

An analysis of the financial difficulties and employment potential of the undergraduates in the Faculty of Humanities, University of Kelaniya

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With the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic crisis, the Sri Lankan society had to face a lot of problems. Not like the academic and non-academic staff members who were getting their entire salaries paid even during the crisis, the undergraduate community of the state universities of Sri Lanka had to face difficulties, and there were many reasons for those difficulties. The conventional mode of teaching and evaluation was replaced by online education. As a result, the undergraduates had to face difficulties such as the unavailability of devices like computers or smartphones for them and the high cost of internet services.. This study was conducted in July 2023 randomly collecting responses from 50 undergraduates of the Faculty of Humanities where the students are engaged in the arts stream of studies, for a questionnaire to study the financial difficulties experienced by them and the potential for employment among them. The majority (62%) of the respondents were females while the rest was males. The majority (60%) of the respondents received *Mahapola* scholarship and 30% received Bursary scholarship. As the income from those scholarships and the financial assistance given by their families were not sufficient for the studies, 44% of the respondents were engaged in some kind of employment during their tenure in the university. The majority (62%) of the employed respondents received an income of around 20,000-40,000 LKR per month as the salary. The majority (74%) of the respondents were experiencing stress due to financial difficulties. The majority (80%) of the male respondents were employed whereas only 38% of the female respondents were employed. Employment among male undergraduates was much higher than that of among females. Overall, more than one-third of the respondents (44%) were engaged in employment to overcome their financial difficulties.

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