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AN EVALUATION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS IN RELATION TO SELECTION CRITERIA – A CASE STUDY IN STATISTICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA.

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ABSTRACT

Students are selected to follow Statistics and Computer Science as a subject at the University of Kelaniya on the same criteria used by the University Grants Commission to select students to Science based streams of the Universities. As such 40% of the students are selected on island wide merit on their performance at the G. C. E (Advanced Level) examination, 55% on district basis and 5% from the underprivileged districts. The G. C. E (Advanced Level) aggregate mark or the z-score is high in the first group of students and is low in the last group of students. The objectives of the present study were to determine whether the students who were selected on merit basis do better in the university examinations than the other students and to determine whether the students selected from underprivileged districts do not perform as good as the other students at the university examinations with respect to Statistics course units. The statistical analyses were performed using one way ANOVA, multiple regressions and simple linear correlations. The results indicated that there is no significant correlation between G. C. E.(Advanced Level) results and the performance at the subsequent university examinations in Statistics course units. The low performance of the students of underprivileged districts at the G. C. E (Advanced Level) examination appears to be due to low facilities for education prevailing in these districts. Given the same facilities and opportunities the students from underprivileged districts perform equally well at the university examinations of Statistics course units as the students who get better results at the G.C.E. (Advanced Level) examination.

Key words : Selection criteria, District basis, Island wide merit, Underprivileged districts, Examination performance.