UNDERSTANDING THE CONFLICT BETWEEN LITERACY RATE AND COMPUTER LITERACY RATE IN SRI LANKA

Nalin Abeysekera,
Faculty of Humanities and social sciences,
Open University of Sri Lanka

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has drafted the following definition: "Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals, to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society." **Computer literacy** *is the knowledge and ability to use computers and technology efficiently. Computer literacy can also refer to the comfort level someone has with using computer programs and other applications that are associated with computers. Another valuable component of computer literacy knows how computers work and operate. Now, having basic computer skills is a significant asset in the developed countries.*

The objectives of this study to identify the relationship between literacy rate and computer literacy rate in Sri Lanka. Content method and focus group techniques has been conducted .According to the statistics Computer literacy rate in Sri Lanka is only 10%. But Literacy rate is over 90%. This is exceptional in the world. In India, literacy rate is 61 % but computer literacy rate is 6%. In America 99% of the population has the literacy skill and their computer literacy level also more than 70%. But in Sri Lanka, though the literacy rate is high there is a considerable Low rate in computer literacy rate. This is an exceptional case once comparing these rates. According to focus group, study most of the respondents in the view that no clear IT policy, political influences as well as infrastructure problems will be the reason for this.