

A Study of the Co-relation between the performance at the G.C.E  
(A/L) and the performance at the First year Examination of  
Engineering Students at the University of Moratuwa

A.L.JOUFER SADIQUE, B.Sc.(HONS)  
(Registration No: 29226051)

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## PRE FACE

I had observed that through the years the standards of the University Undergrauales had gone down considerably. there were several reasons for the fall in standards.

The defective system of admission to Universities had been a primary <sup>reason. The G.C.E (A/L) test is self.</sup> reason. The G.C.E (A/L) test to base University admissions. The A/L test in Most Subjects was a test of the memory of students. In most subjects it was not a test of intelligence or special skills of a student. The appropriate skills so very necessary especially field like Engineering cannot be tested at the G.C.E (A/L). This may perhaps explain for the high failure rate in the Firs year Examination in Engineering. Then the G.C.E (A/L) was one of luck and chance. Selected topics Could be Studied and the large number of tutories help this Process. There was the ability to guess questions in most subjects.

This report provide ways and means to streamline the current University Admission Policy.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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A Study of the Co-relation between the performance at the G.C.E (A/L) Examination and the performance at the First year Examination of Engineering Students at the University of Moratuwa

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. National Education Policy

To achieve the objective of national development, it is important to have a correct national education policy which suits the nation, and available resources in the Country. Unfortunately Sri Lanka did not have a clear cut educational Policy since independence except that inherited from its colonial masters. Still it maintains that colonial education policies with a certain amount of patch-work here and there breed discrimination, disparity and class conflict. Therefore unless and until firm policy decisions are taken to evolve a clear national policy nothing could prevent social unrest. Under the existing educational policies in Sri Lanka Students of the rural community have always felt that they have been discriminated against. The cumulative effect of the past educational policies have already caused serious damage to the youth.

Further, Serious consideration should be given to the present state of higher education the system of University admission needs a radical Change. Every student who qualifies to be admitted to Universities must be given an opportunity to do so.

All in all the basic criteria of a national educational policy must have two important components.

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1. Decisive directions aiming to develop the <sup>island</sup> moral values of the entire nation
2. Re-organisation of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary education with the aim of realizing the objectives of social, cultural, political and economic development.

1.2 The current University Admission policy

The admission policy currently in operation is as follows:

a) Merit quota

40% of the available places in each course of Study is filled in the order of the aggregate of marks obtained on all-island basis.

b) District quota

55% of the available places in each course of study is allocated to the 25 administrative district in proportion to the ratio that the population of each district bears to the total population of the country, and is filled in the order of the aggregate of marks obtained in respect of each such district.

c) Underprivileged quota

5% of the available places in each course of Study is allocated to the following administrative district in proportion to the ratio that the population of each such district bears to the total population of the eleven districts, and is filled in the order of the aggregate of marks obtained in respect of each such district:

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| ( i ) Ampara       | ( v ) Mannar          |
| ( ii ) Badulla     | ( vi ) Mullaitivu     |
| ( iii ) Hambantota | ( vii ) Moneragela    |
| ( iv ) Kilinochchi | ( viii ) Nuwara Eliya |

Contd..... 3

- (ix) Polonnaruwa
- (x ) Trincomalee
- (xi) Vavuniya

### 1.3. Objective of the Study

I intend to study the G.C.E.(A/L) Performance of Students who gained admission to the Degree course in Engineering at the University of Moratuwa and the relationship of this Performance to the performance at the First year Examination in Engineering at the university.

As admission to this professional course is so highly competitive, that many students with a good pass marks are excluded from the Faculty of Engineering because of the "District Quote System". I felt that a Valid Selection process should be consistently pick Students of such high quality .

The aim of my analysis is

1. to determine the relation ship,if any, between First year Examination in Engineering Performance and G.C.E (A/L) performance.
2. to determine from the data pertaining to the G.C.E (A/L) possible predictors of a good performance at the First year Examination in Engineering.

I hope to analyse the available data with regard to G.C.E (A/L) performance and First year Examination in Engineering performance in respect of Students entering the Faculty of Engineering in the year 1987,1988 & 1989.

Contd.....4

The factors relating to the G.C.E (A/L) examination Selected for analysis is

1. Number of attempt at the G.C.E (A/L)
2. Aggregate marks at the G.C.E (A/L)
3. Whether the Student has entered form an Underprivileged district.

The factors relating to the First year Examination in Engineering results I decided on two criteria of Student performance as a measure of student quality.

1. Failing the First year Examination in Engineering at the first attempt (i,e) Passing the sessional Examination .....a "high quality student"
2. Failing the first year Examination in Engineering even at the Second attempt.(i.e) failure at both Sessional and Repeat Examination ..... a "very poor quality student".

I intend to determine whether performance at the First year Examination in Engineering, defined in terms of the above criteria, is related to

1. Number of attempt at the G.C.E (A/L) when taken by it self.
2. Aggregate Marks at the G.C.E (A/L) by itself.
3. Number of attempt and aggregate marks taken together.
4. Admission from an underprivileged district.

A student from an underprivileged district would generally be admitted at a lower aggregate mark therefore I have taken the underprivileged district group for special analysis

Contd.....5

#### 1.4 The First Year Engineering Degree Course at the University of Moratuwa

This is a common course to prepare students for further studies in Various Engineering disciplines. The First year course consists of eight (08) subjects namely -

- ( i ) Mathematics
- ( ii ) Physics
- (iii ) Engineering Chemistry
- ( iv ) Engineering Drawing
- ( v ) Workshop theory and Practice
- ( vi ) Surveying
- (vii ) Building construction/ Process Engineering
- (viii) English

The subject English is independent as the Marks in English are not used to calculate the average which has a bearing on the performance criteria.

A pass in English as the First year Examination is pre-requisite to obtaining the degree.

The full course is conducted in English there is a Sessional and a Repeat Examination each year.

The performance criteria allows for reference in one or two subjects.

of

Students are permitted to proceed to the part I of the Course after Successful Completion or being referred at the First year Examination in Engineering. In this study Engineering Group I students (those intending to Specialist in Civil, Computer Science, Electrical, Electronics & Telecommunications or Mechanical) and Engineering group II Students (those intending to read chemical Engineering, Materials Engineering Mining and Mineral Engineering, or Textile & clothing technology) have been taken together as they study the same Subjects except that Group I Students read Building Construction and Group II Students read Process Engineering .

Contd.....6

2. Performance at the First year Examination in Engineering

TABLE - 1

Number (Percent) of students failing First year Examination in Engineering at 1st attempt

Year of entry	Number entering	Number (%) failing
Academic Year 1987/88	285	25 ( 8.77)
Academic Year 1988/89	269	29 (10.78)
Academic Year 1989/90	278	30 (10.79)
Total	832	84 (10.10)

TABLE - 2

Number (Percent) of students who have not passed the First Year Examination in Engineering even at second attempt

Year of entry	Number entering	Number (%) failing
Academic Year 1987/88	285	09 ( 3.16)
Academic Year 1988/89	269	09 ( 3.35)
Academic Year 1989/90	278	11 ( 6.83)
Total	832	29 ( 3.49)

Contd..... 7

2.1 The relation between the numbers of attempts at G.C.E (A/L) and the First year Examination in Engineering results

2.1.1. Sessional Examinations

TABLE - 3

Academic Year - 1987/88

Number of attempt	P	R1	R2	F	Total
1st	60(76.9)	08(10.3)	06(7.7)	04(5.1)	78(100)
2nd	80(65.6)	14(11.5)	16(13.1)	12(9.8)	122(100)
3rd	50(58.8)	12(14.1)	14(16.5)	09(10.6)	85(100)
Total	190(66.66)	34(11.92)	36(12.63)	25(8.77)	285(100)

TABLE - 4

Academic Year - 1988/89

Number of attempt	P	R1	R2	F	Total
1st	50(72.5)	07(10.1)	09(13.04)	03(4.4)	69(100)
2nd	78(66.1)	15(12.7)	13(11.01)	12(10.2)	118(100)
3rd	51(62.2)	07( 8.5)	10(12.2 )	14(17.1)	82(100)
Total	179(66.5)	29(10.8)	32(11.9 )	29(10.8)	269(100)

Contd.....8

TABLE - 5Academic Year - 1989/90

Number of attempt	P	R1	R2	F	Total
1st	55(76.4)	06(8.33)	07(9.7)	04(5.6)	72(100)
2nd	86(68.8)	13(10.4)	14(11.2)	12(9.6)	125(100)
3rd	47(58.02)	09(11.11)	11(13.6)	14(17.3)	81(100)
Total	188(67.6)	28(10.1)	32(11.5)	30(10.8)	278(100)

Abbreviations

P - Pass

R1- Referred in one subject

R2- Referred in two subject

F - Fail

The figures in brackets indicates the percentage

2.1.2. Repeat ExaminationsTABLE - 6Academic Year - 1987/88

Number of attempt	P	R1	R2	F	Total
1st	12	02	03	01	18
2nd	27	05	07	03	42
3rd	17	06	07	05	35
Total	56	13	17	09	95

Contd.....9



TABLE - 7Academic Year - 1988/89

Number of attempt	P	R1	R2	F	Total
1st	12	05	02	-	19
2nd	24	06	07	03	40
3rd	11	08	06	06	31
Total	47	19	15	09	90

TABLE - 8Academic Year - 1989/90

Number of attempt	P	R1	R2	F	Total
1st	10	03	02	02	17
2nd	18	08	09	04	39
3rd	14	09	06	05	34
Total	42	20	17	11	90

Abbreviations

P - Pass  
R1- Referred in one subject  
R2- Referred in two subject  
F - Fail

Contd.....10

SESSIONAL EXAMINATION 1987/88

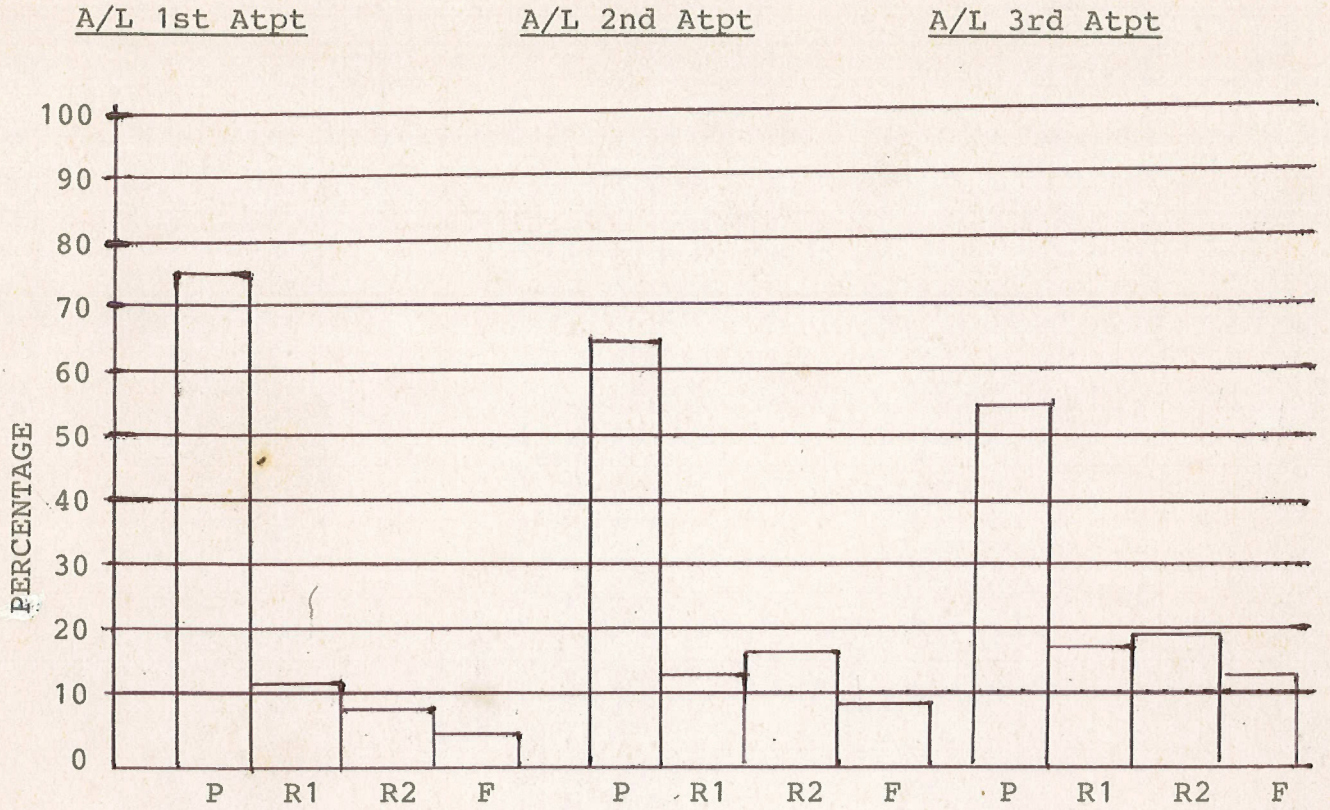


Figure - 1

SESSIONAL EXAMINATION - 1987/88

OVERALL RESULTS

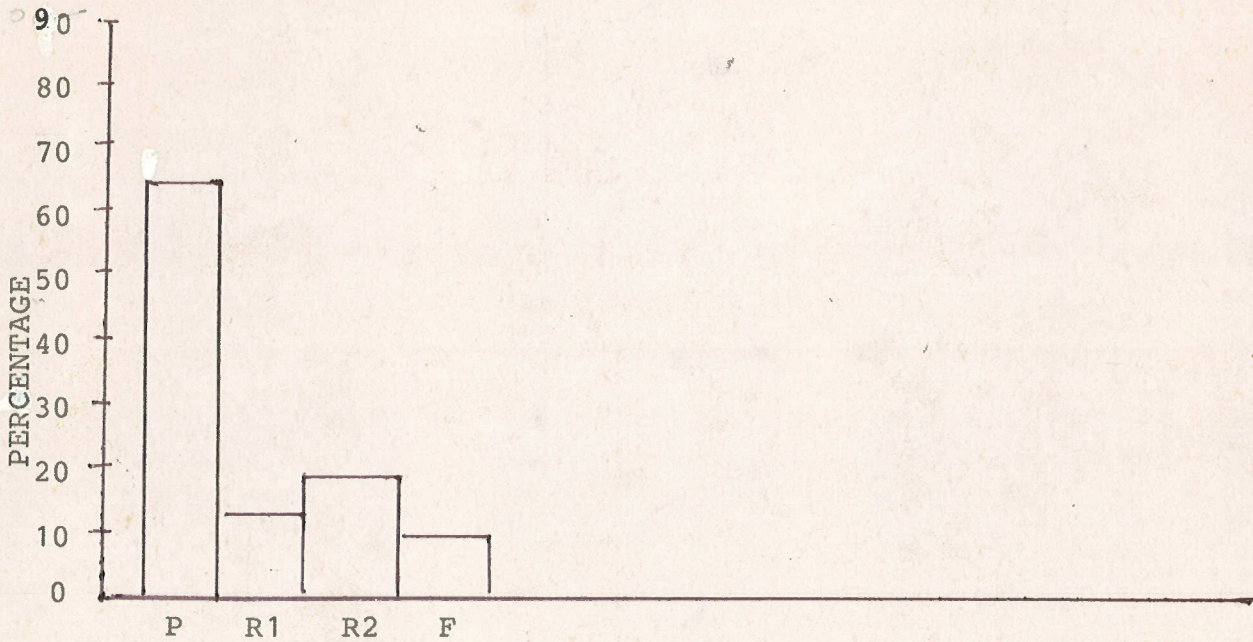


figure - 2

SESSIONAL EXAMINATION 1988/89

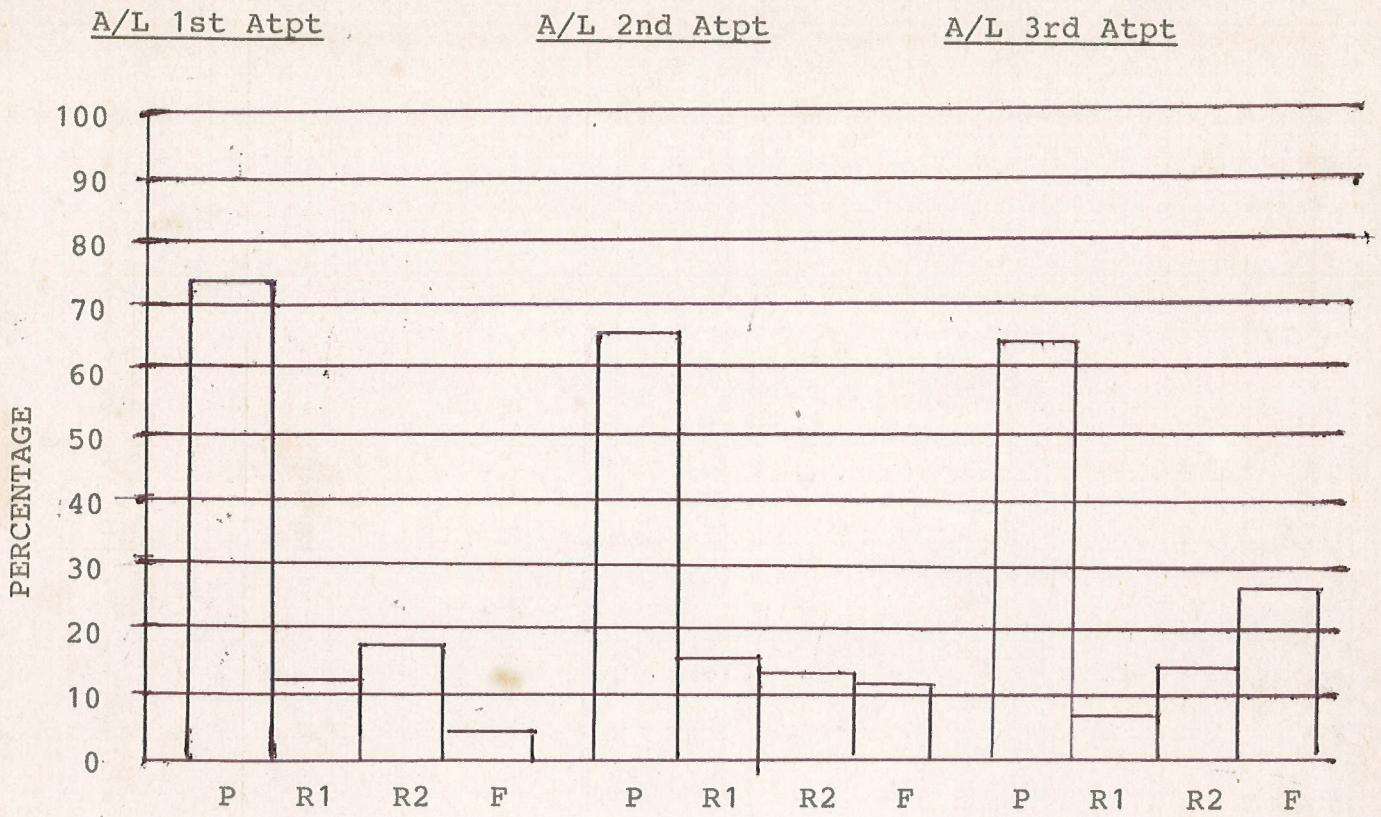


Figure - 3

SESSIONAL EXAMINATION - 1988/89

OVERALL RESULTS

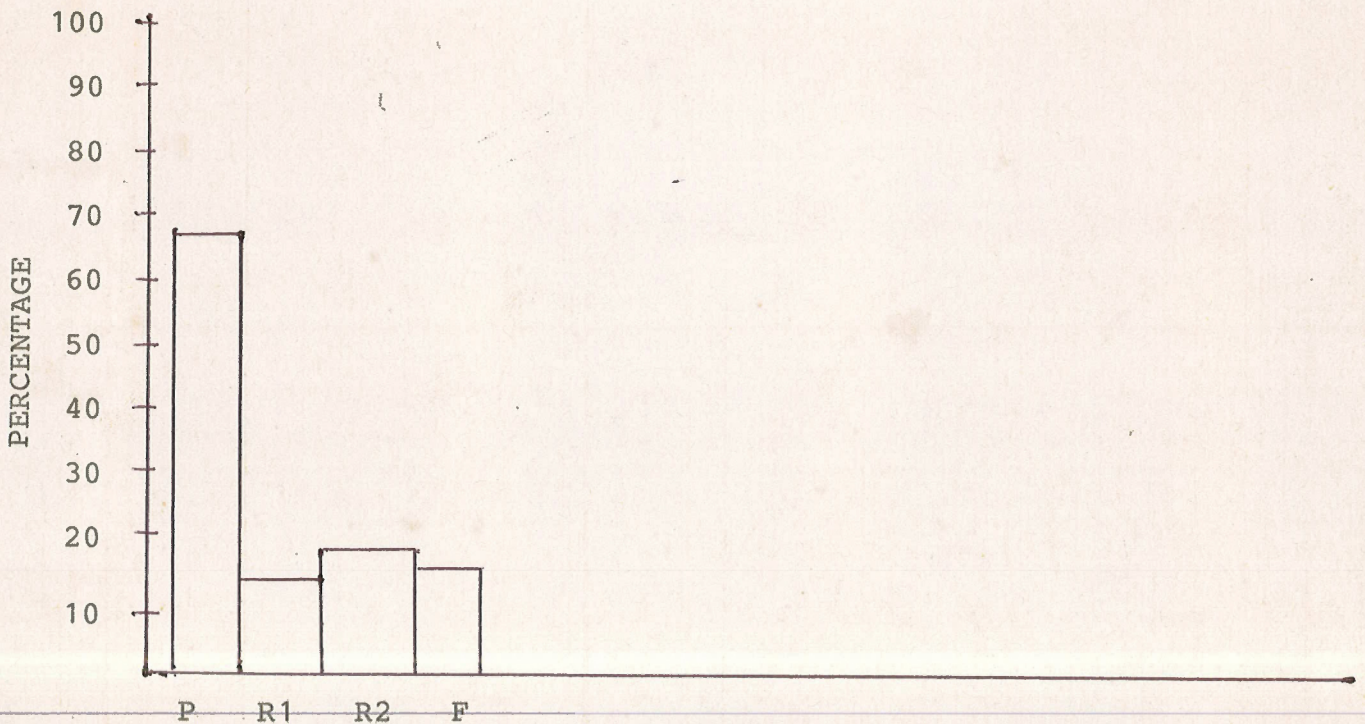


figure - 4

SESSIONAL EXAMINATION 1989/90

A/L 1st Atpt

A/L 2nd Atpt

A/L 3rd Atpt

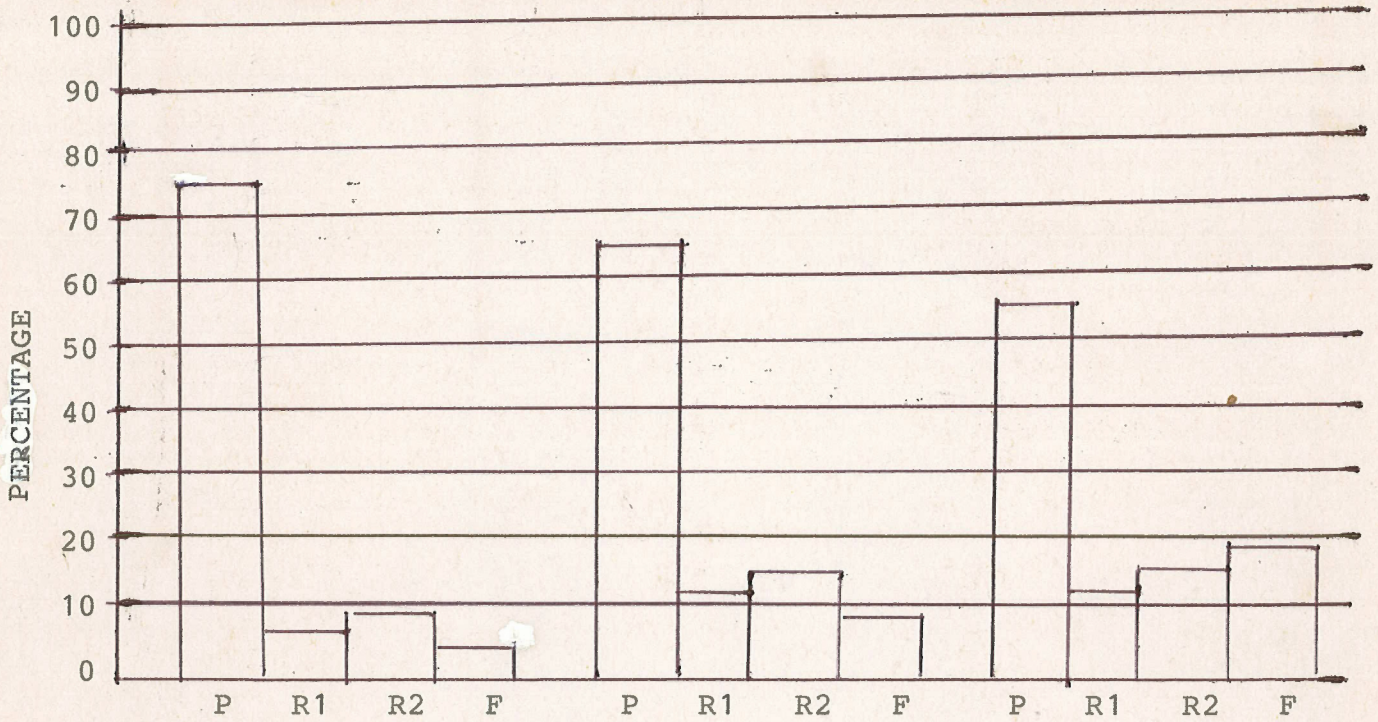


Figure - 5

SESSIONAL EXAMINATION - 1989/90

OVERALL RESULTS



figure - 6

2.1.3 Analysis of the numbers and percentage in 2.1.1 and 2.1.2

2.1.3.1 The G.C.E (A/L) First Attempt Category

The best performance is shown by those who enter at the First Attempt.

Academic Year	Pass and Referred	Total	Percentage
1987/88	74	78	94.9
1988/89	66	69	95.7
1989/90	68	72	94.44

2.1.3.2 The G.C.E (A/L) Second Attempt category

On the basis of the analysis given in 2.1.1 and 2.1.2, it is seen that the G.C.E (A/L) 2nd attempt Students perform better at the First year Examination in Engineering than those who enter at the 3rd attempt, but they do not perform as well as those who enter at the 1st attempt.

2.1.3.3 The G.C.E (A/L) third Attempt Category

The G.C.E (A/L) third Attempt Category account for only about 30% of the total admitted.

1987/88	29.8%
1988/89	30.5%
1989/90	29.1%

The Highest failure rate at the sessional examinations is for the Students who enter at the third attempt.

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>Failures</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1987/88	25	09	36
1988/89	29	14	48.27
1989/90	30	14	46.66

Contd.....14

The number of failures at the Repeat Examination and hence cannot proceed to part I at the end of the particular year is also highest for the third attempt Students.

Academic Year	Failures	Number at entry at 3rd attempt	Total fail sessional and Repeat
1987/88	05	85	09
1988/89	06	82	09
1989/90	06	81	11

TABLE - 9

Number entering in relation to number of attempt at the G.C.E (A/L) and expressed as a percentage of all admission for the 3 year period 1987-1989

Number of Attempt	No. of Entering	% of Total
1st	219	26.32
2nd	365	43.87
3rd	248	29.81
Total	832	100

TABLE - 10

Number entering in the 3 year period 1987-1989 and passing First year Examination in Engineering at first attempt related to number of attempt and expressed as a percentage of all students Passing First year Examination in Engineering at first attempt

Number of attempt	No. Passing	% of Total
1st	165	29.62
2nd	244	43.81
3rd	148	26.57
Total	557	100

Contd.....15

TABLE - 11

Number entering in 3 year period 1987-1989 and passing First year Examination in Engineering at first attempt expressed as a percentage of all those who entered at G.C.E (A/L) 1<sup>st</sup> attempt and G.C.E (A/L) 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt and G.C.E A/L 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt

Number of attempt	Total admitted	No. Passing	% of Total
1st	219	165	75.34
2nd	365	244	66.85
3rd	248	148	59.68
Total	832	557	-

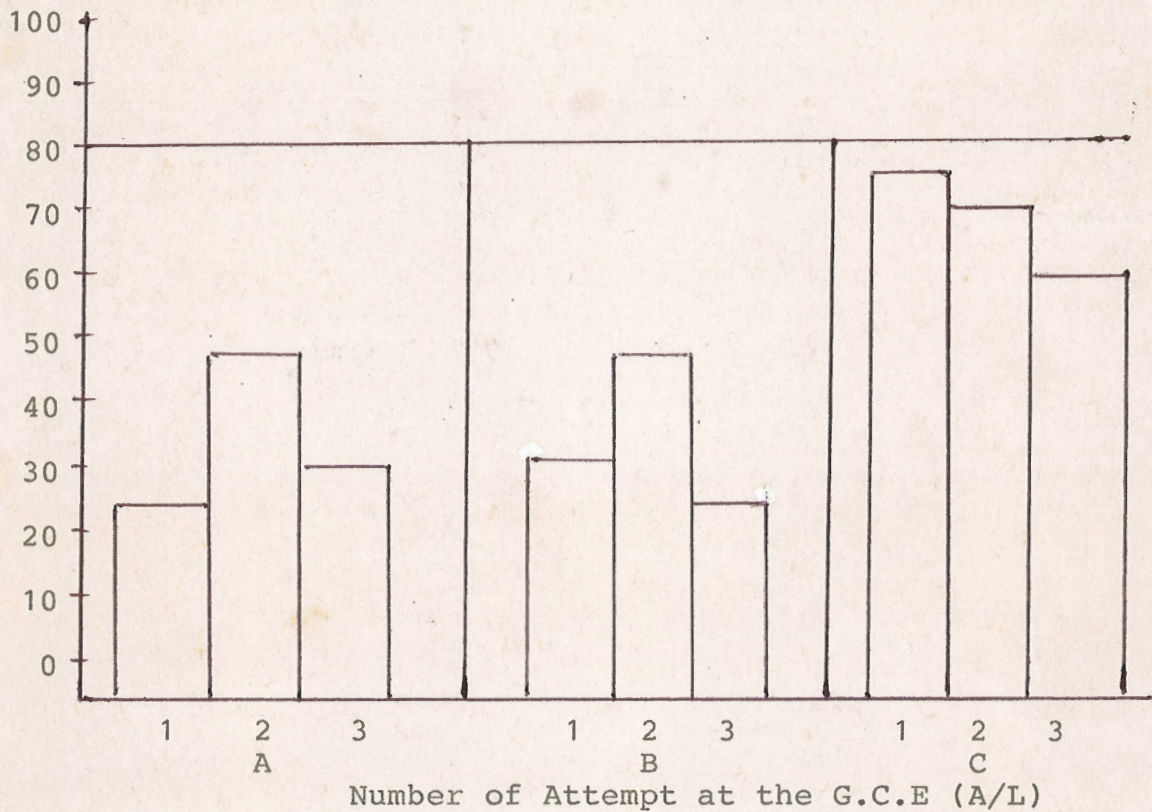


Figure - 7

Figure - (7A)-Percentage of Students entering in 1987-89 in relation to number of attempt at G.C.E (A/L)

Figure - (7B)-Percentage of Students entering in 1987-89 and passing 1st year Examination in Engineering at first attempt, in relation to number of attempt at G.C.E (A/L)

Figure - (7C)-Number of students entering in 1987-89 passing 1st year Examination in Engineering at first attempt, expressed as a percentage of all those who entered at G.C.E (A/L) 1st attempt G.C.E (A/L) 2nd attempt and G.C.E (A/L) 3rd attempt

For the admission Academic Years 1987/88, 1988/89 and 1989/90

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1. G.C.E (A/L) attempt students accounted for 26.32% of all admissions, while second and third attempt students accounted for 43.87% and 29.81 respectively (Table 9; Figure(7A))
2. 29.62% of the students passing the 1st year Examination in Engineering at the first attempt ("high quality students") had come in at the G.C.E (A/L) first attempt, while the corresponding figures for the Second and third attempt students were 43.81% and 26.57% (Table 10; Figure (7B)) respectively
3. 75.34% of the first attempt students were "high quality" (passed the first year Examination in Engineering at the first attempt), while the corresponding percentage for the second and third attempt students were 66.85% and 59.68% respectively (Table 11; Figure (7C))

#### 2.1.4 Conculasion:

Students comming in the first attempt at the G.C.E (A/L), as a group, performed better than the groups of students comming in at second and third attempt; yet, the selection process was such that G.C.E (A/L) first attempt students among whom the highest percentage of "high quality" students were found accounted for only 26.32% of the admissions, while that group (G.C.E (A/L) third attempt entrants) giving lowest percentage of " high quality " students, accounted for an equal proportion of admissions. I consider this an Undesirable and Unjustifiable position

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2.2. Performance at First year Examination in Engineering related to G.C.E (A/L) Aggregate Marks and number of attempt at G.C.E (A/L)

TABLE - 12

Percentage of students who entered in the 3 year Period 1987 - 1989 and failed first year Examination in Engineering at first attempt, in relation to G.C.E (A/L) aggregate Marks and number of attempt at G.C.E (A/L)

G.C.E (A/L) aggregate Mark	Failure rate (%) at first year Examination in Engineering		
	(A/L) 1st attempt	(A/L) 2nd attempt	(A/L) 3rd attempt
300	0	-	-
290	0	-	-
280	0	0	-
270	0	0	-
260	5	9	0
250	11	14	11
240	16	19	20
230	24	30	36
220	27	33	49
210	36	41	54
200	60	65	72

TABLE - 13

Number (Percentage) of students who entered over the 3 year period 1987-1989 with an aggregate mark of 200 or less, and failed first year Examination in Engineering at first attempt in relation to number of attempt at G.C.E (A/L)

Number of attempt at G.C.E (A/L)	Number entering	Number failing	%
1st	12	10	83
2nd	14	11	79
3rd	4	4	100
Total	30	25	83

Contd.....18

TABLE - 14

Number of students failing First year Examination in Engineering even at Second attempt and the number(percentage) of those who come in with 200 marks or less at the G.C.E (A/L)

Year of Entry	Total No failing	Total No (%) of there with 200 Marks at (A/L)
1987	09	5 (55.6)
1988	09	5 (55.6)
1989	11	7 (63.6)
Total	29	17 (58.6)

TABLE - 15

Students from Underprivileged districts failing to Pass the first year Examination in Engineering even at second attempt

Year of entry (1)	Total Number of Students from under privileged districts (2)	Failing	
		No (3)	% of all students from under privileged district (4) $= (3)/(2) \times 100$
1987	15	7	47
1988	26	9	35
1989	21	5	24
Total	62	21	34

Expectation 0

Contd.....19

TABLE - 16

Number (Percentage) of Students from under privileged districts failing to pass First year Examination in Engineering even at Second attempt in relation to all to who fail to do so

Year of entry	Total No failing	No (%) of there from under privileged	Expected No (%) from Under privileged districts*
1987	09	n (%) 7 (78)	2.4 (31)
1988	09	9 (100)	2.4 (40)
1989	11	5 (46)	4.2 (22)
Total	29	21 (72)	9 (27)

\*  $\frac{\text{No. of under privileged districts}}{\text{Total No. of all districts}} \times n$

2.2.1 Performance at the First year Examination in Engineering related to G.C.E (A/L) aggregate mark

1. Regardless of the number of attempt at the G.C.E (A/L) the failure rate falls as the Aggregate mark rose (TABLE - 12)
2. 83% of Students who come in with an Aggregate mark of 200 or less in the Year 1987, 1988 and 1989 failed the First year Examination in Engineering at the first attempt - they were not "high quality" Students (TABLE - 13)
3. More than 55% of the Students who failed to Complete the First year Examination in Engineering at the Second attempt ("vary poor quality" Students) from the 1987, 1988 and 1989 entrants, obtained 200 marks or less at the G.C.E (A/L) (TABLE - 14)

Contd.....20

### 2.2.1.1 Conclusion

1. The Aggregate Mark at the G.C.E (A/L) Showed a positive relationship with performance at the First Year Examination in Engineering.
2. There was little justification for taking in any student who had obtained 200 marks or less at the G.C.E (A/L) At least 80% of these were not "high quality" Students, and nearly 50% were "Very poor quality"

### 2.2.2. Performance at the First year Examination in Engineering related to number attempt at the G.C.E (A/L) and aggregate mark taken together (TABLE - 12)

1. The failure rate of A/L first attempt Students fell within or below what I considered to be a "tolerable failure rate" (approx 25%) at an mark 220 to 230 above
2. For Students coming in at the Second and Third attempt for the failure rate to fall within the tolerable range, the entry mark had to rise to 250 and above
3. Though, through out the greater portion of the mark rage, the A/L) Second attempt Students performed better the third attempt group, at 250 marks and above the distinction was not evident.

### 2.2.2.1 Conclusion

1. The number of attempt at the G.C.E (A/L) and Aggregate mark taken together, was a good predictor of "quality" performance (passing the First year Examination in Engineering at the first attempt)
2. Failure rate could be kept within a desired "tolerable failure rate" range by adjusting the cut-off mark according to number of attempt at the G.C.E (A/L)

### 2.2.3 Students from Underprivileged districts and First year Examination in Engineering performance

1. For the three years 1987, 1988 and 1989 of 62 Students coming from the Underprivileged districts one third were "Very poor quality" (i.e) failed to pass the First year Examination in Engineering even at the second attempt (TABLE - 15)
2. For these same years students from Underprivileged districts formed 78% of all students failing to pass the First year Examination in Engineering at the Second attempt, although on the basis of the proportion of underprivileged to other districts, the failure should not have exceeded 27% (TABLE - 16)

#### 2.2.3.1 Conclusion

1. I have already shown that 83% of Students obtaining 200 Mark or less did not pass the First year Examination in Engineering at the first attempt (TABLE - 13). all Students from under privileged districts came in at this level.
2. I now see that a high proportion of Students from underprivileged districts are "Very poor quality"- 34% (TABLE - 15). as against 3.49% of all Students (TABLE - 2).

#### 2.2.4 Overall conclusion

- My results indicates that for the years 1987, 1988 and 1989
1. The G.C.E (A/L) considered in terms of the Aggregate mark together with the number of attempt at G.C.E (A/L), is Valid predicator of performance at the First year Examination in Engineering - A/L first attempt Students performing better as a whole in the First year Examination in Engineering even if they had come with a lower mark than 2nd and 3rd attempt Students.
  2. The overall level of performance (i.e. the high failure rate at the first attempt and the high percentage of failure at the second attempt) at the First year Examination in Engineering, however, bring into question the Validity of the Method of Selection. My conclusion is that, the results of my analysis while demonstrating the predictive validity of the A/L Examination as judged by First year Examination in Engineering performance does not Validate the current selection process based on the examination. what is defective is not the tool, but the Manner in which it has been used.

### 2.3 The relationship between the Students who gain admission on merit and Others to the failure rate at the First year Examination in Engineering

The Charts given below Viz 2.3.1,2.3.2 and 2.3.3 indicates the number of Students who gain admission on merit and those on district quota and Underprivileged quota (Others), these charts indicate that merit selection is restricted to a few districts mainly Colombo and Jaffna and at a lower level, the districts Gampaha, Kalutara, Kandy, Galle, Matara and Kurunegala, Some on merit

Most of the failures at both Sessional and Repeat are from the district quota and Underprivileged quota Students.

### 2.3.1 Academic Year 1987/88

District	M	O	Failures			
			Sessional		Repeat	
			M	O	M	O
Colombo	65	52	1	2	0	1
Gampaha	5	25	0	2	0	0
Kalutara	2	18	1	2	0	0
Kandy	1	3	0	0	0	0
Matale	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nuwara-Eliya	0	1	0	1	0	1
Galle	2	14	0	2	0	0
Matara	7	14	0	2	0	1
Hambantota	0	7	0	2	0	1
Jaffna	4	8	0	1	0	0
Mannar	0	1	0	1	0	1
Trincomalle	0	0	0	0	0	0
Batticaloa	0	4	0	1	0	0
Vavuniya	0	1	0	1	0	1
Mullaitivu	0	1	0	1	0	1
Ampara	1	8	0	2	0	1
Puttalam	1	8	0	1	0	0
Kurunegala	2	13	0	1	0	0
Anuradhapura	1	0	0	0	0	0
Polannaruwa	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baddulla	2	6	0	0	0	0
Monaragala	0	1	0	1	0	1
Ratnapura	0	4	0	0	0	0
Kegalle	0	3	0	0	0	0
Total	93	192	02	03	0	9

M - Merit Students

O - Others

Contd.....23

2.3.2. Academic Year 1988/89

District	M	O	Failures			
			Sessional		Repeat	
			M	O	M	O
Colombo	50	54	1	2	0	0
Gampaha	8	32	1	3	0	0
Kalutara	6	20	0	2	0	0
Kandy	1	1	0	0	0	0
Matale	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nuwara-Eliya	0	0	0	0	0	0
Galle	7	13	0	2	0	0
Matara	7	13	1	2	0	1
Hambantota	0	6	0	3	0	1
Jaffna	1	6	0	0	0	0
Mannar	0	1	0	1	0	1
Trincomalee	0	2	0	1	0	0
Batticaloa	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vavuniya	0	1	0	1	0	1
Mullaitivu	0	1	0	1	0	1
Ampara	0	7	0	1	0	1
Puttalam	0	3	0	2	0	1
Kurunegala	0	8	0	1	0	0
Anuradhapura	0	4	0	1	0	1
Polannaruwa	0	0	0	0	0	0
Banddula	0	7	0	1	0	0
Moneragala	0	1	0	1	0	1
Ratnapura	0	3	0	1	0	1
Kegalle	1	4	0	0	0	0
Total	82	187	3	26	0	9

M - Merit Students

O - Others

Contd.....24

2.3.3. Academic Year 1989/90

District	M	O	Failures			
			Sessional		Repeat	
			M	O	M	O
Colombo	70	30	0	2	0	1
Gampaha	6	30	0	3	0	0
Kalutara	10	15	1	3	0	0
Kandy	0	2	0	0	0	0
Matale	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nuwara-Eliya	0	1	0	1	0	1
Galle	0	10	0	2	0	1
Matara	4	15	0	3	0	1
Hambantota	0	9	0	2	0	0
Jaffna	3	15	0	2	0	0
Mannar	0	2	0	1	0	1
Trincomalee	0	0	0	0	0	0
Batticaloa	0	2	0	0	0	0
Vavuniya	0	2	0	1	0	1
Mullaitivu	0	1	0	1	0	1
Ampara	0	9	0	0	0	0
Puttalam	0	3	0	2	0	1
Kurunegala	1	21	0	5	0	2
Anuradhapura	0	2	0	0	0	0
Polannaruwa	0	1	0	0	0	0
Banddula	0	2	0	0	0	0
Moneragala	0	2	0	1	0	1
Ratnapura	0	6	0	0	0	0
Kegalle	1	3	0	0	0	0
Total	95	183	1	29	0	11

M - Merit Students

O - O thers

Contd.....25



#### 2.3.4 Conclusion

1. The charts indicate that no Students entering on Merit in the year 1987, 1988 and 1989 had to stay another year in the First year.
2. A negligible number gain admission on merit from the Underprivileged districts. Also, the number of Students who get an aggregate higher than the cut-off mark of the districts like Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Kandy, Galle, Matara, Jaffna and Kurunegala is Very low (U.G.C. admission list) This means that the present quota System prevents entry of good Students to make way for Students who are weak. The obvious Solution is to Select on merit.

contd.....26

### 3. Recommendations

1. The selection Process based on the G.C.E (A/L) Can be improved by:

(i) Using different "cut-off" points, depending on

the number of attempt at the G.C.E (A/L)

1st attempt .....230 and above

2nd attempt .....240 and above

3rd attempt .....250 and above

(ii) in any case excluding Students with a mark of 200 or less irrespective of whether or not they come from an underprivileged district.

2. Once the academic quality of the eligible Students has been ensured by adopting the recommended cut-off points as indicated above, a further selection will have to be made since in all probability the number of eligible Students will exceed the number of available places. (An analysis of marks available at the University Grants commission would give me a very clear picture of the actual position in regard of the years under study)

The final selection could be made by the Undermentioned methods.

(i) Employing a test for desirable professional attitudes such as Concern, Compassion, Sensitivity etc. A possible test instrument for this purpose might be an interview

(ii) Using the "District Quota System" similar to the one being used at present, without sacrificing the requirement of meeting the demands of the recommended Cut-off points.

3. Though I have placed the cut-off points as indicated (on the basis of the data presently available) these points will have to be reviewed from time to time.

4. Selection on merit alone is not a solution in the Present context. But it may be the ultimate solution. However, as an initial step the suggestion is that the 5% quota Set aside for underprivileged districts to be removed because the district quota itself is beneficial for these districts. As I do not intend Proposing radical Changes that would arouse the Students, the Proposal is that this 5% be added to the district quota so that even Underprivileged districts Could in Some way be benefited.

5. I recommend that as in many universities in other parts of the world the first year examination in all the faculties of our Universities Should be treated as an integral part of the admission process and that it should serve as a real and final test for determining the potential of Students for University education. This is especially necessary in the context of the present three-tier admission system. A good student should have little or no difficulty in passing such an examination on the

first attempt after one year's work at University. Those who fail to do so should be required to sit a repeat examination in the end of the academic year in which they entered the University. Those who fail this repeat examination should be permitted one more attempt at it, but from outside the university. They could resume their University careers only after they pass this examination on their third attempt. No further attempts at this examination should be permitted. In making my recommendations, I have been guided by a deep concern for the need to restore pride in academic merit and excellence as essential features of life in our Universities. The conspicuous failure of the Present admissions system is the low Priority it attaches to merit and excellence in academic performance. Anything that can be done to help to reverse some of the damage this has done to our university system before that damage becomes more Strongly embedded than it is now, is worth doing. I believe the Vitality of our University System is being sapped by the present admission policy, and that my recommendation will, at least, help to check this deleterious process, and may even reinvigorate the system.

Source of Survey

APPENDIX

Academic Year.....

Merit cut-off mark....

S/N	Name of the Student	Aggregate Mark	District	Merit	Others	Number of attempts(At)			1st year results							
						1st	2nd	3rd	Sessional			Repeat				
									P	R <sub>1</sub>	R <sub>2</sub>	F	P	R <sub>1</sub>	R <sub>2</sub>	F
28																

P - Pass  
R1- Referred in one Subject  
R2- Referred in two Subject  
F - Fail