

## Comparison of employment rates between male and female graduates from the arts stream of studies of the University of Kelaniya

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The COVID- 19 pandemic and the economic crisis negatively affected the Sri Lankan economy during the last few years. This has created so many problems in the daily life of Sri Lankan citizens. Unemployment is one of the major problems in Sri Lankan society. The unemployment rate in Sri Lanka was 5.4% in 2020. With the COVID- 19 pandemic and the economic crisis, some members of the working community lost their conventional jobs and became unemployed. There is has been a difference in unemployment rates between male and female graduates in Sri Lanka due to several possible cultural, political, and socio-economic reasons. Therefore, this study was conducted in July and August 2023 to analyze the current status of unemployment between male and female graduates of the arts stream of studies of the University of Kelaniya. A questionnaire was distributed randomly among those graduates of the University of Kelaniya. Responses from 50 individuals (25 males and 25 females) were collected and analyzed. The majority (84%) of the respondents were 25-30 years old. According to the results, all the male graduates were employed either in the government or private sector or survived on self-employment. Only 74% of females were employed. The majority (88%) of unmarried females were employed whereas only a half of the married females were employed. Even though 66% of male graduates were employed full-time, only a 54% of female graduates were employed full-time. While the majority (54%) of unmarried females were employed full-time, only 34% of married females were employed full-time. This showed a lower full-time employment among married female graduates when compared with unmarried female graduates.

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