

## **The Effectiveness of the Compulsory English Language Program (CEP) of a State University in Sri Lanka**

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This evaluation assessed the effectiveness of the Compulsory English Program (CEP) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) in a state university of Sri Lanka. The CEP was implemented between 2019 and 2020 funded by Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) project. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to generate substantive evidence and knowledge to inform the university authorities about the effectiveness of the project. The aim of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the expected results of the project have been achieved. This evaluation was a comparative analysis of the CEP outcomes in two selected batches of first year students admitted to the FHSS. Baseline data of the 2019 intake of students were considered as before intervention and data pertaining to 2020 intake was considered as after implementation of the project. The evaluation used a mixed methodology where quantitative measures were supported by the qualitative information. The students' writing and reading skills were assessed by comparing writing test marks of the year 2019 and 2020 while the students' speaking and listening skills were assessed by comparing oral test marks of the year 2019 and 2020. The average writing test score among first year students has increased after the project by 6 marks. Without project average writing test score was 51 in 2019. After project test score was 57 in 2020. Without project Average oral test score is 63 in 2019 but 2020 results can't be identified due to the COVID-19 "New Normal" conditions. Percentage of permanent staff attendance has increased by 34%, while permanent staff teaching hours has increased by 34.32%. Teachers were satisfied with the activities on curriculum development, and 90% of students were satisfied with in-class teaching and teaching methods. In conclusion, the average writing test score among first year students has increased but the project has not attained the expected change of the project outcomes by improving the writing, reading skills of students in the FHSS, thus speaking and listening skills were not assessed due to the current pandemic situation, but the project has improved teachers' engagement of the teaching activities.

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