

Performance in mathematics among Grade 11 students in the Kopai Educational Division, Jaffna

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Background and objective: Results of the G.C.E. Ordinary Level (O/L) Examination shape a student's academic pathway. Among nine subjects, mathematics is important because passing is required to enter most G.C.E. Advanced Level streams. Student performance in mathematics at the G.C.E. O/L examinations in the Kopai Education Division remains unsatisfactory. This study aims to describe student performance in mathematics and associated factors in the Kopai Education Division.

Methods: A school-based descriptive cross-sectional study was done among 401 students from nine selected schools in the Kopai Education Division. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data. A $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results: In the sample, 98.5 % (n=394) had a mathematics teacher and 60.3% (n=242) answered moderately in school mathematics exercises. Among participants, 59% (n=240) had scored less than 40 marks at the third term test. Availability of desks and chairs was 77.1% (n= 309). With respect to health issues, 6.5% (n=26) and 3.7% (n=15) had hearing and vision problems, respectively.

Conclusion: Performance in mathematics is unsatisfactory in the Kopai Education Division. Although most students had a mathematics teacher, many schools lack basic education infrastructure to support student learning.

Keywords: Mathematics Performance, Ordinary Level Examination, Jaffna