]) examination. Poor working conditions and low compensation further diminish teacher performance and the overall quality of instruction.

2. DEMAND FOR SECONDARY TEACHERS

2.1 Teacher Demand According to the Policy Circular 06/2021 in Sri Lanka

According to the Policy Circular's 06/2021 instructions, teacher demand is determined by the number of approved pedagogical groups (i.e. the maximum number of students permitted per subject group) in each school. Even if student demand for enrolment is high, schools are not permitted to exceed the number of pedagogical groups assigned.

Table 2 below presents the number of pedagogical groups and approved teachers calculated in accordance with the circular, based on annual enrolment rates. For example, if a school is approved for 17 pedagogical groups in grades 6–11, the teacher demand would be three for each core subject (science,

mathematics, mother tongue, and English), one for religion, and two for history.

Annually, schools calculate teacher demand based on student numbers and approved pedagogical groups. As a result, the school administration will find a gap between the available and approved numbers. They are required to report the identified annual requirements to the MoE.

As a result, once all national schools have reported their requirements, the data management department will compute the annual teacher requirement for all national schools and advise the teacher recruitment branch to proceed with recruitment. Table 2 below displays the actual recruitment requirements for the Monaragala district, Uva Province, Sri Lanka, for the year 2025.

Table 2. Number of teachers approved for secondary core subjects in Monaragala district, Uva Province, 2025

Total No. of Classes in Grades 6–11	Science	Mathematics	Mother Language	English	Religion	History
1	1	1	1	1	0	1
2	1	1	1	1	0	1
3	1	1	1	1	0	1
4	1	1	1	1	0	1
5	1	1	1	1	0	1
6	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	2	2	2	1	1	1
8	2	2	2	2	1	1
9	2	2	2	2	1	1
10	2	2	2	2	1	1
11	2	2	2	2	1	1
12	2	2	2	2	1	1
13	2	2	2	2	1	1
14	3	3	3	2	1	1
15	3	3	3	3	1	2
16	3	3	3	3	1	2
17	3	3	3	3	1	2

Table 3 below presents the teacher demand based on the approved pedagogical groups for each school in the Monaragala district. The total demand across 11 national schools is 253 teachers for 2025, according to the approved pedagogical groups outlined in the circular. The subject-wise demand is as follows: science (51), mathematics (51), mother tongue (51), English (49), and history (24). After adjusting for the number of teachers currently available, the gap – or total actual requirement – for 2025 is shown in Table 4. As indicated, the actual teacher requirement for schools in the Monaragala district is 21.

The data also show that there is a surplus of teachers in mathematics, mother tongue, and history, while deficits exist in science, English, and Buddhism. A school-level analysis further reveals imbalances. Some schools have excess teachers in core subjects, while others face shortages. For instance, Siyambalanduwa Maha Vidyalaya requires one teacher each for science and mathematics, but has one excess teacher for mother tongue.

Table 3. Teacher demand according to Circular 6/2021 in national schools in the Monaragala District, Uva Province

Seq. No	Census No	School Name	Province	District	Science	Mathematics	Mother Tongue (Sinhala)	English	History	Buddhism	Islam	Roman Catholic
354	22001	BIBILE WELLASSA N.S.	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	6	6	6	6	2	2		
355	22005	MEDAGAMA N.S.	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	4	4	4	4	2	2	1	
356	22069	MONARAGALA MAHANAMA M.M.V.	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	6	6	6	6	3	2		1
357	22073	MO/SIYAMBALANDUWA M.V.	8.Uva	82.Moneragala	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0
358	22086	MONARAGALA RAJAKEEYA V.	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	6	6	6	4	2	2		
359	22111	BADALKUMBURA NISHSHANKA M.M.V.	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	4	4	4	4	2	2		
360	22146	MALWATTAWALA M.M.V.	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	6	6	6	6	3	3		
361	22149	BUTTALA DUTUGEMUNU CENTRAL COLLE	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	6	6	6	6	3	2	2	1
362	22184	KATHARAGAMA .M.M.V	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	4	4	4	4	2	2		
363	22187	THANAMALWILA M.M.V	8.Uva	82.Moneragal	4	4	4	4	2	2		
364	22270	MO/YASHODARA G.S.	8.Uva	82.Moneragala	3	3	3	3	2	2	0	0
Total					51	51	51	49	24	22	3	2

Source: Cadre calculation, MoE, 2024

Table 4. Actual secondary teacher demand in the Monaragala District

Seq.	Census	School	Province	Zone	Division	District	Science	Mathematics	Mother Tongue (Sinhala)	Mother Tongue (Tamil)	English	History	Buddhism	Hinduism	Islam	Roman Catholic	Christianity	
272	22001	WELLASSA N.S.	PED - UVA	ZEO - BIBILE	DEO - BIBILE	82.Moneragala	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1
273	22069	MAHANAMA CENTRAL COLLEGE	PED - UVA	ZEO - MONARAGALA	DEO - MONARAGALA	82.Moneragala	1	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	7
274	22073	SIYAMBALANDUWA M.V.	PED - UVA	ZEO - MONARAGALA	DEO - SIYAMBALANDUW	82.Moneragala	1	1	-1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
275	22111	NISHSHANKA M.M.V.	PED - UVA	ZEO - MONARAGALA	DEO - BADALKUMBURA	82.Moneragala	0	-3	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	2
276	22146	MALWATTAWALA M.M.V.	PED - UVA	ZEO - WELLAWAYA	DEO - WELLAWAYA	82.Moneragala	0	-1	-2	0	0	-1	0	0	0	1	0	-3
277	22149	DUTUGAMUNU M.M.V.	PED - UVA	ZEO - WELLAWAYA	DEO - BUTTALA	82.Moneragala	3	-1	-1	0	3	0	4	0	-2	0	0	6
278	22184	KATARAGAMA JANADHIPATHI M.	PED - UVA	ZEO - THANAMALVILA	DEO - THANAMALVILA	82.Moneragala	0	-1	-1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
279	22270	YASHODARA GIRLS' COLLEGE	PED - UVA	ZEO - BIBILE	DEO - BIBILE	82.Moneragala	4	0	-1	0	3	-1	0	0	0	0	0	5
							9	-5	-6	0	13	-2	12	0	-2	1	1	21

Source: Cadre calculation, Data Management Branch, MoE, 2024

2.2 Teacher Demand According to the Formulas Taught in the Course

The following calculations and analyses are based on the formulas introduced in the KIX EMAP Learning Cycle on Secondary Teacher Workforce Management.

According to Table 5, the estimated number of pedagogical groups for lower secondary level in the 396 national schools, based on a target pedagogical group size of 40 and an enrolment of 330,006 students, is 7,333. For upper secondary, the estimated number is 3,667, calculated using a target pedagogical group size of 45 and an enrolment of 165,003 students.

Table 5. Total number of pedagogical groups in national schools, 2024

			2024
Step 1 - Enrolment	Primary (1-5)		133,970
	Junior Secondary	Lower Secondary (6-9)	330,006
		Upper Secondary (10-11)	165,003
	Senior Secondary (12-13)		194,865
Step 2 - Number of pedagogical groups (PG)	Primary (1-5)	Target size of PG	40
		Number of PG	3,449
	Junior Secondary	Target size of PG	45
		No of PG Lower Secondary (6-9)	7,333
		No of PG Upper Secondary (10-11)	3,667
		No of PG Senior Secondary (12-13)	4,330

Based on these pedagogical group estimates from Table 5, the number of learning hours required per week for each subject, in line with government policy, is presented in Table 6. Using the figures from Tables 5 and 6, the total number of learning hours needed for all 396 national schools at the primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels is also shown in Table 6.

The statutory teaching time (STT) for teachers in government schools in Sri Lanka is a maximum of 35 periods per week, although this may vary depending on the number of teachers available in a given school. Using the values shown in Table 6 and applying 35 as the STT value, the number of teachers required for each subject across the 396 national schools is displayed in Table 8.

Table 6. Number of learning hours (40-minute periods) per week

Learning hours per week and PG (Pedagogical Group)	Curriculum Class Time (40 min period)				
		Primary (1– 5)	Lower Secondary (6–9)	Upper Secondary (10–11)	Senior Secondary
	Science	0	5	6	0
	Mathematics	10	5	6	0
	English	7	5	5	0
	Mother Tongue	10	5	5	0
	History	0	2	3	0
	Religion	4	2	2	0
	Geography	0	2	3	0
	Citizenship	0	2	3	0
	Entrepreneurship (Optional)	0	0	3	0
	Second Lan	2	2	3	0
	Music (Optional)	0	2	3	0
	Art	0	2	3	0
	Dancing	0	2	3	0
	Drama	0	2	3	0
	Literature	0	2	3	0
	ICT	0	2	3	0
	Agriculture	0	2	3	0
	Home Economics	0	2	3	0
	Communication and Media studies	0	2	3	0
	Health and Physical Education	0	2	3	0
	Environment Studies	5	0	0	0
	Total learning hours/week	38	40	40	0

Source: Cadre calculation, Data Management Branch, MoE, 2024

Table 7. Total number of learning hours needed

Step 4 – Total number of teachers needed	Number of teachers needed is rounded to the next greater integer.	All levels and streams		2024
			Science	1,677
			Mathematics	1,677
			English	1,572
			Mother Tongue	1,572
			History	734
			Religion	629
			Geography	734
			Citizenship	734
			Entrepreneurship (Optional)	315
			Second Lan	734
			Music (Optional)	734
			Art	734
			Dancing	734
			Drama	734
			Literature	734
			ICT	734
			Agriculture	734
			Home Economics	734
			Communication and Media Studies	734
			Health and Physical Education	734
			Environment Studies	-

Source: Cadre calculation, Data Management Branch, MoE, 2024

Table 8. Total number of teachers needed for 396 national schools, according to local calculations

Seq. No	Science	Mathematics	Mother Tongue (Sinhala)	English	History	Buddhism
378	9	9	9	8	4	3
379	0	0	0	0	0	0
380	0	0	0	0	0	0
381	6	6	6	6	3	2
382	4	4	4	4	2	2
383	4	4	4	4	2	2
384	4	4	4	3	2	2
385	6	6	6	6	3	3
386	6	6	6	6	2	2
387	0	0	0	0	0	0
388	8	8	8	7	3	3
389	6	6	6	6	3	3
390	6	6	6	6	3	3
391	6	6	6	6	3	2
392	8	8	8	7	3	3
393	6	6	6	6	3	2
394	8	8	8	7	3	3
395	6	6	6	6	2	2
396	3	3	3	3	2	2
	1,680	1,680	1,682	1,606	760	687

Source: Cadre calculation, MoE, 2024

When comparing the number of teachers calculated using the Learning Cycle formulas in Table 7 with those derived from country-specific mechanisms in Table 8, the differences are minimal.

3. SECONDARY TEACHER ALLOCATION

3.1 Regional Disparities in Teacher Allocation

Because of regional disparities among provinces, the demand for teachers in rural schools is very low. Although the policy clearly defines how teacher demand in such schools should be met, appointing teachers remains a challenge for the MoE due to practical barriers such as political influences, personal favours, and appeals submitted by teachers. As a result, advantaged areas often show an excess of teachers in core subjects, while rural schools experience shortages.

Table 9 compares the Colombo district – regarded as the most advantaged province with highly sought-after schools – to the other two districts in the Uva Province, which are considered among the most disadvantaged, with a high concentration of difficult schools.

Table 9 also shows that the Colombo district has an excess of teachers in science, math, history, mother tongue, and Islam. In contrast, Badulla and Monaragala suffer shortages in science, mathematics, English, Buddhism, Catholicism, and Christianity. This discrepancy has persisted for years, as the MoE has been unable to allocate teachers evenly across provinces due to regional differences in transportation, resource distribution, and topographical constraints. The disparities are not only evident between these provinces but also across all nine provinces. To address this issue, the government has mandated that teachers serve in difficult locations during the first three years of their career.

Table 9. Teacher shortages and surpluses by subject in three districts in the Uva Province

	District		
	Colombo	Badulla	Moneragala
Science	-17	14	9
Mathematics	-11	2	-5
Mother Tongue (Sinhala)	-23	0	-6
Mother Tongue (Tamil)	0	0	0
English	13	18	13
History	-24	-1	-2
Buddhism	22	14	12
Hinduism	0	0	0
Islam	-8	-2	-2
Roman Catholic	2	4	1
Christianity	1	1	1
	-45	50	21

Source: Cadre calculation, Data Management Branch, MoE, 2024

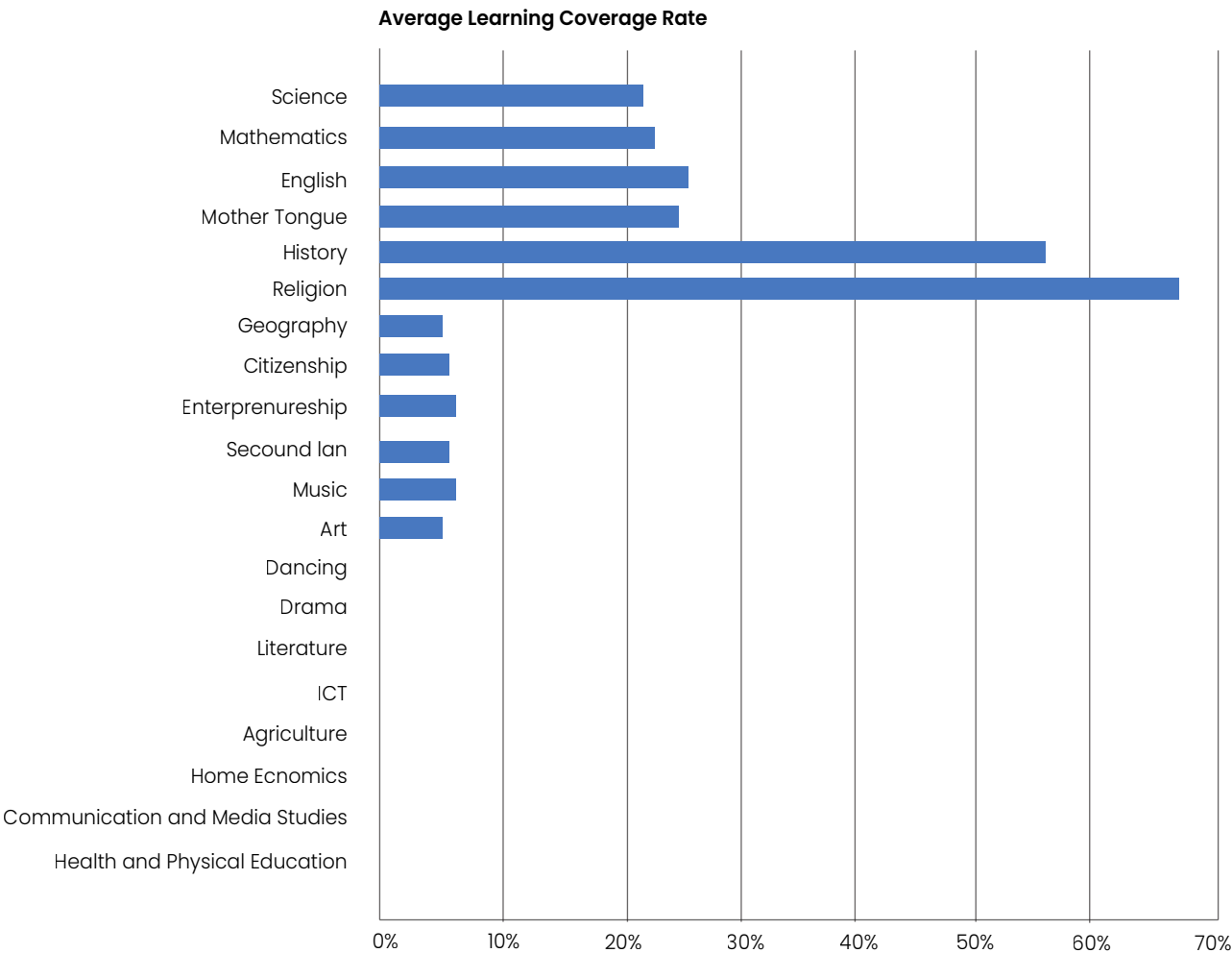
4. SECONDARY TEACHER UTILISATION

4.1 Teacher Utilisation by Location and Subject

It has been observed that the average learning coverage – defined as the percentage of completed learning out of the total required hours per year – ranges between 30% and 60%. This is likely due to the high rate of teacher absenteeism. Teachers in Sri Lanka are entitled to 41 days of casual and

sick leave per year and are also given three school vacations totalling approximately 2.5 months. Figures 4 and 5 illustrate subject-wise learning coverage and its distribution. According to these figures, religion and history subjects have the highest coverage rates.

Figure 3. Average learning coverage rate



Source: Cadre calculation, Data Management Branch, MoE, 2024

4.2 Teacher Utilisation in the Uva Province for Science

The average utilisation rate for science teachers in the Uva Province is 60%. A total of 121 science teachers are required in the province, which exceeds the predicted number. Based on the values in Table 10, the subject under-utilisation rate (SUUR) is 0.097, the overall under-utilisation rate (OUUR) is 0.31, and the

difference between the actual number of teachers (ANT) and the real number of teachers needed (RNTN) is 65. The study indicates that 41% of teachers are underutilised.

Although 104,176 teachers are currently available in schools, this figure is partly explained by the circular that assigns certain teachers additional responsibilities as master teachers or head teachers, with an STT of 10, alongside their teaching duties.

Table 10. Teacher utilisation

Province	Census	School ID	Number of Pedagogical Groups	Theoretical Number of Teachers Needed (TNTN)	Real Number of Teachers Needed (RNTN)	Actual Number of Teachers (ANT)
8. Uva	21001	ANDAULPOTHA NATIONAL SCHOOL	18	2.57	3	4
8. Uva	21026	MAHIYANGANA NATIONAL SCHOOL	30	4.29	5	7
8. Uva	21071	KANDEGEDARA NATIONAL SCHOOL	12	1.71	2	3
8. Uva	21102	VIYALUWA D.S.SENANAYAKE NATIONAL SCH	12	1.71	2	3
8. Uva	21105	MEEGAHAKIULA NATIONAL SCHOOL	17	2.43	3	4
8. Uva	21125	PASSARA M.M.V.	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	21172	BADULLA DHARMADUTHA COLLEGE	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	21173	BADULLA MADYA MAHA VIDYALAYA	36	5.14	6	8
8. Uva	21174	BADULLA VISHAKA GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	21191	ETTAMPITIYA NATIONAL SCHOOL	14	2.00	2	4
8. Uva	21192	HALIELA MAHA VIDYALAYA	17	2.43	3	4
8. Uva	21233	BANDARAWELA M.M.V.	31	4.43	5	7
8. Uva	21234	BANDARAWELA VISHAKA B.M.M.V.	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	21235	NAULLA M.M.V.	12	1.71	2	3
8. Uva	21236	BANDARAWELA ST. JOSEPH'S NATIONAL SO	18	2.57	3	4
8. Uva	21239	HALPE M.M.V.	11	1.57	2	3
8. Uva	21241	BANDARAWELA KUDAKUSUM BALIKA M.V.	18	2.57	3	4
8. Uva	21276	SRI JANANANDA.M.Y.	6	0.86	1	2
8. Uva	21277	HALDUMMULLA ANANDA M.M.V.	14	2.00	2	4
8. Uva	21279	KAHAGOLLA M.V.	12	1.71	2	3
8. Uva	21280	KOSLANDA M.M.V.	13	1.86	2	3
8. Uva	21311	WELIMADA MADYA MAHA VIDYALAYA	16	2.29	3	4
8. Uva	21315	WANGIYAKUMBURA M.M.V.	18	2.57	3	4
8. Uva	21356	LOONUWATTA NATIONAL SCHOOL	12	1.71	2	3

Province	Census	School ID	Number of Pedagogical Groups	Theoretical Number of Teachers Needed (TNTN)	Real Number of Teachers Needed (RNTN)	Actual Number of Teachers (ANT)
8. Uva	21398	GURUTHALAWA MUSLIM CENTRAL COLLEG	6	0.86	1	2
8. Uva	21464	BADULLA SARASWATHI CENTRAL COLLEGE	6	0.86	1	2
8. Uva	21511	PASSARA TAMIL M.V.	6	0.86	1	2
8. Uva	22001	BIBILE WELLASSA NATIONAL SCHOOL	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	22005	MEDAGAMA NATIONAL SCHOOL	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	22069	MONARAGALA MAHANAMA M.M.V.	29	4.14	5	6
8. Uva	22073	SIYAMBALANDUWA M.V.	16	2.29	3	4
8. Uva	22086	MONARAGALA RAJAKEEYA V.	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	22111	BADALKUMBURA NISHSHANKA M.M.Y.	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	22146	MALWATTAWALA M.M.V.	31	4.43	5	7
8. Uva	22149	BUTTALA DUTUGEMUNU M.M.Y.	32	4.57	5	7
8. Uva	22184	KATHARAGAMA M.M.V.	24	3.43	4	6
8. Uva	22187	THANAMALVILA M.M.V.	30	4.29	5	7
8. Uva	22270	BIBILE YASHODHARA B.V.	18	2.57	3	4
Total			727	103.9	121.0	176.0
			RNTN - TNTN =	17.1	ANT - RNTN =	55
			SUUR =	0.097	OUUR =	0.31
			Total Under Utilisation Rate =		0.41	
			SEDt		0.17	

Source: Cadre calculation, Data Management Branch, MoE, 2024

The calculations presented above are based on the STT and the number of students, which might explain the high underutilisation rate. Based on practical experience, teacher utilisation rates in Sri Lanka are above 70%.

5. SECONDARY TEACHER MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Sri Lanka's secondary teacher management policies and strategies aim to increase the quality of education by enhancing teacher recruiting, training, and retention. These policies and strategies have focused on equitable teacher allocation and optimising the use of the existing workforce.

First, addressing the equitable allocation of academic staff through the Circular 06/2021 is crucial. This Circular outlines the process for calculating annual teacher recruitment by school, based on available subjects, medium, and the number of pedagogical groups. Schools should inform the MoE if changes are needed from the approved cadre. The MoE reviews these requests annually, taking actual recruitment into account and approving additional staff when necessary. Measures are then taken to recruit new teachers accordingly.

Sri Lanka has implemented several strategies for managing secondary teachers effectively, particularly when deploying them to disadvantaged schools. Teachers assigned to challenging schools receive financial incentives, their children

are given preference when applying to popular schools, they earn additional points for years of service in these schools during transfers and promotions, and new teachers are required to serve in difficult schools for a minimum of three years. To ensure that no teacher remains in a popular school for more than 10 years, the transfer policy seeks to rotate teachers among difficult schools. Teachers who have worked in difficult schools are given preference during redeployment and are assigned to schools where they are most effective. Those who have worked in remote areas and demonstrated dedication are eligible for in-service training programmes at the national and provincial levels. Subject to certain limitations, schools are permitted to hire temporary teachers to meet their specific needs under the school-based management approach.

The promotion of multidisciplinary specialisation allows teachers to receive training in both major and minor subject areas, enabling them to teach across multiple grades and schools to fulfil required teaching hours.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

To maximise the use of secondary teachers and improve educational results, Sri Lanka has introduced a number of regulations and initiatives. Nonetheless, regional disparities in facilities, legislation, and teacher management persist. Practical obstacles continue to widen these discrepancies, despite policies designed to optimise teacher utilisation. Rural areas experience teacher shortages, while urban areas often have an excess. Women constitute the majority of the teaching workforce, with only 20% being male. Although a proper process exists at the ministry level to determine teacher requirements, obtaining accurate data is challenging, as schools do not always report actual teacher numbers. Because education is a devolved subject, teachers cannot easily be deployed across provinces.

6.2 Policy Recommendations

Based on this study, the following recommendations are proposed to establish an effective teacher management system in Sri Lanka.

1. Centralising Education Administration for Effective Teacher Management

All administrative, recruiting, and deployment functions should be centralised under the MoE. A national teacher database should be established to track credentials, placements, and transfers, ensuring fair distribution across rural and urban areas. To reduce political influence and inefficiency at the provincial level, a clear framework for hiring and promoting teachers should be created. Digital solutions for teacher deployment are recommended to minimise vacancies and prevent over-teaching in some schools.

2. Strict Adherence to Teacher Management Policies

All teacher management policies, including transfers, promotions, and disciplinary actions, should be strictly enforced. Transparent procedures should be implemented to prevent political interference in the hiring and placement of teachers. Furthermore, a national oversight organisation should be created to supervise the implementation

of policies at all levels. Additionally, systems should be introduced to ensure that teacher licenses are maintained and periodically updated.

3. Developing an Equitable Teacher Deployment Policy

A needs-based teacher deployment policy should be introduced, considering school size, subject demand, and geographical disparities, to ensure equitable and effective teacher distribution. Incentives such as housing, financial benefits, and professional advancement opportunities should encourage teachers to work in rural and disadvantaged areas. Gender-sensitive deployment policies should be implemented to address specific challenges faced by female teachers and foster a more accepting and encouraging learning environment.

4. Establishing a Robust Teacher Performance Evaluation System

A comprehensive teacher evaluation system should be implemented, incorporating student outcomes, classroom observations, peer reviews, and self-assessments. Furthermore, digital platforms should be developed to enable teachers to maintain records of professional development, lesson plans, and classroom assessments. Linking evaluations to promotions and professional development will create a merit-based career progression system, motivating teachers to improve their classroom abilities and effectiveness.

5. Conducting Teacher Professional Development Programmes during School Vacations

Mandatory teacher training and professional development workshops should be scheduled during school vacation periods to prevent disruptions to the learning process. Dedicated funding should be allocated for teacher training programmes at both national and provincial levels. Collaborative and flexible learning approaches should be promoted, including peer mentoring, best practice sharing, and hybrid training programmes. These measures will enhance teacher skills while ensuring that students' classroom time is not affected.

6. Establishing a Teacher Licensing System

A national teacher licensing system should be introduced, requiring teachers to renew their licenses periodically through formal assessments and accumulation of professional development credits. Licensing standards should be aligned with international best practices to maintain quality education standards across the country. This system will ensure that teachers remain up to date with pedagogical developments, uphold professional standards, and contribute consistently to improving student outcomes.

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