



# GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY



2018

A STUDY ON THE GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA

University Statistics & Data Monitoring Unit



# **GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY**

**2018**

**University of Kelaniya**

**University Statistics & Data Monitoring Unit**

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**F**or all the individuals who work enthusiastically to improve the quality of higher education

## Prologue

**E**memployability can be considered as one of the prominent factors in measuring the quality of the graduates of a University. Graduate employability, based on the graduates passed out in 2018, has been depicted in this report. Factors that affect the employability of the graduates of the University of Kelaniya have been identified as soft skills, involvement of the extra-curricular activities, language proficiency, professional qualifications and practical knowledge and the research skill acquired through course works.

A prominent reason behind the investment in University education by the students is that it has the capability to enhance employment prospects. However, in this competitive world, being a graduate alone does not guarantee the employability of students. It is noticeable that while academic achievement is of paramount importance in employability, the other qualifications and soft skills make the graduate stand out from the usual graduates. University education empowers the graduates to move on at the job with good confidence. Owing to the academically weakness and the effective communication, percentage of employability may decrease. Furthermore, the rate of the employability of a certain university becomes visible at the choice point for which university students apply to. Consequently, employability is one of the most dominant key performing indicators of the University.

## Acknowledgements

**T**he University Statistics and Data Monitoring Unit extends profound gratitude to the honorable Vice- Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya, Professor D M Semasinghe, for the exemplary guidance and monitoring throughout this employability survey. And also, Senior Professor N R De Silva, Director, Quality Assurance Centre of the University of Kelaniya and Accreditation Committee for procure advices for the successful graduate employability survey.

Our sincere gratitude to Deans of all the Faculties and Heads of the all Departments in the University of Kelaniya and Mrs. Damayanthi Panagoda, Statistician, University Grants Commission, for the guidance extended through the preparation of the questionnaire.

Last but not least, all the graduates who responded to the survey; the graduate employability 2018 is all about your responses.



## Vice- Chancellor's Message

According to the Professor Mantz York (2003) “the graduate employability is a set of achievements-skills, understanding and personal attributes-that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.”

The employability rate is one of the main measurement used to measure the fruitfulness and the quality of the output of a university. It is also considered as a major (KPI) Key Performing Indicator of the University.

University of Kelaniya always focuses on helping the students to develop personally and professionally so that they can achieve success in their careers. The Center/Units such as Career Guidance Unit, Gavels Club, Technology and Innovation Support Center etc. work collaboratively to enhance the student's career development and employability. Career fair, Best Speaker are some of the programmes conducted annually through the University to build up the students' personality and soft skills so that they can achieve their future goals.

This is the invitation for all of you to explore the employability achievements that the graduates of the University of Kelaniya have accomplished.

Professor D M Semasinghe

Vice-Chancellor

University of Kelaniya

Kelaniya



## Message of the Director- USDMU

The education and knowledge provided by a university can be placed into two broad skill categories of technical and non- technical. Technical skills refer to subject specific or content knowledge while non-technical skills include the basic skills such as oral communication, reading, writing and arithmetic, higher order skills such as learning skills & strategy, problem solving and decision making.

A graduate to be a successful employee must have both the technical and non-technical skills. A student of the University of Kelaniya has been provided all the necessary facilities to gain the above mentioned skills. Other than the theoretical knowledge, extra-curricular activities help the students to strengthen their soft skills.

Hence, with the aim of measuring the productivity of the effort taken by the University, a survey to identify the graduate employability rate of the University of Kelaniya of year 2018 was carried out through the University Statistics and Data Monitoring Unit under the supervision of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya as well as the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka.

This Report provides the significant information about the graduate employability of University of Kelaniya in the year 2018.

Dr. K. M. L. M. Manjula Gunarathna

Director

University Statistics & Data Monitoring Unit

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## Abbreviation

HEI	: Higher Education Institute
FCMS	: Faculty of Commerce & Management
FHU	: Faculty of Humanities
FMED	: Faculty of Medicine
FSC	: Faculty of Science
FSOSC	: Faculty of Social Sciences
F	: Female
M	: Male
GPA	: Grade Point Average



# 1 Introduction

Postindustrial economy can be described as more and more competitive. Almost countries are enhancing quality and skills of their workforces to increase national growth and prosperity. Accordingly, the Sri Lankan government has perceived education with higher quality to achieve these challenges. This belief has resulted in an increased pressure on state Universities and thus, employability of graduates now stands high on the government agenda.

Graduate Employability is a crucial index of economic development of a country because, it is an indicator about the contribution of the educated population to the workforce of a country. Apart from that graduate employability guides education system, how to comply for industrial requirements. Hence, graduate employability has become a key performance indicator of all Universities.

As a leading University, the University of Kelaniya has perceived the value of graduate employability and maintained an above average rate for the graduate employability. University of Kelaniya has monitored and evaluated the graduate employability for several years. Also, findings have been used for short range and long range plan to increase the quality of the University. Additionally, the University has taken some strategies to maintain the satisfied employability rate.

University Statistics & data Monitoring Unit annually conducts the Employability of Graduates survey to ensure that the graduates of the University of Kelaniya are employable. This year, 2018 the survey has highlighted several issues to develop the existing curriculum to achieve higher employability than now.

This report consists of the significant information about the graduate employability of the University of Kelaniya in the year 2018. It provides a valuable pathway to develop the existing curriculum to achieve higher employability than now.



## 2 Graduate Employability; The Role in Higher Education Institutes

Since the beginning, the traditional role of the state Universities of Sri Lanka has been to produce and disseminate knowledge. But in the modern competitive world, it is always up to argument whether disseminating knowledge is sufficient for graduates who pass out from the institutions. Currently, the graduate employability has been globally known as an indicator of quality for the HEIs. Maharosoa and Hay in their study points out that considering students, their post-graduation employment rate is an important indicator of quality and also, they claim that the ability of an HEI to ensure the their graduates' employability has become an indicator of quality as well as depicted as a notion of quality (Maharosoa & Hay, 2001). Therefore, in other terms graduate employability ratio can be used as one of the main measurements of the quality of the HEI and sometimes the suitability of a degree programme.

Employability is defined as “a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy (Yorke, 2004). When analyzing the definition itself, the employability can be identified as a two phase scenario in which the first one is to be an employee or to get an employment and the second phase is to stay on and to improve in the employment. However, the first phase always seems to be the most difficult part of the youngsters whether graduates or not. Kalufya and Mwakajinga in their study highlights that in the current competitive world, getting the first step of the career ladder is challenging (Kalufya & Mwakajinga, 2016). The role of a higher education institute on employability thus becomes the first phase in which, the HEI should prepare its graduates to be employed.

### 3 Methodology

The Graduate Employability study for the year 2018 was conducted in a different manner compared to the previous years 2016 and 2017. The Usual procedure was to conduct the survey parallel to the convocations of each faculty. That arrangement, however, brought some difficulties in comparing the employability rates with the Faculties of the University since the graduation dates differed from each faculty, though the effective date was same for most of the faculties which eventually caused the employability rate of some faculties to increase than the real value. Also, it was difficult to compare the employability rate with previous years due to the time period mismatches. Therefore, to overcome the issue of comparison yearly and with Faculties, the graduate employability study for the year 2018 was carried out after 6 months of the effective date but before 7 months.

#### 3.1 Population

The population considered for the study was the graduates passed out in the year 2018 of the University. In 2018, a total of 2035 students has been graduated and following table 3-1 illustrates the graduate output of the University as at December 31, 2018.

Table 3-1: Examination Output of the University (As at December 31, 2018)

Faculty	Number of Graduates
Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies	509
Faculty of Computing & Technology <sup>1</sup>	-
Faculty of Humanities	289
Faculty of Medicine <sup>2</sup>	55
Faculty of Science	444
Faculty of Social Sciences	738
Grand Total	2035

<sup>1</sup> Any students from the Faculty of Computing & Technology has not yet graduated.

<sup>2</sup> 47 students were from the Bachelor of Speech & Hearing Sciences programme and the other 8 were from the MBBS programme.

## 3.2 Target Population

For the study, graduates from the all the Faculties were considered excluding the MBBS graduates. Following table 3-2 shows the target population.

Table 3-2: Target Population

Faculty	Number of Graduates
Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies	509
Faculty of Humanities	289
Faculty of Medicine	47
Faculty of Science	444
Faculty of Social Sciences	738
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2027</b>

## 3.3 Sampling Technique, Sampling Methodology and Sample Size

### 3.3.1 Sampling Technique

For sample selection process, the stratified sampling technique was used. The whole University was stratified using the homogeneity of the Faculties. That is, the strata were defined for each Faculty under the study.

### 3.3.2 Sampling Methodology

The selection of the sample was conducted using the simple random sampling methods using random number generators with the need of selecting an unbiased sample for the survey.

### 3.3.3 Sample Size

Per the statistics revealed through previous studies, where overall employability rate of the University was 81%, the required sample size for the graduate employability survey 2018 was 855 students from all considered faculties (At the 95 % level of confidence). The corresponding sample size required from each Faculty is as following (Table 3-3)

Table 3-3: Required sample sizes

Faculty	Number of Graduates
Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies	248
Faculty of Humanities	113
Faculty of Medicine	17
Faculty of Science	212
Faculty of Social Sciences	265
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>855</b>

### 3.4 Data Collection Methodology

Two approaches were used for the data collection by using a single questionnaire. For the graduates belonging to the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies and the Faculty of Science an online questionnaire was given and for the students belonging to the Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Social Sciences a general questionnaire was distributed. However, the time frame and the questionnaire were same in the two approaches. The information and experiences gained through previous studies in 2017 and 2018 revealed the best data collection process as a combination of an online and wireless questionnaire distribution.

For all the students considered for the study, an awareness note was sent by general post and for the students who were selected for the online survey the URL for the corresponding survey questionnaire was sent along with the awareness letter while the questionnaire was sent to the students who were selected for the wireless survey.

Letters were sent to a total 1,745 students and the data collection process yield 87.16% response rate with 1,521 responses. However, the data validation process removed several responses due to incomplete questionnaires, contradicted responses, and also empty responses. Thereafter, to have an unbiased employability rate and to align with the minimum sample sizes required, out of the 1,521 responses received, 855 responses were selected using the above mentioned sampling method.

### 3.5 Data Organization and Data Analysis

The data analysis involves set of descriptive statistics along with basic pie- charts, bar charts and column charts.

The statistical packages of MINITAB 17 and SPSS along with Microsoft Excel 2016 were used.

## 4 Findings

This chapter illustrates and highlights the findings of the graduate employability survey 2018.

### 4.1 Profile Analysis

The respondents of this survey were the graduates passed out in the year of 2018 from the University of Kelaniya. These graduates belong to five different Faculties, different degree programs and different genders. Before analyzing the employability, it is evident to contrast the variations of the respondents.

#### 4.1.1 Respondents by the Faculty

The graduates participated in the survey belonged to the all the Faculties except for the Faculty of Computing & Technology. Figure 4-1 demonstrates the variation of respondents by the Faculty of their study.

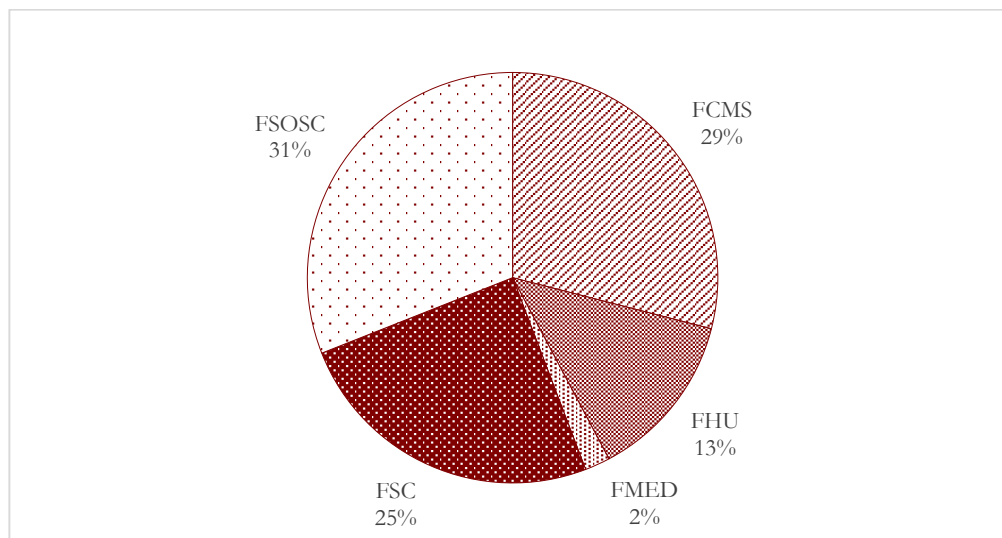


Figure 4-1: Response by the Faculty

The sample was selected proportional to the graduate output and hence the majority of the sample represents the graduates of the Faculty of social Sciences and the minority from the Faculty of Medicine.

### 4.1.2 Respondents by the Type of the Degree Program

The University of Kelaniya offers students three types of degree programmes. The first one is the general degree programme which has a duration of three years. The second is a special degree programme of four- years duration and the third one is the medical degree programme of five- years duration. However, since there was no considerable output from the medical degree programme the third type of degree program was not concerned with the survey. The following figure 4-2 depicts the variation of the respondents by the degree programme.

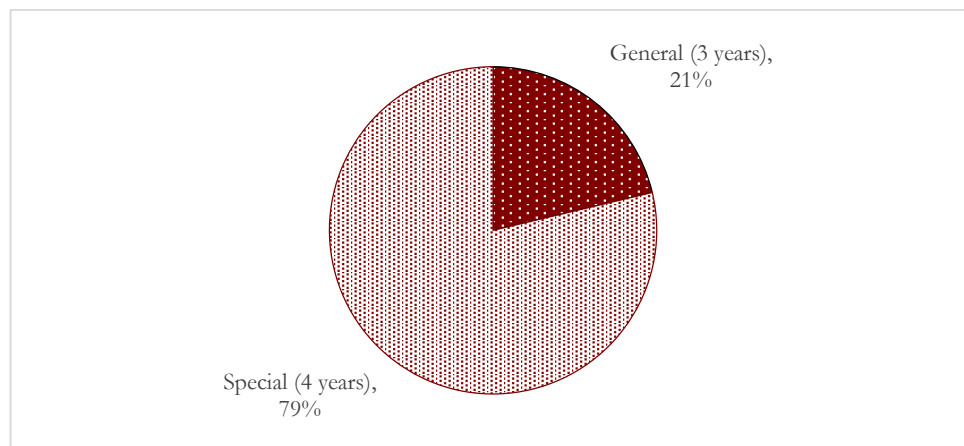


Figure 4-2: Respondents by the Type of Degree Programme

As shown in figure 2, the majority (79%) of the respondents has followed a special degree. The respondents who have followed a general degree is 21%.

### 4.1.3 Respondents by the Gender

The survey sample consists with more female respondents than that of the male respondents. Below figure 4-3, shows the composition of respondents by the gender. Out of the 855 graduates, 650 which represents 76% are female graduates while 205, 24%, are male graduates.

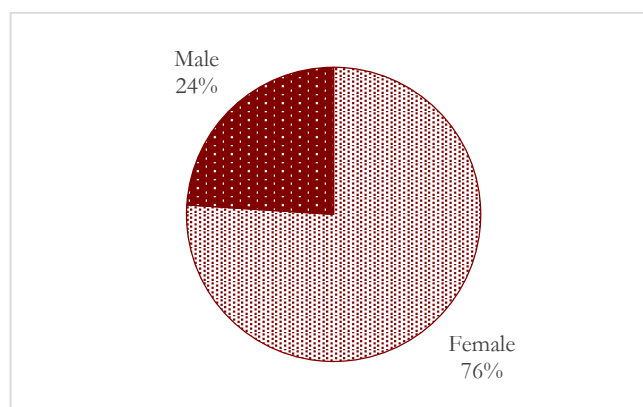


Figure 4-3: Composition of the sample by the gender

## 4.2 Employability Rate

Employability rate is measured by the ratio of the number of employed graduates to the total number of graduates in the sample. Following sections reveals the employability rate and employability rate by the Faculty and the gender.

### 4.2.1 Employability Status of graduates

The overall graduate employability of the University of Kelaniya is 61%, while the unemployment rate 39%, which indicates more than half of the graduates of the sample are employed. The corresponding rates are shown in the table 4-1 and the figure 4-4 depicts the difference of the employment rate and the unemployment rate.

Table 4-1: Employability rate of the University

Employability Status	Percentage
Employed	61%
Unemployed	39%

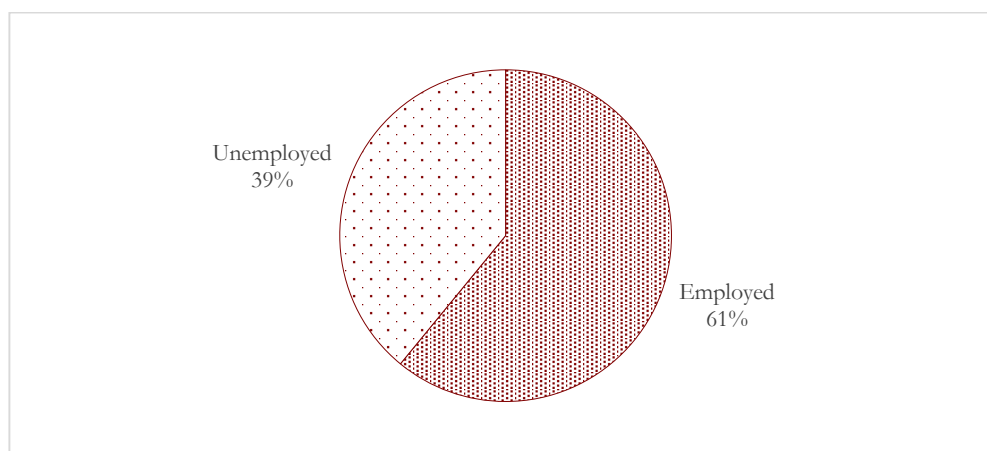


Figure 4-4: Pie Chart of Employability

According to the figure 4, It can be seen that there is a clear difference between the percentages of Employed and Unemployed graduates of the University.

### 4.2.2 Employability by the Faculty

For a wider knowledge, Faculty wise distribution of employability was analyzed and it revealed that the highest employability (81%) has been reported from the Faculty of Commerce and Management. The Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Humanities record as second and third

employability rates respectively. The lowest employability rate (34%) is reported from the Faculty of Social Sciences. The corresponding statistics are shown in the table 4-2. The employment rate of the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies and the Faculty of Science differs from 1% where the Faculty of Humanities is 31% lower than that of the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies and also, the employment rate of the Faculty of Social Sciences is 47% lower than the highest percentage. Comparatively, Faculty of Social Sciences employment rate has been deviated nearly 50% from the highest percentage value. Furthermore, the lowest employment rate is recorded from the Faculty of Medicine<sup>3</sup>, where the difference between the highest and the lowest rates exceeds 50%.

Table 4-2: Employability by the Faculty

Employability Status	Faculty				
	FCMS	FHU	FMED	FSC	FSOSC
Employed	81%	50%	24%	80%	34%
Unemployed	19%	50%	76%	20%	66%

The comparison of the employment rates between the Faculties reveals that, the graduates of the Faculties which have more job oriented and technical degree programmes have acquired a higher employment rate compared to other Faculties.

### 4.2.3 Employability by Gender

Gender equity and equality is one of the priorities of the world nowadays and hence, the overall employability as well as the Faculty employability rate was analyzed in terms of gender. In 2018, total of 2027 (Two thousand and twenty-seven) passed out from the main stream and repeat stream. Out of 2027 graduates 1442 students were female while the remaining 582 students were male. The following figure 4-5 illustrates that nearly three fourth of graduates were female.

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<sup>3</sup> For the calculation only the Bachelor of Speech and Hearing Sciences Program was considered and is mentioned in section 3.2



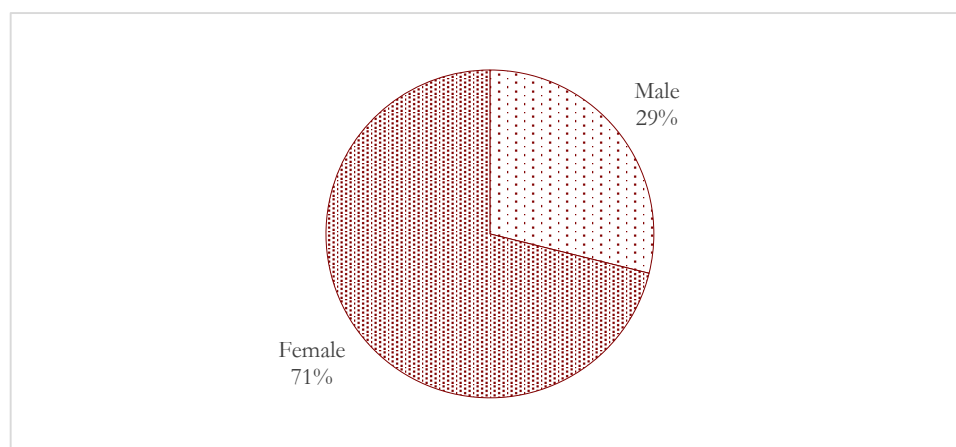


Figure 4-5: Examination output by Gender

Section 4.1.3 also indicated that the sample of respondents of the survey also has a similar distribution in which female respondents are nearly three fourth of the total sample. However, the analysis revealed that out of the female graduate approximately 55% are employed and of the male graduates, nearly 80% are employed. Hence, comparatively, according to the statistics, male graduates has secured employment opportunity than that of female graduates. Moreover, the disparity of the employability rate between the two genders is 25%, which is slightly higher (Table 4-3).

Table 4-3: Employability by gender

Employment Status	Female	Male	Overall
Employed	55%	80%	61%
Unemployed	45%	20%	39%

Since, it was found out in the previous section that the employability rate between each Faculty differs, it is more useful to analyze the employability rate of graduates by gender of each Faculty. The table 4-4 reveals that, in all Faculties male graduates report higher employability rate than the female graduates. Also, most of the female graduates of the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Social Sciences are unemployed than that of the other Faculties. However, the highest female employability rate is also recorded from the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies and the lowest is recoded from the Faculty of Medicine.

Table 4-4: Employability by Faculty and by gender

Employability Status	FCMS		FHU		FMED		FSC		FSOSC	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Employed	78%	86%	48%	62%	24%	0%	77%	85%	32%	57%
Unemployed	22%	14%	52%	38%	76%	0%	23%	15%	68%	43%

## 4.3 Characteristics of the Employed Graduates

Analyzing the characteristics of the graduates who were employed when the survey was carried out, discloses important aspects about their employment. These characteristics involve, time to find the job, status of the employment, type of employment, economic sector of the employment and average monthly salary.

### 4.3.1 Average time to find the employment

The analysis revealed that, most of the graduates have found employments after they complete the degree programmes while very few graduates have been engaged in employment after advanced level examination. As shown in figure 4-6, most of the graduates, 64%, have found a job after completing the degree and 1% of the respondents have found jobs before the University.

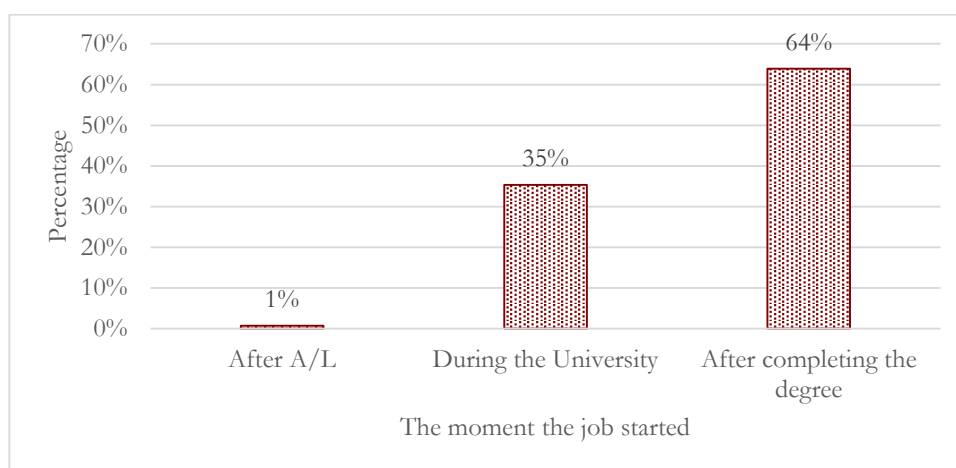


Figure 4-6: The moment the job started

Further analysis of the time to find the job revealed that, most of students who have found a job during the academic period have started the jobs nearing graduation. Moreover, the statistics revealed that the average time to find a job after completing the degree is nearly 3 months. Below table 4-5 depicts the time to find a job after completing the degree descriptively.

Table 4-5: Time to find a job after completing the degree

Number of months from the graduation	Percentage
0 (Just after finishing the degree)	10%
1	20%
2	14%
3	15%
4	11%
5	10%
6	12%
7	7%
8	2%

### 4.3.2 Status of the Employment

Previous studies on the graduate employability of the University of Kelaniya revealed that, the graduates sometimes engage not only in permanent employment, but in temporary employment or voluntary service and start their own employment as entrepreneurs. In 2019, the survey pointed out that, after six months of the graduation, most of the graduates, work in temporary employment than in permanent employment. Furthermore, the statistics reveal that, out of graduates who have temporary employments, work in the private sector. Figure 4-7 and 4-8 depicts the type of employment and the employment sector of temporary employments.

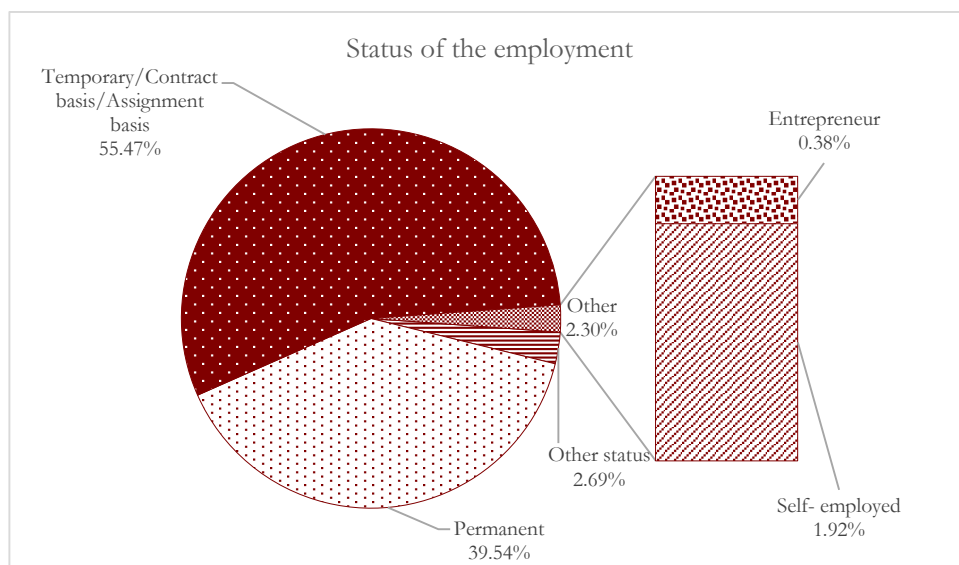


Figure 4-7: Status of the employment

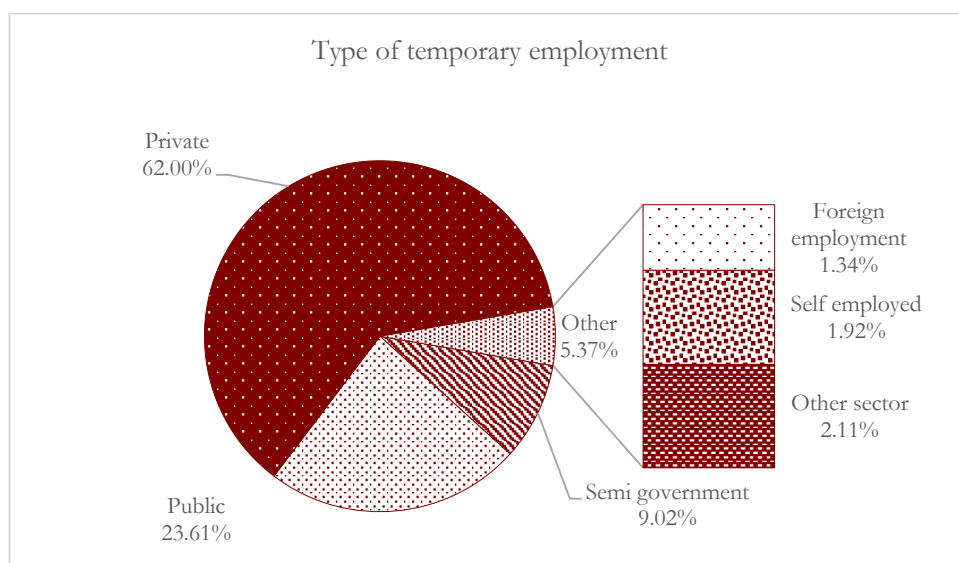


Figure 4-8: Type of temporary employment

### 4.3.3 Type of Employment

Graduate employment was categorized according to the employment sector, which indicates where the most graduate employees are working. The statistics generated through the survey indicates that the private sector employment rate is higher than that of the public employment. Moreover, it indicates that the self- employments/ entrepreneurs are very low compared to the other sectors. However, when considered about the foreign employment of the graduates, the figure obtained from the survey might not represent true value since the survey was mainly designed to approach the local residents.

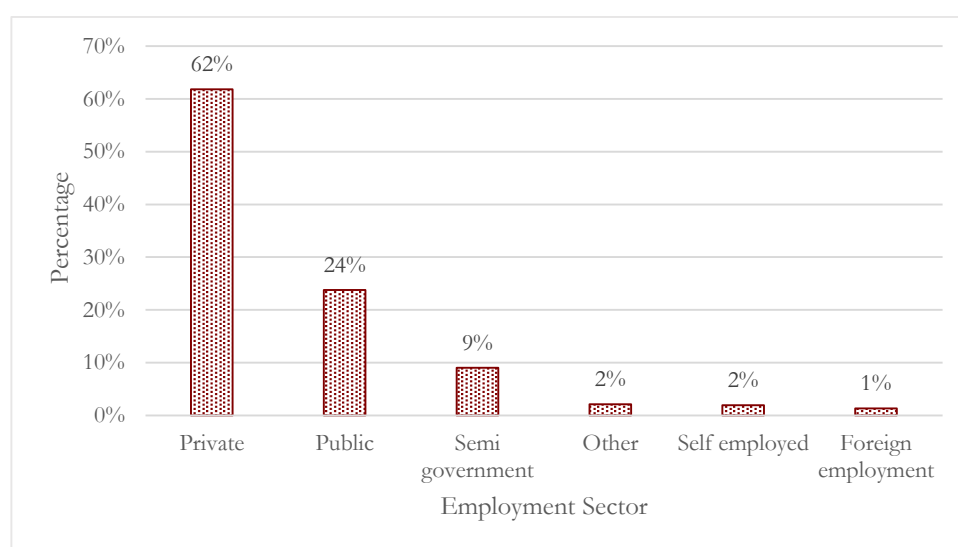


Figure 4-9: Percentage job enrolment of Graduates in Sectors

Figure 4-9 depicts that, a majority of 62% graduates were employed by the private sector, while the public sector job enrollment is reported as 24%. Job enrollment in semi government institutions, self-employed, foreign employment and others are reported as 9%, 2%, 1% and 2% respectively.

When compared to the employment sector of each Faculty, it was found that the highest percentage of graduates who work in the private sector are from the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies (84%). Further, the least were recorded from the Faculty of Social Sciences. (Table 4-6)

Table 4-6: Type of employment by Faculty

Employment Type	FCMS	FHU	FMED	FSC	FSOSC	Overall
Private	84%	48%	50%	54%	38%	62%
Public	8%	23%	25%	38%	32%	24%
Semi government	4%	14%	0%	6%	22%	9%
Self employed	3%	5%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Foreign employment	1%	5%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Other	1%	4%	25%	2%	4%	2%

Comparison within each Faculty points out that, the gap between private employment and the public sector employment, including semi- government sector is high in the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies and the Faculty of Science. But, the employment sector gap of the Faculty of Commerce and Management is comparatively very high.

Analysis reveals that, 73% of male respondents work in the private sector, while 57% of female graduates contribute in the private sector. Also, it can be highlighted that, there are more male graduates engaging as entrepreneurs than female graduates. (Table 4-7)

Table 4-7: Type of Employment by gender

<b>Employment Type</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Private	57%	73%
Public	26%	19%
Semi government	11%	4%
Self-employed(Entrepreneurship)	1%	3%
Foreign employment	2%	1%
Other	3%	1%

#### 4.3.4 Employability by the Economic Sector

Most of the graduate respondents are working in the education sector while least are working in defense and plantation sectors. According to the statistics shown in the table 4-8, 25.9% of the graduate employees are working in the field related to education and 17.9% and 12.3% are working in the fields of manufacturing and bank/finance respectively. Furthermore, a considerable percentage of respondents are also working in trade and IT related fields and the remaining economic sectors have somewhat equal distribution of graduate employees.

Table 4-8: Employability by the economic sector

<b>Economic Sector</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Economic Sector</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Defense	0.2%	Construction/ Engineering	4.4%
Plantation	0.2%	Professional, Scientific & Technical	4.6%
Power and energy	0.6%	Trade	5.4%
Telecommunication	1.3%	IT	7.5%
Health care	2.1%	Bank finance/ Insurance	8.6%
Agriculture/ Dairy	2.3%	Manufacturing	12.3%
Public Administration	2.9%	Other	17.9%
Hotel/ Travels/ Tourism	3.8%	Education	25.9%

### 4.3.5 Gross Monthly Salary

In general, most of the employed graduates of the University of Kelaniya are salaried between Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 39,999. And there are approximately 5% of graduates who earn over Rs. 75,000. (Table 4-9)

Table 4-9: Gross Monthly Salary

Employment Type	Percentage
Less than 20,000	17%
20,000 - 29,999	21%
30,000 - 39,999	30%
40,000 - 49,999	17%
50,000 - 59,999	7%
60,000 - 75,000	3%
Over 75,000	5%

According to the Table 4-10, when comparing the statistics between each faculty it is found that, the more percentage of graduates of the Faculty of Medicine earn less than Rs. 20,000 than the graduates of other faculties. Also, the majority of the graduates of the Faculty of Social Sciences earn a salary between Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 39,999. Among the employed graduates of each Faculty who earn a gross salary over Rs. 75,000 the highest percentage are from the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities.

Table 4-10: Gross monthly salary by Faculty

Employment Type	FCMS	FHU	FMED	FSC	FSOSC
Less than 20,000	22%	14%	50%	8%	15%
20,000 - 29,999	20%	27%	0%	14%	25%
30,000 - 39,999	31%	14%	25%	41%	76%
40,000 - 49,999	17%	18%	25%	20%	37%
50,000 - 59,999	6%	9%	0%	8%	15%
60,000 - 75,000	3%	7%	0%	4%	7%
Over 75,000	3%	11%	0%	6%	11%

Table 4-11 illustrates that, most of female and male employees are having salary in between Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 39,999. Thus, it cannot see a vast salary difference between female and male graduates. But, more females earn below Rs. 40,000 than males.

Table 4-11: Gross monthly salary by gender

<b>Employment Type</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Less than 20,000	17%	16%
20,000 - 29,999	23%	17%
30,000 - 39,999	32%	25%
40,000 - 49,999	16%	19%
50,000 - 59,999	5%	12%
60,000 - 75,000	3%	3%
Over 75,000	4%	8%

## 4.4 Attributes Relevant to the Employability

### 4.4.1 Academic Performance and the Employability

Class award or the GPA of an undergraduate is known to be an important indicator of the academic performance of the University, which is also having a significant impact on the employability of the graduates. Martin, Rolf and Annelore point out in their study that the underperformance has a huge impact on the employability. In their study, they have shown that the graduates who belong to the top 25% have more productivity than the bottom 25%. Also, they point out, the chance that a graduate even getting invited to face an interview also depends basically on the grades and it is required to have excellent grades to be employable for the graduates who have no work experience or low work experience. (Martin, Rolf, & Annelore, 2013). Thus, academic performance indicated in the class award is an important factor to study the graduate employability of the University.

As shown in the table 4-12 below, most of the respondents of the survey has obtained second class upper divisions while the least has obtained second class lower divisions. But, as recorded in the University's undergraduate output in 2018, table 4-13, the least number of class award obtained is first class honors. However, the sample of the survey consists of the higher percentage of undergraduates who obtained first class honors than the actual percentage which may have an effect on the overall employability of the University. Furthermore, there are some little deviations from the population figures with the sample figures of the undergraduates' performance.

Table 4-12: Overall academic performance of the respondents of the Faculty

Faculty	First Class	Second Upper	Second Lower	Ordinary Pass	Grand Total
FCMS	14%	45%	19%	23%	248
FHU	28%	63%	2%	7%	113
FMED	6%	12%	0%	82%	17
FSC	16%	42%	22%	20%	212
FSOSC	8%	83%	6%	3%	265
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>855</b>

By examining these figures of performance of the students, it can be found that the highest percentage of first-class honors receivers are from the Faculty of Humanities and the undergraduates from the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Social Sciences has a less percentage of the first class award. Also, except for the Faculty of Medicine, the majority of the undergraduates of the other faculties have obtained second class upper divisions which is also visible in the sample data too.



Table 4-13: Undergraduates overall academic performance by the Faculty in 2018

Faculty	First Class	Second Upper	Second Lower	Ordinary Pass	Total Number Graduated
FCMS	12%	39%	20%	29%	509
FHU	19%	55%	7%	19%	289
FMED	4%	24%	15%	58%	55
FSC	11%	37%	20%	31%	444
FSOSC	4%	80%	6%	9%	738
<b>Overall Performance</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>2035</b>

The following figure 4-3 indicates and differentiates between the class awards within each Faculty.

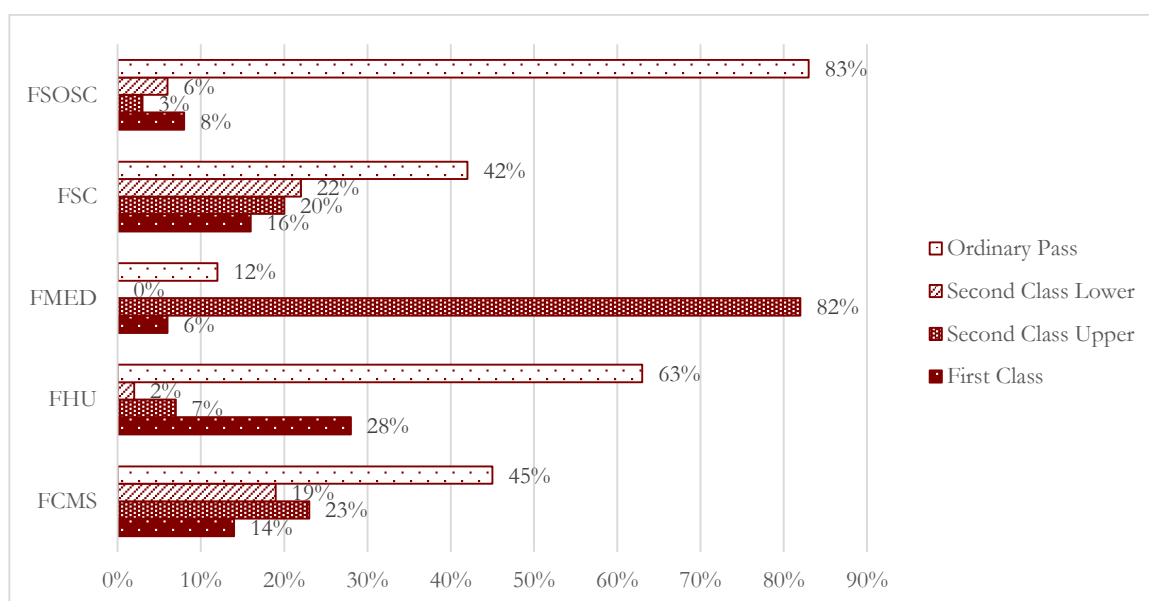


Figure 4-10: Percentage of different grades obtained of the students in Faculties

As revealed from the analysis, students with the first class awards have obtained more job opportunities above all the other grades. But, compared to the remaining grades, students who have obtained second class upper divisions are having lesser employability than other grades. However, these results imply that any student who have got a first class has a higher chance of getting employed. The corresponding statistics related to the employability and the academic performance is shown in the below table 4-14.

Table 4-14: Employability by the class received

Employment Status	First Class	Second Upper	Second Lower	Ordinary Pass
Employed	78%	55%	68%	64%
Unemployed	23%	45%	32%	36%

## 4.4.2 Medium of Instruction and the Employability

In a country like Sri Lanka, where the official language differs from the international language, the medium of instruction of the degree program matters to for the employability. Gunaratne PSM, Asoka and Damayanthi in their research highlights that there is a higher chance of being employed when English being the medium of instruction of the degree program than that of any other language (Gunaratne, Asoka, & Damayanthi, 2018). Therefore, it is evident to find out the employability with respect to the medium of instruction of the degree program.

The medium of the instruction of the degree programmes followed by the respondents is given in table 4-15 which indicates that the majority of the respondents, that is 62%, have followed the degree programmes in English medium. Sinhala and other languages were reported as 26% and 5% respectively. 7% of respondents have followed the degree program in both English medium and Sinhala medium.

Table 4-15: Respondents by the medium of instruction

Medium of Instruction	Percentage
English	62%
Sinhala	26%
other (Chinese, French, German and Japanese)	5%
Sinhala and English	7%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Graduates who have followed the degree program in English medium, have obtained more job opportunities than other medium of instructions. That is, 77% of graduates who have followed the degree program in English medium are employed while the graduates who have followed the degree program only in Sinhala medium and either both in Sinhala and English mediums have only secured job opportunities for 29% and 28% respectively. Moreover, 73% of the students who have followed the degree program in other languages or in a combination of some other languages with Sinhala or English have gained job opportunities compare to the students who followed the degree program either in Sinhala medium or in a combination of Sinhala and English.

Table 4-16: Employability by the medium of instruction

Medium of Instruction	Employed	Unemployed
English	77%	23%
Sinhala	29%	71%
other (Chinese, French, German and Japanese)	73%	27%
Sinhala and English	28%	72%

### 4.4.3 English Language Proficiency and the Graduate Employability

The previous section pointed out that, the graduates who followed the degree programme in English medium have a higher employability rate than that of any other medium of instruction. Therefore, it is evident to find out the employability with respect to the language proficiency before the University.

Accordingly, the table 4-17 indicates that the graduates who have obtained higher grades for English in general certificate of examinations- ordinary level, are more employed than the below grades. That is 47% out of the total respondents have obtained higher grades representing the top 20% and among them 78% are employed while 2% out of the total respondents who represent the lowest 20%, has only 15% employability rate.

Table 4-17: Language proficiency and the employability

Language proficiency for O/L	Respondents	Employed	Unemployed
A	47%	78%	22%
B	15%	60%	40%
C	25%	43%	57%
S	10%	41%	59%
W/F	2%	15%	85%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>39%</b>

Moreover, the further analysis of English Language proficiency and the medium of instruction revealed that, the graduates who had obtained lower grades for English in O/L examination and followed the degree program in English have lower employability rate compared to others and simultaneously, the graduates who obtained lower grades and followed the degree program in Sinhala medium has higher employability rate. Similarly, the graduates who got higher grades for English and also followed the degree programme in English medium have obtained a higher employability rate. The distribution is clearly depicted in the figure 4-11.

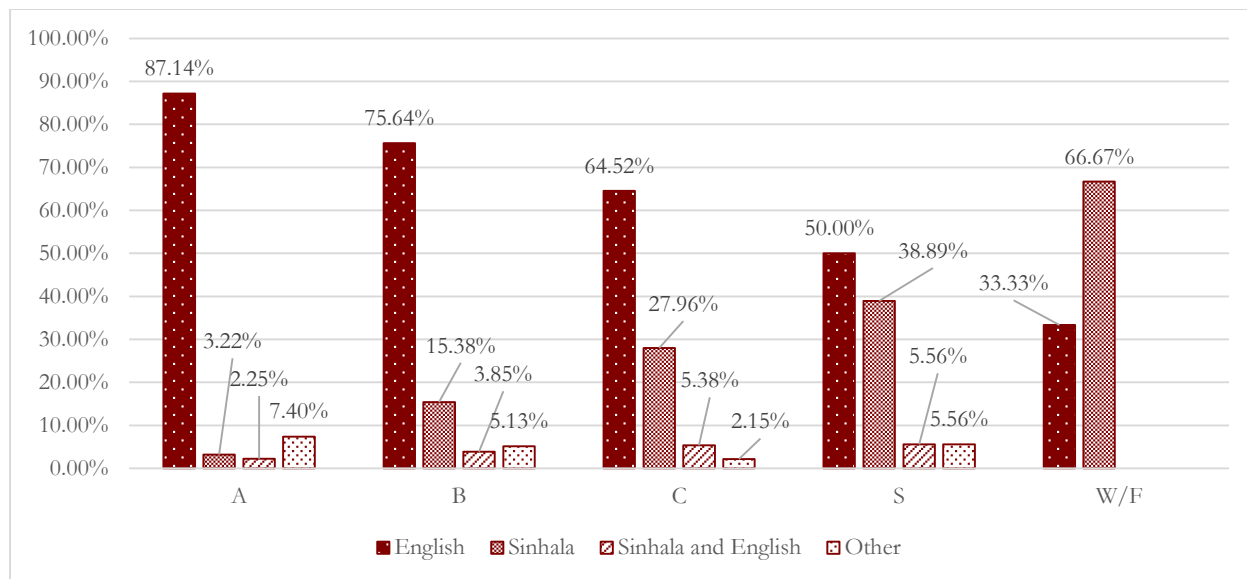


Figure 4-11: Employability by the Medium of instruction vs language proficiency

#### 4.4.4 Internship Training and Employability

In some degree programmes, the undergraduates are required to go through an internship training during the academic period. These internships are subject to following four categories.

- Compulsory with credits: Performance as an intern, counts for the GPA and should follow to obtain the degree
- Compulsory without credits: Performance as an intern, does not count for the GPA, but, should follow to obtain the degree
- Elective with credits: May or may not follow, but if followed, performance as an intern, counts for the GPA
- Elective without credits: May or may not follow and performance as an intern, does not count for the GPA

The analysis revealed that, the percentage of employed graduates who have gone through an internship training is higher than that of who have not gone through. Also, figure 4-12 points out that, the gap between the employed graduates and the unemployed graduates are higher for who have had internship training than that of who have not had.

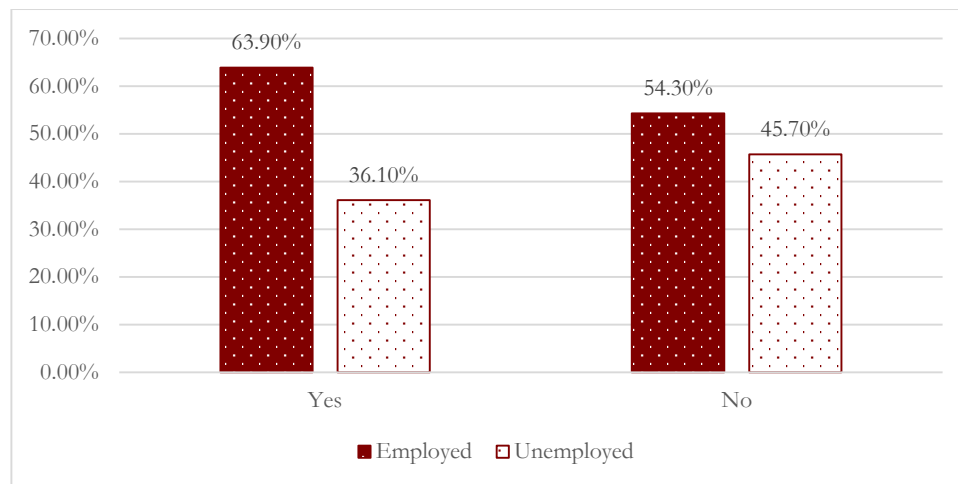


Figure 4-12: Employability with respect to the internship training

#### 4.4.5 Extra- curricular Activities and Employability

Undergraduates of the University of Kelaniya have a large variety of extra-curricular activities such as, sports, aesthetic activities and students' clubs and unions to engage during their academic period. Involvement in extra- curricular activities help to develop the communication skills, teamwork, adaptability to new situations, decision making skills, planning and organizing skills, analytical thinking and problem solving skills. Gunaratne PSM, Asoka and Damayanthi in their research, points out that, employers value communications skills, team work, reading/ writing skills, ability to adapt to new situations, analytical and problem solving skills, effective use of IT, English language proficiency, decision making skills and sector specific skills are some of the most valued skills and competencies by the employers (Gunaratne, Asoka, & Damayanthi, 2018).

The respondent profile indicated that, 65% of them have been involved in extra-curricular activities, while only 35% have not been involved. Also, as depicted in figure 4-13, the employability rate of the graduates who have involved in extra- curricular activities is higher than that of the graduates who have not.

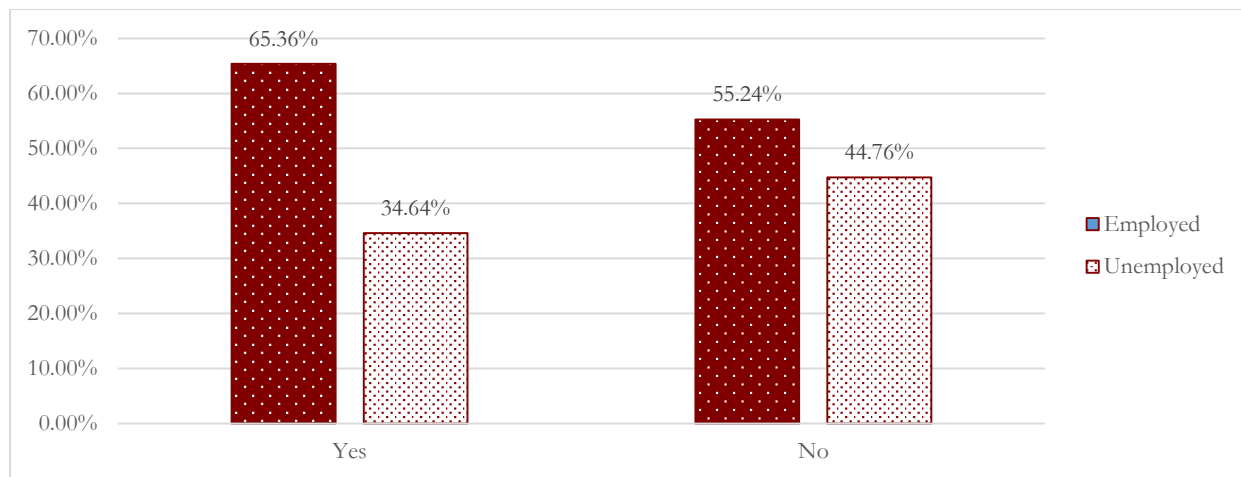


Figure 4-13: Employability by the involvement in extra-curricular activities

#### 4.4.6 Full- time/ Part- time Employment During the Academic Period and Employability

Some of the students of the University engage in full time or part time employment during the University due to many reasons. The analysis revealed that, the employability rate of the graduates who have been doing a full time/ part time employment has a higher employability rate than who have not. (Figure 4-14)

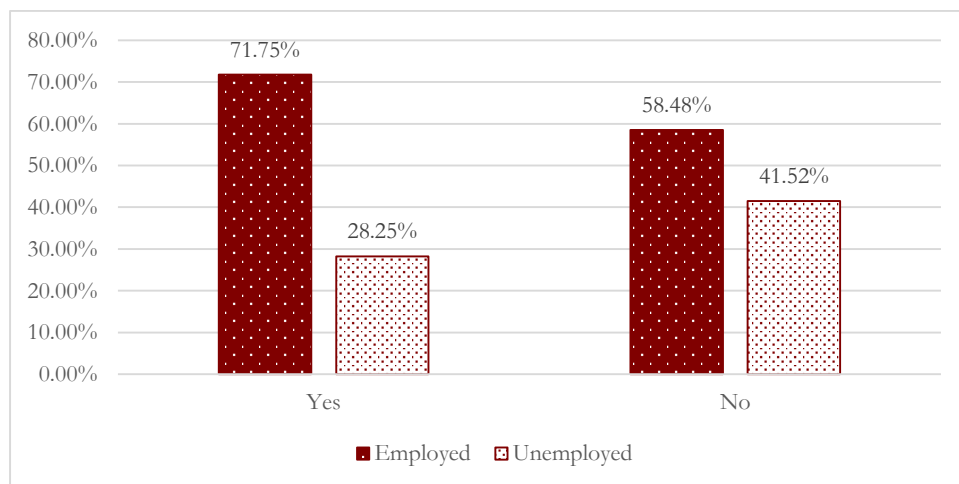


Figure 4-14: Full time/ part time employment and the employability

## 4.5 Insights on Employability: Graduates Point of View

The survey explored about the views and comments about the employability with the aim of having a broader idea about the changes that are needed to adhere in the current career guidance process. The respondents were asked about the way they found the jobs, relevance of the current employment to the degree, satisfaction about the employment, the most influential factor to obtain an employment.

### 4.5.1 Method of Finding the Employment

Most of the graduates, 31.1%, have found their employments through the advertisements on online media and social media networks such as LinkedIn. Comparatively a higher percentage, 27.4%, with respect to the majority, have found their employments through personal contacts, while a higher percentage to some extent, 15.4%, has found the jobs via University, in which 90% have temporary appointments most probably the temporary academic staff. (Figure 4-15)

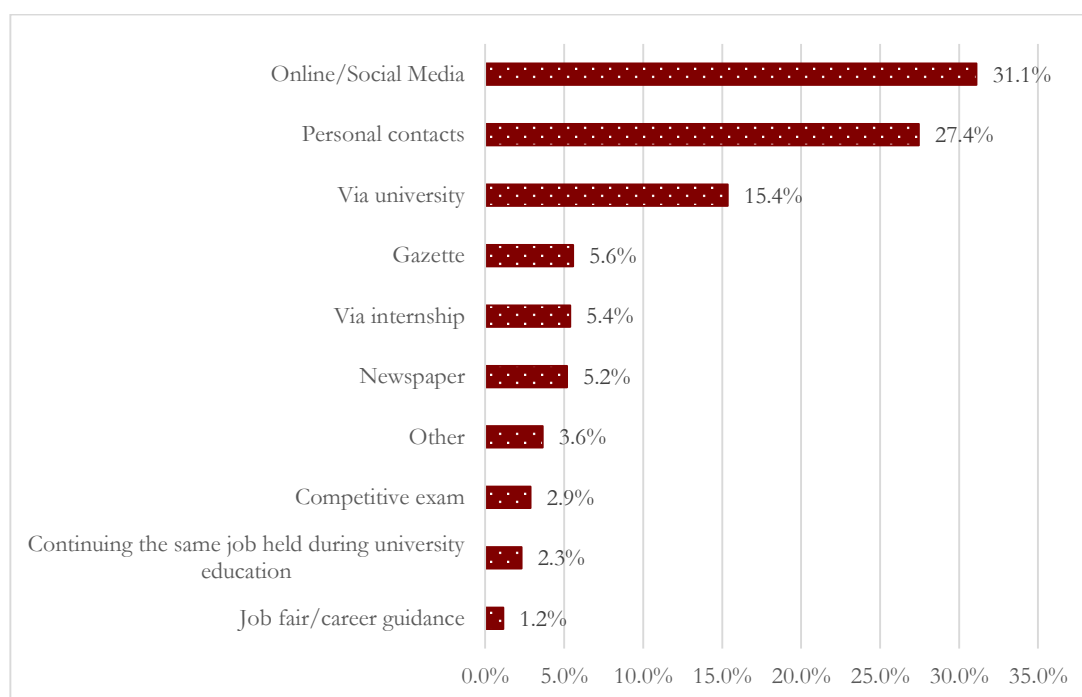


Figure 4-15: Method of finding the employment

The important factors which can be identified through this analysis is that, the graduates have obtained less percentage of employment via job fair/ career guidance of the University, which implies that, the career guidance activities have to be modified to promote job opportunities for the graduates of the University.

### 4.5.2 Relation to the Field of Study and Current Employment

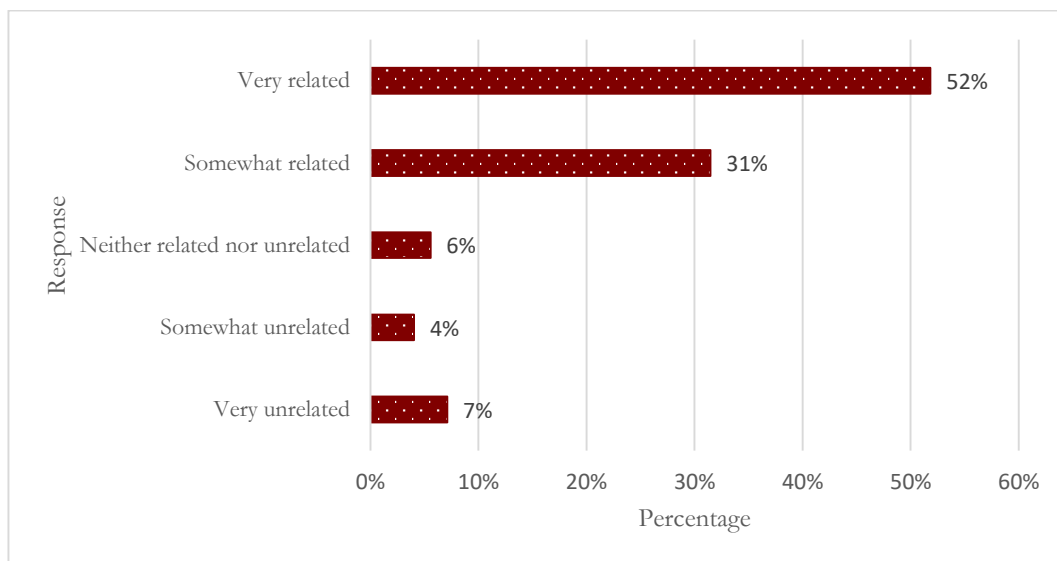


Figure 4-16: Related to degree qualification

As shown in above figure 4-16, most of the respondents stated that their current employment is very related to the degree programme they followed (52%). Only about 11% of respondents have stated that they are involved in a job which are unrelated to their degree qualification.

### 4.5.3 Level of Job Satisfaction

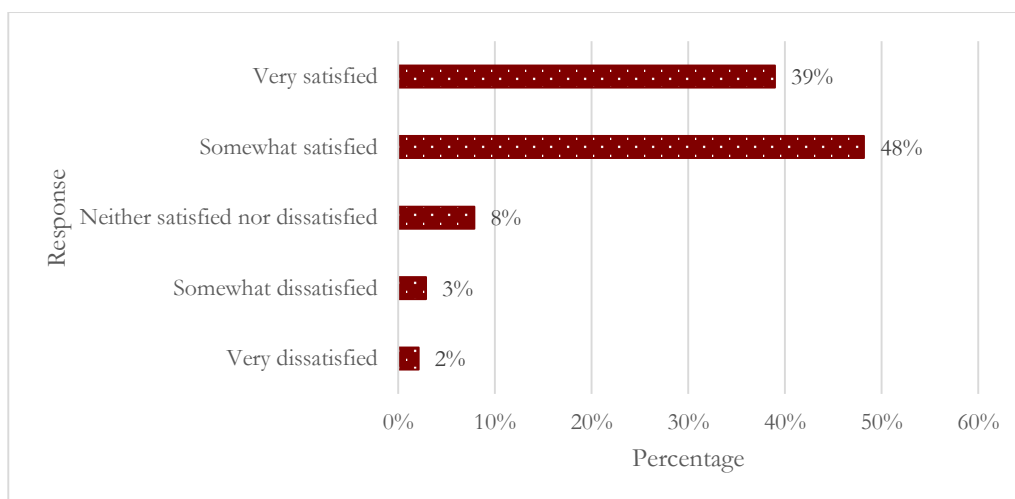


Figure 4-17: Level of satisfaction of the job

Figure 4-17 illustrates that most of the graduates are somewhat satisfied (48%) with their job. Among the graduates 39% graduates are very satisfied with their jobs. Also the percentage of somewhat dissatisfied and very dissatisfied were 3% and 2% respectively.



### 4.5.4 Most Influential Factor to Obtain a Job

Rather than deciding the influencing factors, by the University itself, it is more useful to get the graduate employees point of view of their own experience. Accordingly, 69% of the respondents have mentioned degree has been a key point for them to obtain the job, which is obviously true. Then, 52% of the respondents have mentioned, personality of them has been helpful in obtaining the job while 48% have mentioned English proficiency has been important. Wherefore, the five most influential factors which effects to obtain an employment are, degree, personality, English proficiency, field of study and computer literacy. According to the figure 4-18, the last, but also most influential factor they have mentioned is the reputation of the University.

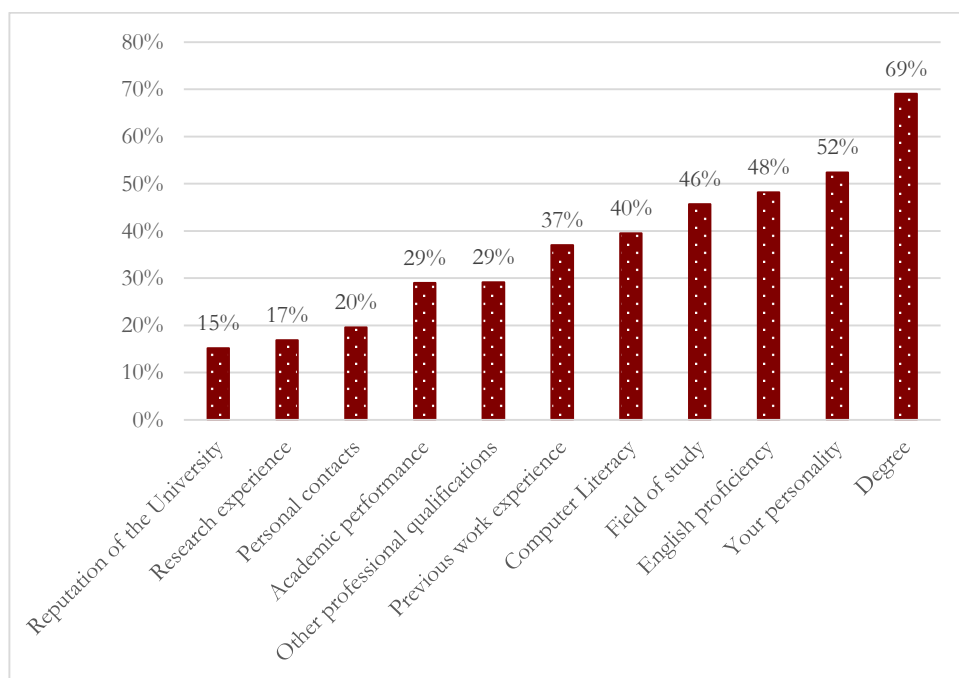


Figure 4-18: Most influential factor to obtain a job

## 4.6 Unemployability

Employment as well as unemployment should be analyzed very carefully since the perspectives of unemployability reveal hidden aspects that need to be considered for immediate actions. Accordingly, this section explores the reasons why the graduates are unemployed and what were their obstacles in getting a proper job.

Thence, the most of the unemployed graduates, 80.84%, have mentioned that they were trying to find a proper employment at the moment while, 7.49% were not looking for employments. Few of the unemployed graduates were continuing higher studies and thus indicated unemployed while several have rejected the job opportunities they have received due to less salary, irrelevant works and duties, for the qualifications, no career development paths and less professional backgrounds. Figure 4-19 depicts the distribution of reasons why the graduates are unemployed.

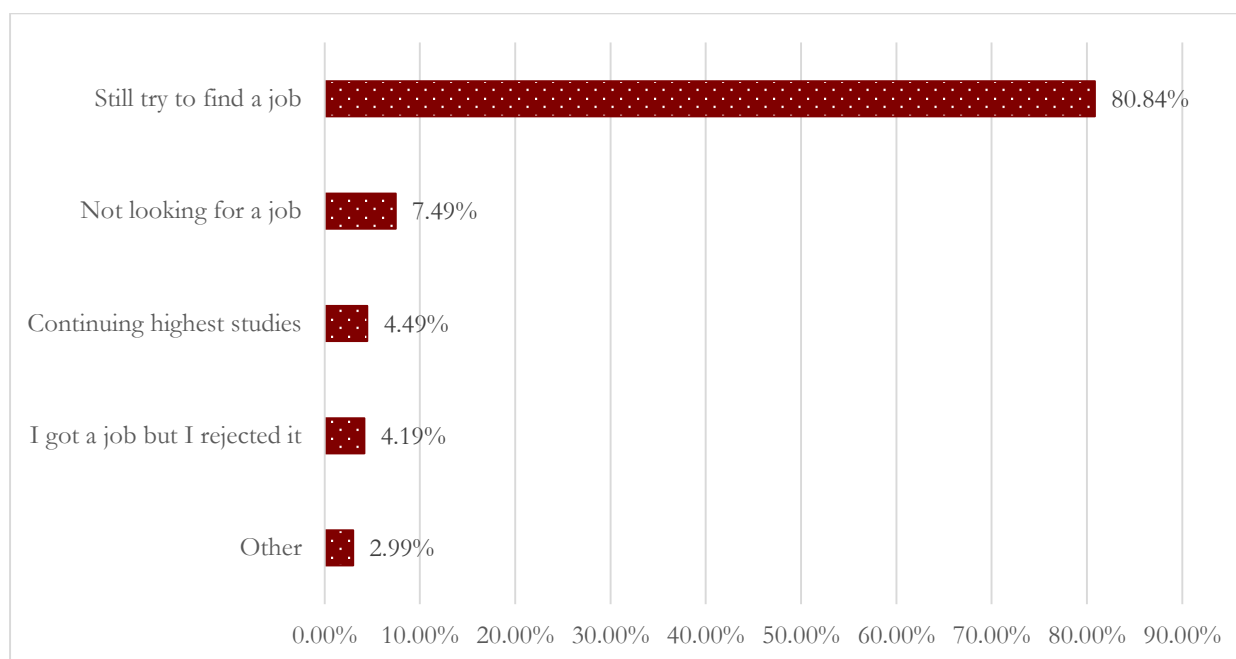


Figure 4-19: Reasons for unemployment

According to the unemployed graduates' point of view, the obstacles they were facing to obtain an employment are mainly the experience, the gap between the degree and the job market (Less job oriented programmes, less job vacancies, less jobs for relevant fields in Sri Lanka), language proficiency, political and politicians' influences.

## 5 Discussion and Conclusion

The ultimate goal of a higher education institute is to produce graduates fully equipped to achieve personal and professional standards. Employability is one of the most important indicators of a University to measure to which extent its expectations are met regarding the graduate employability. Therefore, the University of Kelaniya conducted this graduate employability survey to measure how employable its graduates are.

Per the limitations and issues found out in the previous graduate employability surveys in 2016 and 2017, the survey was redesigned with a few modifications in the data collection methodology, in the questionnaire and in the data collection period. Accordingly, the issue of less response rate was resolved by using two approaches which involved online questionnaire and paper-based questionnaire. When determining between these two approaches for whom to deliver the online questionnaire for whom to deliver the paper-based questionnaire, employability rates by the Faculties were considered assuming that the online questionnaire is most suitable for the employed graduates. Therefore, the online questionnaire approached for the Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies and Faculty of Science while the paper-based questionnaire approached for the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences. Moreover, considering the number of graduates, a paper-based questionnaire was also used for the graduates of the Faculty of Medicine. The questions of the questionnaire were updated to have a broader idea about the employability and unemployability aspects and the employability status was categorized as permanent employment, temporary/contract basis- assignment basis employment, self-employment and entrepreneurships. Furthermore, the unemployability status was also updated as, not looking for an employment, continuing higher studies, trying to find employment and rejection of employments. The purpose of using these categories is to seek, at which point exactly the graduates of the University are after graduation. The issue of comparing inter Faculty employability rates was resolved by conducting the survey across the University within six months to ten months of the graduation.

In addition, when deciding the target population, the graduates from the MBBS programme of the Faculty of Medicine was excluded since the MBBS graduates are granted government job opportunities after their graduation. And therefore, the graduates who followed the Bachelor of Speech and Hearing Sciences programme was only considered from the Faculty of Medicine. However, the data validation process removed a set of responses due to incomplete responses where the respondents have provided less information regarding their employability status.

Moreover, several of them have mentioned contradicted responses where it was unable to decide whether they are truly employed or unemployed.

The survey analysis revealed that, in 2018, 61% of the graduates are employed and on average they have found the employments after three months of the graduation and are having a temporary/contract basis/assignment basis employment mostly in the private sector related to education and are earning between Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 39,999. Further, the findings pointed out that, male graduates have higher employability rate and also earns above Rs. 40,000 than female graduates.

The highest employability rate was recorded from the graduates of the Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies and the lowest employability rate was recorded from the Faculty of Social Sciences. Comparatively, the employability rate of the Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies and the Faculty of Science have higher employability rates than the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The reason behind these differences between the employability rates of the Faculties was found out from the graduates' feedback about the most influential factor for obtaining an employment which is indicated as degree. That is, the more the degree programmes are job oriented and compatible with the job market, the more the jobs are open, and the chances of getting selected for jobs are high. The Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies offer degree programmes which are more job oriented than that of other Faculties. Similarly, the Faculty of Science offers a variety of technological and job oriented programmes than that of the other two Faculties, the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences.

To overcome the problems associated with not having proper employment, students have suggested and commented about the experiences they had during their study period. Most of the respondents had pointed out the importance of having internship training during the academic period, which was also confirmed by the findings that indicated the employability rate of the graduates who had an internship training is higher than that of who have not had an internship training. The graduates who had gone through an internship training have also mentioned that the duration of the training should be increased and some of them have requested the internship programmes to be conducted in the final year of the studies since most of the employers are likely to retain the interns as permanent members, but since the students need to complete the degree they reject the offer. Furthermore, the respondents have requested to increase opportunities for professional; exposure and have asked to develop a mechanism to obtain professional qualifications from the University parallel to the degree qualifications. Moreover, according to the graduates' point of view, the career guidance cell should focus on more productive career development criterion and needs to improve partnerships with cooperating bodies. Some of the respondents have also mentioned that, by

introducing career paths with respect to the degree programmes and subjects would increase the employability of the graduates of the University of Kelaniya.

In addition, the graduates have described few aspects according to their experiences to increase the employability such as personality and have asked to provide opportunities to develop interpersonal skills parallel to the academic activities. Moreover, except for the degree program and the personality of the candidates, the respondents have mentioned that proficiency in, the international language, English, and IT literacy has a considerable impact on the employability of the graduates. Therefore, increasing the language learning opportunities as well as the subjects relevant to IT would eventually increase the employability rates. However, the students' suggestions on increasing employability needs high attention should be followed up with a set of long term and short term solutions.

In addition to the employability, the USDMU inquired about the overall feedback about the University of Kelaniya and 93% of the respondents has recommended the University as a very good place study while a few of the respondents have stressed out the importance of updating the degree programmes to be more job oriented and to move with the current global and local economic system.

This report's statistics, which is a useful check on the employability of University of Kelaniya, can be used to find and analyze the determinants which causes to increase the employability rate of University of Kelaniya. This report gives a reliable and straightforward estimate of employability rate. The employability rate as reported in this study illustrates that more than 60% students had employed after completing their degree. Accordingly, University of Kelaniya maintained well satisfied employability rate for some years. Several problems which defers to increase employability can be identified using this report and therefore, it supports to revitalize the University of Kelaniya and improve the employability rate.

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# Questionnaire

Form 01

## Employability Study of Graduates 2018

This is the official census form on employability for all graduates this year.

Please complete the survey and help to improve and reform the quality of higher education in Sri Lanka. The estimated time to complete this survey is less than 10 minutes. Note that your answers are anonymous and that they will be protected by law.

### PART A - GENERAL INFORMATION

1) Gender:  Male  Female

2) GCE (A/L) Examination:

District	Z-Score	Year

3) A/L Examination results

Subjects	Results

4) Contact Details: email: ..... Telephone: .....

5) Faculty/ Institution: .....

6) Degree type:

General (3 years)  Special (4 years)  Medical (5 years)

6.1 If "General" please specify the degree program.....

6.2 If "Special" please specify area of specialization: .....

6.3 If "Special" please specify the academic department.....

7) Medium of Instruction (Mark with a "√" to all that applies)

English  Sinhala  Tamil  Other If other, please specify .....

8) Class received:

First Class  Second Upper  Second Lower  Ordinary Pass

9) English Language Proficiency

Examination	Grade Received				
GCE(O/L) English Language	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> S	<input type="checkbox"/> F / W
GCE(A/L) General English	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> S	<input type="checkbox"/> F / W

10) What are your career goals for the next two years? (Mark with a “√” to all that applies)

- Find a better job
- Migration
- Further studies
- Be an entrepreneur
- Other If other, please specify .....
- Upgrading the current position

11) Do you like to recommend your degree program to others?

- Yes
- No

If it is “No”. Please specify the reasons.

12) Was there an Internship Training component in your degree programme?

- Yes
- No
- Not relevant

If yes answer Questions 12.1 & 12.2

12.1 Was **Internship Training**

- Compulsory with Credits
- Compulsory without Credits
- Elective with Credits
- Elective without Credits
- Other please Specify .....

12.2 Did you get the support from the university to find an **Internship Training**?

- Yes
- No

13) Were you involved in any of the following during your university years?

Category	Yes	No	If yes, please specify
Extra-curricular activities			
Vocational training			
Other educational/professional qualifications			
Full/part-time employment			

14) What do you think could be done to facilitate the first employment after graduation? Please give suggestions



**PART B – IF YOU ARE UNEMPLOYED....**

15) Reasons for Unemployment

- Not looking for a job
- Continuing highest studies
- Still try to find a job
- I got a Job but I reject it
- Other If other, please specify .....

If you reject a job, please specify the reason

16) What kind of a job in which area are you looking at.

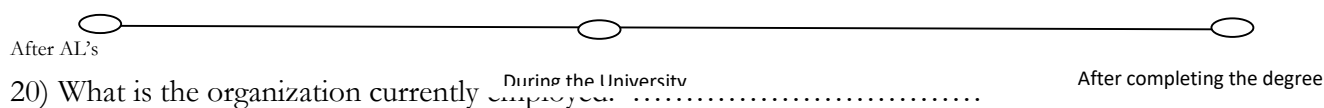
17) What do you think are the main obstacles for you to get a job? Please give details

**PART C – EMPLOYMENT DETAILS**

18) Current status of the employment

- Permanent                       Temporary/Contract Basis /Assignment Basis
- Self Employed                  Entrepreneur                       Other                      please                      specify  
.....

19) When did you find your **current job**?



20) What is the organization currently employed at .....

21) Date of the current employment as you remember MM/YYYY .....

22) Details of immediate supervisor: Name.....Contact Details:

.....

23) Which sector are you employed in?

- Public                       Private                       Semi Government                       Self Employed
- Foreign Employment                       Other please specify .....

24) The position you hold currently?

- Senior Management                       Middle Management                       Junior Management
- Management Trainee                       Support Staff (Clerical/Secretarial)                       Teacher
- Lecturer                       Doctor                       Entrepreneur
- Other please specify .....

25) -To which economic sector does your current job belong to

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture /Dairy              | <input type="checkbox"/> Bank Finance/ Insurance              | <input type="checkbox"/> Construction / Engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Power and Energy           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hotels/ Travels/Tourism         | <input type="checkbox"/> Health care                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IT                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Plantation                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunication          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Administration & Defense | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional, Scientific & technical | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                      |
- If other, please specify.....

26) What is your current gross monthly salary (In Rupees)?

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20,000 - 29,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30,000 - 39,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 40,000 - 49,999  | <input type="checkbox"/> 50,000 - 59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 60,000 - 75,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Over 75,000      |  |  |

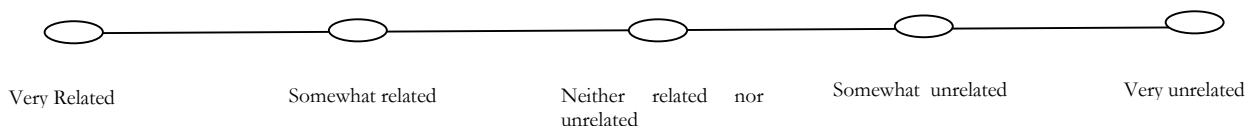
27) How did you find this job?

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper   | <input type="checkbox"/> Gazette                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Online         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal contacts   | <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Exam          | <input type="checkbox"/> Via Internship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Via University  | <input type="checkbox"/> Job fair/ career guidance |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing with the same job held during university education |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other If other, please specify .....                          |  |   |

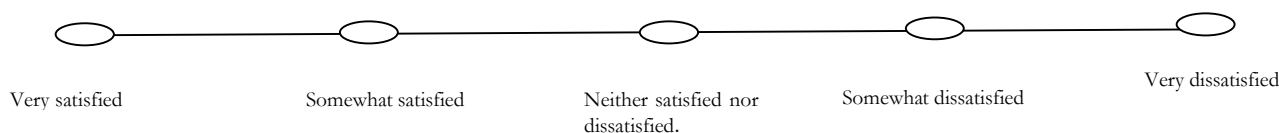
28) What do you think were the most important aspects in getting this job? (Check all that applies)

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Degree                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Class of degree                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Reputation of university |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field of study                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Research experience               | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal contacts        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Previous work experience             | <input type="checkbox"/> English proficiency               | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Personality         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer literacy                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other professional qualifications |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other If other, please specify ..... |  |   |

29) Is this job related to the field you studied for your degree?



30) How satisfied are you with this job?



Thank you for completing this census. We appreciate the time you have spent in providing us with feedback that will help reform.

# EMPLOYABILITY 2018

## A STUDY ON THE GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA

University Statistics & Data Monitoring Unit

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