

Sri Lanka's computer ownership continues to fall

Affordable smartphones cited as main reason

Wide disparities in computer literacy among urban, rural and estate sectors

Households owning a desktop computer or a laptop have continued to decline in Sri Lanka during the three years from 2017 to 2019, but the shifting to home working in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic may have reversed the trend with people setting up home offices.

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conspicuous in Sri Lanka, the survey showed. Although the national average of households owning a desktop or laptop was 22 percent, "this percentage is 38 in urban sector and rural and estate sector show 19.7 percent and 4.6 percent respectively. When provinces are considered, the highest availability is in the Western province (34.3 percent) while the lowest availability is reported from Uva (11.8 percent)," DCS said.

Meanwhile, what is more pronounced in the regional disparities is computer and digital literacy, albeit the overall percentage of computer literate population has been on an uptrend.

Sri Lanka's overall computer literacy in 2019 was 30.8 percent, an increase of 3.2 percentage points during the four years from 2016 to 2019.

"Urban sector shows the highest computer literacy rate (43.6 percent) among residential sectors. Computer literacy rate for rural and estate sectors are 29.0 percent and 12.6 percent respectively.

Among the provinces the highest level of computer literacy is reported from Western province (44.1 percent).

The lowest computer literacy is reported from the Eastern province (15.7 percent)," the survey report stated.

Meanwhile, computer literacy among the males was higher at 32.9 percent than females who had a literacy rate of 28.9 percent in 2019.

The survey also observed an ascending rate of computer literacy level along with the level people's education.

The group with A/L or above level of education showed the highest computer literacy rate of 72.6 percent while the computer literacy is higher at 71.5 percent among those literate in English language.

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People took to smartphones, which made multitasking possible in a fast paced working world, as they had limited time and patience to sit and work in front of a bigger screen unless your daytime job requires you to do so.

Meanwhile, the regional and provincial disparities of computer ownership were