Exploring the Role of Essentialism for Curriculum Development and Practices: A Case of Sri Lankan National Curriculum

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Abstract

Education is a well-organized process that extends beyond the transmission of knowledge, which is influencing both individuals and communities by shaping values and attitudes, promoting social cohesion, and empowering people to contribute meaningfully to societal development and progress. Educational philosophies lie at the heart of this process of education by providing the foundational principles for teaching, learning, and curriculum design. Among various philosophies, essentialism plays a significant role in shaping how knowledge is delivered and how students engage with it. Essentialism, as a philosophy, helps define the aims of education, the responsibilities of educators, and the methods used to prepare students for responsible roles in the future. The Sri Lankan education system predominantly reflects an essentialist approach, emphasizing a disciplined, knowledge-centred curriculum which is focused on core subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Language, and History. Therefore, this paper aims to examine the philosophy of essentialism and its influences and implications for curriculum development and educational practices in Sri Lanka. This paper also explores how the essentialist perspective aligns with the broader goals, roles, and focus of education within the Sri Lankan context.

1. Introduction

Education is a purposeful and structured process that goes far beyond the mere transfer of knowledge, playing a vital role in shaping individuals, influencing societies, and preparing future generations for the challenges of life (Kumar & Ahmad, 2008). At the heart of an education system, there is a set of philosophical beliefs and approaches which inform decisions about teaching, learning, curriculum design, and the role of both teachers and students (McLain, 2007). In other words, educational philosophy provides the foundation/basic guidelines that shape how teaching, learning, and curriculum development are approached (Castle, 2007). For example, philosophies such as essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, and constructivism define educational goals, outline the roles of teachers, influence teaching methods, and determine how students engage with knowledge (Seetharamu, 1978). As a result, examining different educational philosophies enables educators, policymakers, and teachers to identify the most effective approaches for fostering students' cognitive development and ethical values.

1.1 Origin and Ideology of Essentialism in Education

Although essentialism is not strictly a part of any single philosophical tradition, it aligns with various schools of thoughts (Kneller, 1971). For example, essentialism has been heavily influenced by classical philosophies, particularly idealism and realism (Austin, 2017; Barakett & Cleghorn, 2000; Winsor, 2006). In other words, essentialism incorporates ideas from idealism, which values enduring truths, ethical instructions, and emphasizes knowledge rooted in observable reality (Tan et al., 2006; Onwuka, 1996). While idealism shapes essentialism's focus on intellectual and moral growth, realism contributes a practical, experience-based perspective, particularly in subjects such as science and mathematics (Kurtus, 2001; Stewart & Wong, 1982). This blend of influences enables essentialism to provide a well-rounded, rigorous education that prepares students for both critical thinking and real-world challenges.

On the other hand, essentialism, as an educational philosophy, emerged in the early 20th century as a response to progressive education movements, emphasizing a return to traditional academic instruction and cultural literacy by prioritising a solid foundation in key academic subjects (Kurtus, 2001). Moreover, Essentialism developed under the influence of traditional western educational practices, especially during the 19th and early 20th centuries (Rodseth, 1998). Key figures such as William Bagley, who helped formalize the essentialist philosophy in the early 1900s, advocated for a strong focus on a core curriculum aimed at nurturing both intellectual growth and moral values (Bagley, 1939; Null, 2007). William Bagley firmly opposed progressive education, asserting that its student-centered approach and flexible curriculum design undermined academic rigor and moral discipline. Further, he believed that moving away from structured, teacher-led instruction diminished educational quality and left students unprepared for adult responsibilities and civic life. As a response, Bagley promoted a disciplined, content-rich curriculum that emphasized essential academic subjects, cognitive development, and ethical character building (Bagley, 1939). He believed that teaching should follow a systematic approach, allowing students to build a solid base of critical knowledge instead of relying on their individual interests or experiential methods. His criticisms of progressive approaches further supported the belief that maintaining structure and consistency in teaching was vital to preserving high educational and moral standards.

According to McLain (2007), essentialists believe that instruction should be grounded in time-tested educational values, ensuring students study subjects such as literature, history, and science which could develop intellectual abilities and represent the enduring achievements of human thought. This ideology forms the backbone of a core knowledge base that must be taught in a thorough and methodical manner, helping students deeply understand the key concepts. This approach which focuses on reinforcing foundational knowledge/skills and core subject matter commonly described as a "back-to-basics" approach (Wieder, 1990). Moreover, this approach aims to ensure that students thoroughly understand and master essential knowledge before moving on to more advanced topics, thereby building a strong academic foundation. By emphasizing repetition, memorization, and clear, direct instruction, this approach seeks to cultivate intellectual discipline and prepare students for future academic and real-world challenges. On the same note, essentialists believe in a fixed body of knowledge that all learners should master, emphasizing both intellectual development and moral education (Bagley, 1939). Therefore, in an essentialist framework, someone is recognized as 'educated' only when they have acquired the core academic knowledge and competencies considered fundamental to success (Acquah, 2017). Furthermore, essentialists see learners as individuals who need direction and guidance to fully develop their thinking and moral character (Tan et al., 2006). They also believe that schools have a responsibility to transmit knowledge that shapes good behaviour and supports personal growth. From this perspective, the teacher plays a central role as an expert authority who leads the learning process by transmitting knowledge, delivering clear instruction, setting firm academic standards, and ensuring that students meet learning objectives (Sahin, 2018).

2. Implication of Essentialism for Curriculum Development and Practices

This section discusses the importance of having an educational philosophy for curriculum development and practice in a country's education system.

Philosophy plays a key role in shaping curriculum development by offering a guiding framework for educators, teachers, and curriculum planners to design, implement, and evaluate educational programs (Ogwora et al., 2013). It helps answer critical questions about the goals of education, the significance of different subjects, how students learn best, and what teaching methods and materials should be used (Adirika et al., 2017). Without philosophical grounding, educators would lack clear direction in determining educational content and delivery. Therefore, philosophy underpins curriculum decisions by considering the needs of students, schools, the environment, and society. Therefore, this paper aims to explore how essentialism influences curriculum development and practices from Sri Lankan context by critically examining three key aspects of the philosophy as below:

- emphasis on a core/essential body of knowledge that is necessary for intellectual and moral development
- emphasis on a strict assessment and evaluation structure, and
- emphasis on a teacher-led curriculum.

2.1 Overview of Sri Lankan Education System

Before all else, this section provides a brief overview of the Sri Lankan education system in order to provide an understanding of the nature and the structure of the national curriculum at each stage which eventually lead to the discussion of philosophical implications on the system.

Sri Lanka's education system is a free, well-structured framework that is governed by the Ministry of Education, offering compulsory schooling from ages 5 to 16 and encompassing primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels (Scholaro, 2025). Moreover, in Sri Lanka, the education system is largely influenced by essentialist philosophy, focusing on a structured and content-rich curriculum that emphasizes core subjects such as mathematics, science, language, and history (Aturupane and Little, 2021; Gamage, 2017; Ginige, 2023).

2.1.1. Primary Education and Curriculum

Sri Lanka's Primary education (Grades 1–5) focuses on foundational literacy, numeracy, and holistic development, with a play-based approach. For instance, in Grades 1 and 2, curriculum is primarily centered around play-based learning (Aturupane and Little; 2021). Gradually, structured writing tasks and formal academic lessons are introduced and become more prominent from Grade 3 curriculum with a noticeable shift towards rigorous academic work by Grade 5 (Aturupane and Little, 2021; Scholaro, 2025). Moreover, the curriculum of primary education aims to cover essential subjects such as native language (Sinhala or Tamil), English as a foreign language, Mathematics, and Environmental Studies (Scholaro, 2025). In addition to academic content, co-curricular activities and moral education are integral components, contributing to the development of students' values, character, and social competencies. For example, scouting, aesthetic clubs such as dancing, music, and drama are organized in many public schools to instil values such as teamwork, leadership, and cultural appreciation. At this stage, student assessment mainly takes a formative approach, emphasizing ongoing evaluation instead of relying on paper-based examinations (Wijethunga et al., 2008). Nevertheless, students must sit for the Grade 5 Scholarship examination which is a standardised competitive assessment used to award scholarships and secure placement in prestigious secondary schools (Nuffic, 2024; Scholaro, 2025).

2.1.2. Secondary Education and Curriculum

Secondary education is split into junior (Grades 6–9) and senior (Grades 10–11) stages, expanding the primary level curriculum to include core and elective subjects. The secondary stage curriculum is built on the basic knowledge gained during primary schooling while also equipping students for future academic paths (Nuffic, 2024). For instance, the junior secondary curriculum extends primary education by introducing new subjects such as Science and History. Consequently, students study core subjects such as Language (language of instruction/native language), English (as a foreign language), Mathematics, Science, and History during this stage (Aturupane and Little, 2021). Furthermore, in the senior secondary phase, the curriculum includes core subjects such as Mathematics, Science, English, Language, and History. Further, at the senior secondary education level, students have the opportunity to choose elective subjects based on their personal interests, such as Business Studies, Agriculture, Aesthetic subjects (Music, Drama, Dance, or Art), or Physical Education (Scholaro, 2025). At this stage, student assessment mainly takes the form of both formative and summative assessments to monitor students' progress (Wijethunga et al., 2008). However, at the end of Grade 11, students take the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (G.C.E. O/L) examination, which is a standardised examination that serves as a key qualifier for further education (entering advanced level studies) at post-secondary stage (Nuffic, 2024). This examination places strict emphasis on Mathematics and Language where students must pass these subjects in order to get qualified for the next academic level (advanced level). Therefore, this examination is considered as a turning point for Sri Lankan students where most of the academic or career opportunities rely on this examination (Little, 1997). In other words, students who are not successful at this examination have to leave the school and find other opportunities for their future.

2.1.3. Post Secondary Education and Curriculum

Followed by the G.C.E O/L examination, students who meet the eligibility criteria for advanced level studies can choose to specialize in one of the key academic streams: Mathematics, Science, Commerce, Arts, or Technology (MOE, 2018). In addition, at this stage evaluation of students' progress is based on an assessment system which incorporates both ongoing (formative) and end-of-term (summative) evaluations to track and support student learning and development (Aturupane and Little, 2021). At the end of two years at this stage, students are

required to sit for General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (G.C.E. A/L) which is a standardised competitive examination to get qualified for admission into a state university of Sri Lanka (Little, 1997).

It is worth noting, in addition to the national education system, which includes public or state-run schools, Sri Lanka also has a range of other educational institutions such as private schools, international schools, and religious schools that follow alternative curricula or spiritual traditions. For instance, international and private schools often adopt international syllabi like the British IGCSE and Cambridge A-Level, giving students different academic options beyond the national framework (Studyway, 2025; Wettewa, 2016). Furthermore, traditional Buddhist monastic institutions known as *pirivenas* offer teachings rooted in Buddhist philosophy, while *madrasas* focus on Islamic education (IEF, 2025; Privena, 2021; Studyway, 2025). In simpler terms, *pirivenas* are religious schools primarily educating Buddhist monks, whereas *madrasas* serve the Muslim community by providing Islamic teachings. These types of institutions help preserve the country's religious and cultural heritage, playing a complementary role alongside the formal national education system.

2.2. Focus on Core Subjects and the Standardised Curriculum

Essentialism is a traditional philosophy of education that focuses on teaching core academic subjects to cultivate intellectual discipline, moral values, and cultural understanding (Bagley, 1911; Bestor, 1956). It promotes a structured curriculum based on foundational knowledge deemed essential for preparing students to be informed, responsible, and productive members of society (Bestor, 1956). Similarly, Sri Lanka's national curriculum reflects this essentialist influence, especially in state schools, by prioritizing core academic disciplines viewed as vital for academic achievement and future career success. Therefore, this section discusses how the Sri Lankan education system emphasizes intellectual training, aligning with the essentialist belief in teaching core subjects which endure universal knowledge.

As outlined earlier, Sri Lanka's primary curriculum includes key subjects such as mathematics, literacy, and environmental studies, while the secondary curriculum broadens to incorporate core disciplines such as mathematics, science, and history. This structured progression is designed to establish a strong base in essential skills and knowledge that are crucial for students' academic and intellectual development. The Sri Lankan education system places significant emphasis on foundational learning in primary education in a way to align with essentialist principles that advocate for mastery of basic subjects before advancing to more complex content (Aturupane and Little, 2021; Mosteller, 2013). By gradually deepening subject matter across grade levels, the curriculum ensures students build on their foundational understanding in a coherent and cumulative way (Bagley, 1939). In this system, students are required to show competence in core subjects to move forward academically. For instance, the GCE O/L exam assesses proficiency in key areas and determines eligibility for post-secondary level (advanced level) studies. Those aiming to specialize in Science, Commerce, or Arts at the post-secondary level must have a solid grounding in subjects such as mathematics, science, and language literacy (Jayaweera, 1990). Moreover, university admission, particularly for competitive fields such as Medicine, Engineering, and Law, is largely dependent on the results/achievements in these core subjects of the G.C.E A/L examination (Little, 1997). This trend emphasises the importance of a strong academic foundation (Abeyratne, 2024).

On the other hand, non-essentialists might argue that Sri Lanka's strong focus on a solid foundation of core knowledge may suggest that student interests are not prioritized by educators. However, according to the ideology of essentialism, essentialists believe that even if students initially dislike certain subjects, they can develop an appreciation over time (Bagley, 1905). Moreover, essentialism emphasises that it is the teacher's responsibility to introduce essential academic disciplines, trusting that students' interest will grow through exposure and structured learning over time. Therefore, essentialists expect teachers to be patient, maintain a positive outlook, and communicate well while managing the classroom, organizing lessons, delivering instruction, and assessing progress in a way to help foster students' intellectual growth and interest in learning (Bagley, 1939). The teacher's role in this sense will be discussed in more detail later in this paper.

the Sri Lankan education system is concerned with reforming its curriculum by integrating Information Technology as a core subject (Ada-derana, 2022; Suraweera et al., 2018). Interestingly, this reform also aligns with essentialist beliefs that core academic standards and knowledge are fundamental, they must evolve to meet society's changing needs (Mosteller, 2013). In other words, integration of new subjects which are considered essential to the current society or trends are crucial as it provides skills and knowledge demanded by the world. This approach, known as 'neo-essentialism,' modernizes essentialist principles by including contemporary skills

needed in today's world (Adirika et al., 2017). Therefore, influenced by essentialism, Sri Lanka adopts a pragmatic stance, allowing gradual updates to the curriculum while preserving foundational subjects such as reading, writing, mathematics, and science (Bahm, 1976).

Furthermore, Sri Lanka's national curriculum guarantees that all students, regardless of region, socioeconomic status, or school type, follow the same syllabus from Grade 1 to 13 (MOE, 2020). Core subjects are compulsory, ensuring equal access to foundational knowledge. This standardized system reflects essentialist ideals of uniform education, providing equal academic opportunities for every child (Aturupane and Little, 2021). Yet, in an essentialist classroom, all students, despite varying interests and abilities, follow the same fixed curriculum with little room for choice (Scholaro, 2025). For instance, students with disabilities or limited English proficiency receive instruction using the same materials and methods as others. However, from essentialist perspectives, lowering standards or altering the curriculum for individual circumstances would be unfair as all students should meet the same rigorous expectations (Wortham, 2006). Thus, from an essentialist view, Sri Lanka's standardized national curriculum is viewed as the fairest approach to education for all learners.

However, it is worth considering that relying heavily on a standardised curriculum which focuses on core subjects could lead to negative impacts such as neglecting the individual interests and creativity of students, limiting critical thinking beyond factual knowledge, and reducing engagement in non-core areas such as the arts or physical education. While Sri Lankan national curriculum values a strong foundation in fundamental academic disciplines, overemphasis on standardisation may risk creating a rigid learning environment that overlooks the diverse needs and potential of learners. For example, as discussed above, Sri Lanka's national curriculum places heavy emphasis on core academic subjects such as Mathematics, Science, History, and languages. As a result, schools often allocate minimal time and resources to aesthetic subjects such as music, dance, and visual arts, despite their inclusion in the national curriculum (Irugalbandara & Campbell, 2020). This de-prioritization limits students' holistic development and narrows their educational experience. Consequently, when aesthetic and non-core subjects are deprioritised, students may miss out on opportunities to develop essential life skills such as creativity, emotional intelligence, communication, collaboration, and cultural appreciation. Over time, this can lead to a generation of learners who are academically competent but lack the soft skills, adaptability, and innovative thinking required in a rapidly changing, globalised world. Moreover, as a consequence, this imbalance may also contribute to increased academic stress, reduced student motivation, and a mismatch between education and the diverse career paths available in the modern economy. Moreover, it can be particularly disadvantageous for students with talents in arts, sports, or technical fields, whose strengths are not recognised or nurtured within a narrowly focused academic framework. Therefore, a well-balanced approach is recommended to overcome the limitations of an overly rigid academic framework which is not suitable to nurture diverse talents beyond core subjects.

2.3. Strict Assessment and Evaluation Structure

Essentialists stress the importance of testing and evaluating students as it measures their performance and mastery of the key knowledge before promoting students to the next academic level (Bagley, 1911). Therefore, now this paper discusses how the Sri Lankan national curriculum reflects essentialist influences in testing and evaluating students before promoting them to the next academic level.

The essentialist framework, originally outlined by William Bagley in 1938, was developed as a response to what he saw as ineffective educational methods of the time, such as flexible, student-centred approaches relied on the philosophy of progressivism, and the common practice of promoting students socially regardless of their academic achievement (Onwuka, 1996). Essentialists believe that without clear evaluation tools, it would be difficult to hold students accountable and track their educational progress (Bagley, 1939). For this reason, essentialists strongly advocate for evaluations to be done before students advance to ensure they have mastered the necessary knowledge and skills. Reflecting this essentialist perspective, educators and policymakers in Sri Lanka place great emphasis on testing and evaluation, believing that standardized assessments provide an objective way to measure students' mastery of core curriculum subjects, promoting accountability and consistent learning outcomes (NIE, 2020). Therefore, the Sri Lankan education system uses a strict pass/fail model, requiring students to demonstrate mastery of grade-level content before moving forward. Furthermore, Sri Lankan educators highly value standardized test scores as indicators of student achievement and support the essentialist idea of retaining students who fail to meet academic standards (Nuffic, 2025). For instance, the

G.C.E. Ordinary Level (O/L) and G.C.E. Advanced Level (A/L) exams operate on this pass/fail basis, with students needing to pass key subjects such as Mathematics and Language of instruction (Sinhala or Tamil) to qualify for further education (Scholaro, 2025). Those who do not pass must retake exams or pursue alternative options, reinforcing the essentialist belief that content mastery is necessary for academic advancement. This system of assessment serves as a key factor in defining who is considered 'educated' (Wortham, 2006). Moreover, with a culture of exam-based assessment, the success is measured mainly by test results rather than practical skills or creativity in Sri Lanka. Consequently, standardized exams play a major role in student classification, affecting school admissions, university entry, and career prospects. While non-essentialists argue that applying the same assessments to students with different abilities and interests is an unfair approach, the essentialist education system in Sri Lanka views exams as a merit-based way to assess student readiness for the next educational stage (Abayasekara & Arunatilake, 2017). Therefore, strict grading standards are maintained throughout the Sri Lankan curriculum to ensure consistent measurement of student performance.

However, it could be critical to highly depend on a strict examination structure as some students possess strong practical skills rather than excelling in paper-based assessments. This reliance may not be beneficial for learners who demonstrate their abilities through hands-on activities, creative expression, or technical proficiency, which are not adequately measured through traditional written exams. To create a more inclusive and fair assessment system, it is recommended to adopt a blended evaluation model that combines traditional written exams with practical assessments, project-based learning, and continuous evaluation. For example, students can be assessed through hands-on projects, experiments, or portfolios in addition to theory exams which can ensure that students with practical or creative strengths are given the opportunity to demonstrate their competencies. Furthermore, teacher training and curriculum reform should support this shift by equipping educators with the tools to design and fairly evaluate practical tasks. Such reforms would reduce exam-related stress, boost student motivation, and better prepare learners for a variety of career paths in the modern economy.

2.4. The Teacher-Led Curriculum and Practices

The teacher's role, particularly in inspiring students to develop curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, is an essential element that must not be ignored in curriculum planning. Therefore, this section examines how teachers contribute to the effective delivery of the curriculum in Sri Lanka aligns with the essentialist beliefs.

Essentialism is one of the dominant teacher-centred educational philosophies practiced in Sri Lankan state schools, focusing on systematic, content-based teaching to guarantee that students gain fundamental knowledge, skills, moral values, and meet academic expectations outlined by the curriculum and national education policies (Aturupane and Little, 2021). Within the philosophy of essentialism, the teacher acts as a knowledgeable authority figure who guides students throughout the learning journey (Crisp, 2014). Teachers deliver direct instruction, set high standards, and ensure that students consistently work toward mastering the required content. Beliefs of essentialism allows teachers to organize lessons, maintain discipline, and create a structured classroom environment that supports learning which eventually discourages student-led discovery (Bagley, 1939). Similarly, the Sri Lankan education system values teacher authority, discipline, mastery of content, and efficient instruction in curriculum delivery (Perera, 2020). This framework grants teachers' instructional control, ensuring lessons remain organized and focused on subject matter rather than on student-led or exploratory learning. On the other hand, essentialists perceive learning primarily as acquiring knowledge and skills rather than as a journey of exploration or self-discovery (Bagley, 1905). From this viewpoint, the best way to facilitate learning is through a structured teaching style which encourages teachers to lead through lectures, drills, recitation, and demonstrations (Bahm, 1976). Therefore, the Sri Lankan education system considers teachers as the primary source of knowledge, and students are expected to absorb information (Perera, 2020). This controlled setting helps meet the academic benchmarks set by the curriculum where a strong foundation in key subjects is crucial (Bestor, 1956). For instance, in Sri Lanka's upper secondary classes, lessons are mostly lecture-driven, with teachers explaining complex theories, formulas, and problem-solving steps while students take notes and follow carefully organized instruction (Nawastheen, 2019). This stance arises from the essentialist belief that certain knowledge is universal and unchanging. Consequently, students should be taught established facts, principles, and methods instead of spending time discovering information on their own (Tan et al., 2006). Essentialists argue that these fundamental truths remain constant and should be directly taught rather than uncovered through exploration. This ensures students acquire necessary, well-founded knowledge efficiently, reinforcing the idea that education should focus on core academic content instead of open-ended learning.

Additionally, essentialist beliefs hold that teacher-led instruction provides students with a rigorous and disciplined education that prepares them for future academic achievements and professional success (Austin, 2017). Conversely, allowing students to independently explore subjects may result in uneven educational outcomes, whereas a teacher-centred curriculum guarantees that all students gain the same foundational knowledge in a systematic and effective manner.

Although the teacher-centred curriculum supports academic discipline and uniformity across schools, it also presents several challenges for the Sri Lankan education system. For instance, increased exam-related stress, reduced motivation, and the underdevelopment of soft skills are frequent concerns among students (Nawastheen, 2019). Moreover, students with strengths in practical subjects such as arts, or technical fields often find few opportunities for recognition or growth within this framework. To remain relevant in a rapidly changing world, Sri Lanka's teacher-led curriculum may benefit from gradual reforms. This could include more student-centred pedagogies, project-based learning, and the integration of continuous assessments alongside traditional exams. Such changes would not abandon essentialism's core values of academic rigor but would balance them with approaches that nurture a wider range of student talents and better prepare learners for the demands of the modern workforce.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is essential to develop a well-organized curriculum rooted in a solid philosophical base. Therefore, educational philosophies help educators and teachers to get a better understanding of the educational aims which eventually assist in curriculum design and execution. Inspired by essentialism, Sri Lanka's national curriculum adopts a content-focused model that stresses fundamental knowledge and key skills. It highlights discipline, the authority of teachers, and core subjects such as Mathematics, Science, languages, and History to equip students for responsible citizenship. However, an exclusive focus on essentialism and intellectual training may risk producing learners who excel in theory but face difficulties applying knowledge practically. To mitigate these issues, education systems can embrace a blended philosophy that combines different approaches to foster a more balanced, inclusive, and flexible curriculum. Reflecting this trend, Sri Lanka's educational reforms are gradually incorporating methods that emphasize independent thinking, student-centred learning, and creativity. These changes align more with progressivism and constructivism, which promote skills development, learner-focused education, and alternative forms of assessment instead of strict exam-driven evaluation. Nevertheless, implementing student-centred approaches faces challenges, especially in rural regions where limited resources and traditional teaching practices still dominate. Furthermore, rolling out educational reforms on a national scale encounters obstacles such as inflexibility, difficulties in addressing cultural diversity, and resistance to change. Frequent changes in policy and ideological disputes also hinder consistent progress. Despite ongoing reforms and curriculum updates, essentialism continues to form the backbone of Sri Lanka's education system.

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