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**EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF G. C. E. A/L BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE
STREAM STUDENTS IN SELECTED PROVINCES OF
SRI LANKA**

A PROJECT REPORT PRESENTED BY

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ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka has a high demand for knowledgeable man power in biology related fields. As the mismatch between education and employment has resulted in high level of unemployment and under employment, it is important to study whether the present education system addresses the growing needs of the country. This study focused on the present status and employability of G.C.E (A/L) biological science students, and was further extended (i) to find the difficulties in the job market and (ii) to make suggestions to overcome these difficulties.

School leavers from the Central, North Western, Northern and Eastern province were selected for this study. As all schools are IAB schools, information was gathered from any school leavers from 2000 to 2004 in the G.C.E (A/L) biological science stream in selected provinces neglecting school wise discriminations. The questionnaire designed was the major instrument used for data collection. Thereafter, formal and informal interviews were conducted to get in-depth information and fill any gaps in the information provided in the questionnaire. Data was analyzed percentage wise, statistically and also by incorporating the evidences at the interviews. Total sample (508) was categorized into three namely those who were employed (202), unemployed (183) and in the higher education (123).

There was a growing interest among (73%) majority of ordinary population in engaging in the biological science education. Gender discrimination was not visible in the job market or higher studies. There was a gap between the performance in the O/L and the A/L examinations. Post secondary qualifications, performances of A/L biology and the language skills had a positive relationship with the employment status. It also showed a mismatch between the of education and the employment. Majority of (76%) employed and (84.5%) of those involved in higher education were in fields related to the biological sciences. Majority were employed in the government sector (51%) as well as in the private sector (38%). Fifty nine percent of the employed were attached to the medical and the teaching fields.

The level of job satisfaction was not related to the management levels or monthly salary of the job. Low standard of English, Information Technology and poor performance at the A/L examination were the main reasons denoted for unemployment and under employment.