

Factors affecting for university entrance

Advanced level is one of the most competitive examinations in Sri Lanka since it is the only path towards a free higher education. Therefore students are given three attempts at the A/L examination to qualify for selection to an university. The objective of this study is to identify factors, which affect a student's selection to the university in the first attempt of his/her advanced level examination.

In order to collect the data, a survey was conducted involving the students in all universities excluding Jaffna, Eastern and South Eastern universities. Data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire and the stratified random sampling technique with proportional allocation was used for the study. (where the considered strata were "faculty" and "sex") A questionnaire was designed containing 37 questions in order to collect information about 20 factors. There were three main sections in the questionnaire. They are general information about the student, information about the history of his/her school education and information about his/her family.

Association between attempt and the rest of the variables was tested using Chi-Squared test using contingency tables. ("attempt" is a binary response variable.i.e.1st attempt and 2nd & 3rd attempt) A Logistic Regression model was fitted to investigate the extent to which the variables are associated with the response variable. Then goodness of fit of the model and model diagnostics were checked. Odds ratios were calculated using the coefficients of the fitted model.

From the Chi-Squared test eight factors were significant at 5% level. A Logistic Regression model was fitted by using the above selected variables as the explanatory variables and "attempt" as the response variable. A model with four main effects was obtained at 5% significance level. They are the subject stream done for A/L, type of tuition class, type of father's employment and having a love affair during school days. Based on the diagnostic tests carried out it was found that the model is satisfactory.

A student who follows Arts for the advanced level, who obtains tuition individually, whose father is employed in the private sector and who was not involved in a love affair during school days has the highest chance of being selected to the university in the first attempt.