

## **A Study on Inclusive Development of the Block Five in Mahaweli System H**

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### **1. Introduction**

The main aim of this research was to study how inclusive development has taken place in block five in the Mahaweli system H. Specific objectives of this research were: i) to examine the basic information about the people in Block Five, Thambuttegma area in Mahaweli system H ii) to investigate the income level of the people in Block Five, Thambuttegma area in Mahaweli system H analytically iii) to find how educational development taken place in Block Five, Thambuttegma area in Mahaweli system H, iv) to examine how has the development of the communication modes taken place in Block five in the Mahaweli system H, and v) to propose recommendations for policy formulation relevant to the sustainable development of the education, communication and the social development of the Mahaweli H system based on the research findings. As a huge physical and human resources development program executed in the country in 1977 and developed under the Mahaweli Authority Act No 23 of 1979, it covers 15 administrative districts in Sri Lanka comprising 47 divisions and 223 units in 10 Mahaweli systems. This project implemented with numerous objectives, has greatly enhanced the national economy of Sri Lanka (Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka, 2018).

### **2. Materials and Methods**

Descriptive analysis is essential for gaining an initial understanding of collected data and summarizing its key characteristics. In this study, the descriptive analysis method comes under the quantitative approach was used to examine the demographic and economic characteristics of the survey participants, their education levels, and their perceptions of the development of educational and communication modes. In this research block 5, Thambuttegama which consists of five units: Thambuttegama town, 404, 405/A, 405/B, 406 & 408 of the Mahaweli H system has been selected as the research area. The total population who lives in this area is 51492. While the male population in this area is 24010 the female population is 26150. From this population, 300 hundred people were selected as the sample. Random sampling method has been used as the method of collecting samples. The structured questionnaire was the research tool used by the researchers to collect data. SPSS software has been used in analyzing data. The response rate is a crucial indicator of the effectiveness and representativeness of a survey. In this study, the response rate was calculated by dividing the number of completed questionnaires (268) by the total number of questionnaires distributed (300), resulting in a response rate of 89%. This response rate indicates that a substantial proportion of the targeted participants actively engaged in the survey and provided their perceptions on the development of educational and communication modes within the Mahaweli System H. A response rate of 89% is considered satisfactory and enhances the reliability of the findings obtained from the survey.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

The sample composition used here was categorized by age group. Most respondents (56.36%) were in the 35-55 age group, followed by those in the 55-75 age group, and then the 18-35 age group. A minority (2.27%) was above 75, indicating that the majority of the respondents in the sample were middle-aged. According to the analysis, the majority of respondents (70%) were male, while 30% were female. Moreover, 98% of the respondents in the sample were married, while only 2% were unmarried. Furthermore, out of the 224 respondents, 211 (94%) were permanent in Block Five, Thambuttegama in the Mahaweli System H residents, indicating that most were long-term residents. Additionally, respondents' career and income level-related data revealed that most respondents were engaged in agriculture (49%), while 30.7% were in

government and private sector jobs, and 12% were unemployed. Also, it was identified that 70% of the respondents have a monthly income below 50,000, while only 25% earn more than 50,000.

When examining the satisfaction levels of residents in the Mahaweli H area, the survey results revealed that the majority of respondents (97%) were satisfied with their living conditions. Only six respondents have expressed dissatisfaction. Further analysis of their reasons for dissatisfaction indicated that the primary issues were related to education, transportation, and community concerns.

According to the data collected on respondents' family educational backgrounds, it was observed that 141 respondents (63%) have children who are currently attending school, with the majority of these children in grades 1 to 5. Additionally, 64 respondents have at least one family member who has passed the Grade 5 scholarship examination, and 22 respondents have at least one family member who has qualified for university. Moreover, the study revealed that the majority of respondents' students are pursuing studies in the arts and technology streams, while the minority are pursuing studies in mathematics. On the other hand, 41 respondents have at least one family member who stopped their education after completing the Ordinary Level examinations. When investigating satisfaction with educational facilities among respondents, it was found that the majority of parents (52%) were dissatisfied with the educational facilities available to their children. In contrast, 48% of parents reported being satisfied with these facilities. By further investigating the 52% of parents who are dissatisfied with their children's educational facilities, the main reasons for their dissatisfaction were identified, with a lack of available facilities being the main reason. On the other hand, parents who are satisfied with their children's educational facilities revealed that some of the main reasons for their satisfaction were the nearby location, availability of teachers, transportation facilities, and provision of school stationery.

According to the survey responses, the majority of respondents had relied on mobile phones for communication, with 52% using phone calls and 24% using WhatsApp. On the other hand, email was the least used mode for communication, with only 3% of respondents utilizing this method. When it came to educational purposes for their children, the majority of respondents had used Zoom, which was the most popular tool for this purpose, used by 28% of respondents. Other commonly used educational tools include WhatsApp (26%) and YouTube (19%). Moreover, Email was the least utilized method for educational purposes, used by just 3% of respondents. These findings indicated a clear preference for mobile phone communication in general, while Zoom was favored for educational purposes.

When identifying the variations in living satisfaction by the gender of the respondents, it was found that there was no difference in their living satisfaction based on their gender. The majority of the respondents were satisfied with living in the Mahaweli H area. To further investigate whether there was a difference in their satisfaction based on their gender, a Chi-square test was conducted. According to the Chi-square statistic (2.268) with 1 degree of freedom has a p-value of 0.132. Since this p-value was greater than the common significance level of 0.05, there was not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis and this suggested that there was no significant association between the respondents' gender and their satisfaction with living in the Mahaweli H area. Given the lack of variation among genders, further analysis focused on the variations in living satisfaction in the Mahaweli area by the respondents' income level.

According to the data, the majority of the respondents were low-income and their living satisfaction appeared to decrease as income levels increased beyond the lowest category, but the differences were not statistically significant based on the Chi-square test results. According to the Chi-square test results, the Chi-square statistic was 1.096, with 4 degrees of freedom,

and has a p-value of 0.89. Since this p-value was greater than the significance level of 0.05, there was not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis and this suggested that there was no significant association between the respondents' income level and their satisfaction with living in the Mahaweli H area.

Therefore, it could be concluded that, regardless of gender and income level, the majority of respondents were satisfied with living in the Mahaweli H area. This finding suggested that factors contributing to their satisfaction might extend beyond the demographic variables examined. Also, this result highlighted the importance of conducting further research using diverse approaches to explore the reasons for this satisfaction and to identify additional variables that may influence the quality of life in the Mahaweli region.

When observing the variations in children's education satisfaction by the gender of the respondents, it was found that there was no difference in their education satisfaction based on their gender. The majority of respondents were satisfied with their education, with 86 indicating satisfaction. To further investigate whether there was a difference in their satisfaction based on gender, a Chi-square test was conducted and according to the results, the Chi-square statistic was 0.180, with 1 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.672. Since this p-value was greater than the common significance level of 0.05, there was not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that there was no significant association between the respondents' gender and their education satisfaction.

Furthermore, when analyzing education satisfaction by income level, it could be observed that the majority of respondents from various income categories reported satisfaction. However, the differences in satisfaction across income levels were not statistically significant based on the Chi-square test results presented in the following analysis. The Chi-square statistic was 4.441, with 4 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.350. Since this p-value was greater than the significance level of 0.05, there was not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that there was no significant association between the respondents' income levels and their education satisfaction.

Regardless of gender and income level, the majority of respondents were satisfied with their education. This finding suggested that factors contributing to their satisfaction might extend beyond the demographic variables analyzed in this study. Additionally, this result highlighted the importance of conducting further research using diverse approaches to explore the reasons for this satisfaction and to identify additional variables that may affect the quality of education in Block Five, Thambuttegama in the Mahaweli H region.

When exploring the communication methods utilized by gender in the Mahaweli H area, there were significant differences among the communication methods used by respondents. The data indicated that mobile communication was the most utilized method, with 49 females and 94 males using it exclusively, highlighting a strong preference for this channel among both genders. Additionally, while both genders employ combinations of mobile and WhatsApp, males tend to use these methods more frequently, with 14 males compared to 7 females using mobile and WhatsApp together. Other multi-platform combinations, such as mobile, WhatsApp, Facebook, and SMS, also showed higher usage among males. Despite the observed variations, the overall patterns suggested that mobile communication remained the dominant choice among the respondents. These findings indicated that gender might influence communication preferences, suggesting the need for further investigation into the factors that could affect these choices and their implications for social interaction in the region.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Most of the respondents who participated in this research engaged in agriculture. But, some people were engaged in government and private sector jobs. The unemployment rate remains

here, was 12%. It was identified that 70% of the respondents have a monthly income below 50,000. The majority of respondents (97%) were satisfied with their living conditions. Moreover, the majority of the respondents were satisfied with living in Block Five, Thambuttegama in the Mahaweli system H. There was no significant association between the respondents' income level and their satisfaction with living. 52% of the respondents were dissatisfied with the educational facilities available. There was a clear preference for mobile phone communication in general, while Zoom was favored for educational purposes. There was a difference in their satisfaction based on their gender. According to the analysis, there was a need for a comprehensive program to address the unemployment rate and enhance the monthly income of the residents in Blok Five, Thambuttegama. It was essential to prioritize addressing key concerns about education, transportation, and community welfare. Furthermore, there was a pressing need to further develop educational facilities in the area to strengthen its sustainable development. Encouraging the residents to explore various modes of communication for educational purposes was also crucial for their overall development.

### **5. Keywords**

block five, development, inclusive, Thambuttegama

### **6. Acknowledgment**

We would like to extend our gratitude to the Research and Publication Committee, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihintale for extending the financial support to conduct this research relevant to the Mahaweli system.

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