

INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF
UNDERGRADUATES ON THEIR ACADEMIC PROGRAMME :
A SURVEY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA

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The socio-economic background is known to have a substantial influence on the educational performance of students at all levels. The present study was undertaken to identify the critical factors that affect the academic performance of undergraduates in universities of Sri Lanka. For this purpose, University of Kelaniya was singled out as a case study.

Students in three faculties, viz Science, Humanities and Social Sciences were categorised into two, as those who offered science courses and those who offered arts courses. The sample selected for the study comprised of 46.8% of the total target student population of which 56.6% belonged to the former category. Information on the socio-economic background of students was collected by a questionnaire appropriately set out for this purpose. Data thus collected was correlated to individual performance at internal examinations. Chi-square test for dependence and Crammer's V for strength of association were used as statistical measures.

Results indicated a strong association between family income and examination performance. Students from low income families were more likely to get better results than those of high income groups. This study also indicated that the students of parents with a low level of education were more likely to get better results than those students of parents with higher levels of education.

Further analysis showed that those students who were boarded at the University hostels were more likely to do better at examinations than others. A comparison of the examination performance and living status of parents indicates that students of single parent families are more likely to get better results than those students having both parents.

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References:

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