

# Parental Involvement, Demographic Factors, and its Effects on the Academic Success of Undergraduates in Sri Lanka

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**Abstract** - Parental involvement plays a pivotal role in the lives of their offspring. Education is a highly regarded aspect at present. Parents are concerned about their children and their education. In Sri Lanka, parents are involved in their children's academic lives. Therefore, common knowledge is that parental involvement impacts the academic performance of undergraduates, this phenomenon has not yet been conducted in the Sri Lanka context. Hence, to fill this empirical gap, this study aims to understand whether there is an impact of parental involvement and demographic factors on the academic success of undergraduates. Data were collected from state and private university undergraduates in the Western Province through a simple random sampling technique. The questionnaire was developed through a thorough analysis of the past literature available in the related field. Data were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Through analysis, it was found that there is insufficient evidence to prove that there is a significant impact of parental involvement on undergraduates. While the result deviates from common expectations, distanced parent-child relationships in the modern era may have caused this result. In addition to the contribution to the body of knowledge, this study assists educational institutions in policy implementation and parents and teachers in parenting and teaching respectively. Further, this study can be further extended with comprehensive coverage of undergraduates and getting the opinions from parents' side as well.

**Keywords:** Academic Success, Parental Involvement and Undergraduates Education.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Parents are one of the most important factors in a child's development. Through their direct participation in educational activities, through their direct participation in educational activities, this is because they get the power and ability to make their children into self-motivated tolerant adults (Naite, 2021). Conversely, parental education and socio-economic factors are crucial for undergraduates' academic success. They serve as students' pillars of financial and psychological confidence. Explicit differences can be observed between those students who belong to diverse socio-economic backgrounds and different parental educational levels (Azhar et al., 2014).

Academically successful parents constantly strive to raise their children to be more educated than they are. To make their children more educated, they provide the necessary learning environment at home. The utilities and surroundings at home allow children to meet the coming problems of the next social, political, spiritual, and educational spheres of life. The common consensus of the research community is that parental involvement positively impacts students' educational levels (Idris et al., 2020). According to Foster & Loven (1992), undergraduates need interaction with their parents

and the involvement of their parents, but they also need to allow their personal opinions and values.

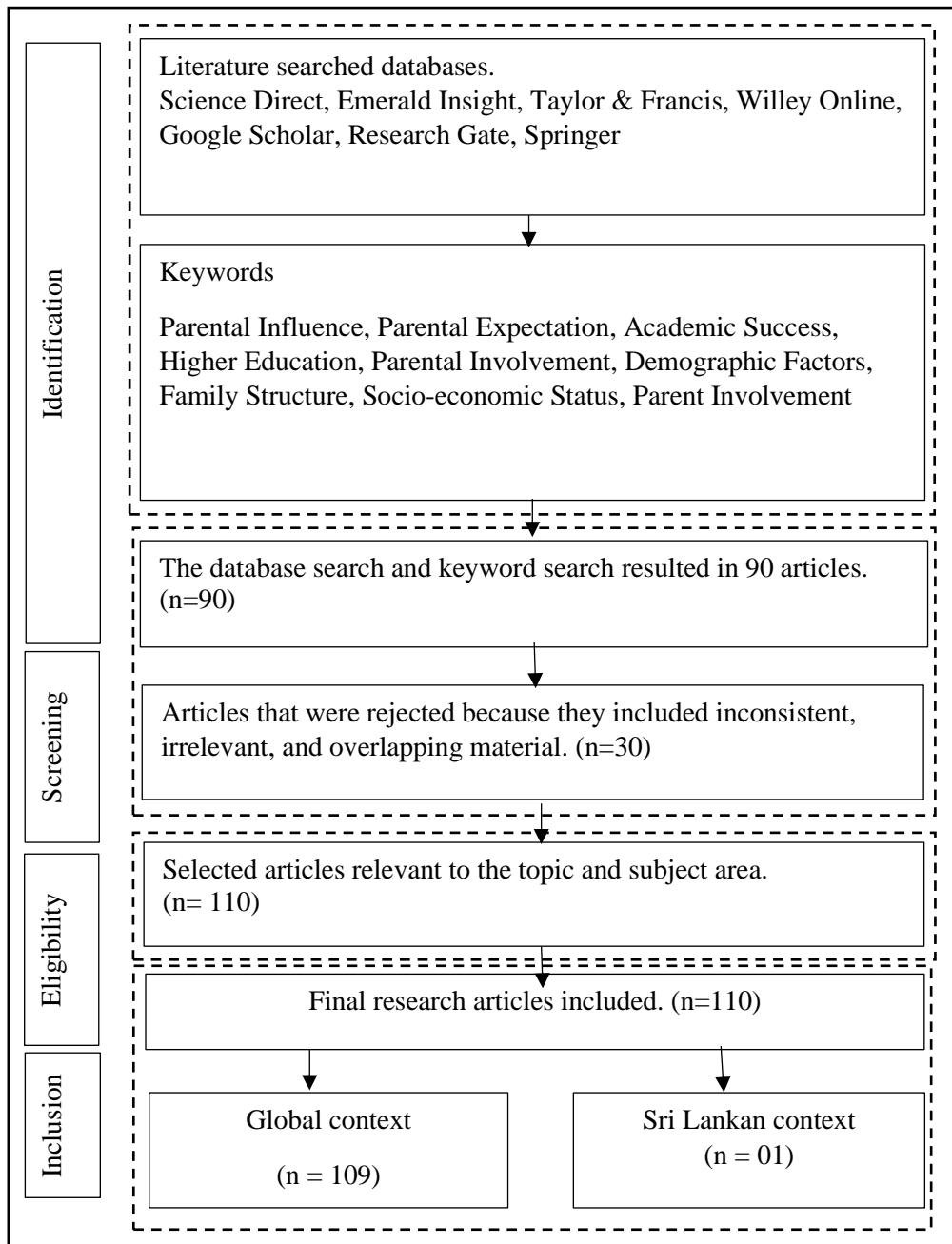
As a developing nation, Sri Lanka has a widespread perception that obtaining an education will lead to affluence. Therefore, despite any challenges, society is more in pursuit of encouraging their children to learn to the best. However, this phenomenon has not yet been conducted in the Sri Lankan context according to available information. The gap in the literature addressed by this study is that there is a dearth of research into conceptions impact of parental involvement and demographic factors on undergraduates' academic success. There is, then, ample justification for a carefully conducted study to extend the understanding of these conceptions. Hence this study was conducted in Sri Lanka with special reference to the top 10 Western province Universities, it will determine the significance and the impact of parental involvement and demographic factors which are, parents' education level, economic status, and family structure towards the academic success of university undergraduates. The objective of the present study is to fill the gap, in doing so, the study can be considered extensive, as it investigates the impact of parental involvement and demographic factors on the academic success of undergraduates.

The significance of this study comes in many folds, firstly, parents will understand the extent to which the parent-child relationship is vital to children's academic success. It will enable parents to maintain proper relationships with their children to boost their academic success and clarify the importance of parents' education effects on the education of their children. Secondly, teachers can conduct their academic work effectively, whilst encouraging the appropriate relationship between the students and their parents to make a positive impact on their academic success. Thirdly, educational policymakers and public institutions may find this study useful in developing programs to enhance their abilities, knowledge, and attitudes when working with children. Moreover, the study will be useful for social scientists who are examining how education is changing and how other factors of parents' lives relate to their undergraduate academic success. Furthermore, the findings of the research will be significant to the policy-making institutions to implement appropriate educational policies considering the parental influences on children. Additionally, educational institutions could use the result of this study to determine the ideal approach for each student that would enable them to have a better-quality learning experience.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This research focuses on the impact of parental involvement and demographic factors on undergraduates' academic success. This study provides a comprehensive literature investigate with highlighting the investigate, with highlighting the influencing of earlier and recent studies on the methodology and identifying the knowledge gaps. The literature review identifies and analyses aspects from studies on the impact of parental involvement, parents' education level, Economic Status, Family structure, and Academic success. Figure 1 presents a systematic method of determining a research article for a literature review. Using keywords and database searches, 90 papers were identified, and 30 publications were eliminated. The 110 papers that remained were divided into two groups: the global context and Sri Lanka context. These 110 publications were chosen because of their relevance to the study's keywords and context.

**Figure 1. Literature Search Strategy**



Source: Authors' compilation.

**1) Parental Involvement:** Family influences have a significant role in a child's or student's success, regardless of their difficulties. The parental involvement level is crucial to a child's academic achievement (Duan et al., 2018). According to the findings, levels of involvement and participation vary widely according to parents' social and financial capabilities. In many instances, parental involvement also has an impact on the parents'

educational level. Parents' level of education may not always have an impact on how involved they are in guiding and assisting their kids. Even if they have an academic background, those parents are dedicated to being involved in their children's education. Children of authoritative parents tend to have traits like a higher level of maturity, independence, and more impressive achievements. Gwen (2017) demonstrates how an authoritarian parenting style helps undergraduates succeed academically by helping them see the importance of it.

Finally, considering the primary forms of parental involvement defined in previous studies, this study explores which parental participation can influence children's academic success. The current study uses the previously mentioned literature to determine parental participation's influence on students' academic achievement in Sri Lanka, and derived the following hypothesis.

*H1: There is an impact of parental involvement on the academic success of undergraduates.*

**2) Parents' Education Level:** According to Ndimuh & Ngeh (2022), Parental education is directly associated with parenting behaviors but not with children's academic achievement. Tsela et al.'s (2022) investigations for this study also revealed differences between the mothers' and fathers' educational backgrounds in terms of how schooling affects children's academic success. The degree of education of a child's parents was predicted to be the single most crucial factor in determining how well they will perform academically. According to Awan & Hassan (2020), women's educational attainment or capacity and their children's aspirations to pursue academic pursuits are strongly correlated, as opposed to fathers' educational attainment.

According to Sherub and Gyeltshen (2022), a student's academic success may be positively impacted by the educational level of his or her parents. Students are most familiar with their parents since they rely on their parents for their early education. Parental educational involvement, which includes things such as communicating to children about school, studying their homework, and participating in extracurricular activities at school, has the potential to improve children's academic performance, as Feraco et al. (2023) have elaborated. To demonstrate the connection between parental support and encouragement and students' involvement in higher education, Heldemerina et al. (2017) study have gone into further detail. Furthermore, Yang & Wang (2022) determined that there is a strong relationship between parental support (Students' personal development, school development, behavioral support, and aid for their studies) and student participation in learning in terms of students' psychological, socio-affective, and behavioral involvement. Additionally, academic research has shown that parental support for learning is stronger when measured in terms of kids' mastery goal orientations than in terms of their performance goal orientations. A student's academic achievement and welfare are directly correlated with parents' educational support for their child's learning, as demonstrated by Rassidy and Ishmael (2018). This is especially true of students' participation in education in terms of their behavior, cognition, and socio-affective well-being. Also, they observed that mothers used to create an environment and academic support that gives attention to their children. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived.

*H2: There is an impact of the education level of parents on the academic success of the undergraduates.*

**3) Parents' Economic Status:** A student who has higher socio-economic status students can more easily access a range of resources to get the information and skills necessary for their field of employment. Evaluating the parental educational level without considering the family's finances is impossible. According to Drajea et al. (2020), it is difficult to distinguish between these variables since they both serve as stand-ins for socio-economic indicators. However, Tsela et al. (2022) research that parents' educational attainment is independent of finances since their degree of education may influence the extent to which they value education and, in turn, whether much their children aspire to pursue higher education. The socio-economic status of a child's family significantly impacts their academic achievement. Each child has unique needs, such as ideal reading conditions, healthy food, safe play environments, books, and affordable enrolment in prestigious institutions. According to research by Deng et al. (2023), parental involvement and support in a child's education are essential for that child to succeed academically.

A child's general development and growth may be significantly influenced by the type of family they are born into. The child's parents' social and financial standing are used to categorize the type of environment the child is reared in. Numerous studies have shown how a person's family history influences the growth of their mental health, physiological, and intellectual talents, in addition to Setiati & Jumadi's (2022) academic success and learning. The impact of economic status on the academic success of undergraduate students in Sri Lanka isn't yet fully understood. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived.

*H3: There is an impact of the economic status of parents on the academic success of undergraduates.*

**4) Family Structure:** A variety of frameworks have been used in research on the relationship between family composition and levels of academic achievement. Many studies investigated the relationship between family structure and academic achievement, and the findings have been conflicting. The findings of Azumah et al. (2018), while other research has found either no significant difference or even a positive impact. When there is peace and harmony in the family, children also do not leave their homes at a younger age. Additionally, according to research by Cynthia and Martha (2021), families with two parents frequently have access to more work-, income-, and savings-related financial assets than families with only one parent family.

Despite the fact that some studies indicate that family structure or family size does not always affect children's academic achievement. Hanafi and Noor (2016) have observed that family size has a negative impact on the academic performance of undergraduate students.

Moreover, they mentioned that larger family sizes adversely affect academic performance. Azumah et al. (2018) investigated how stepfamilies and two parents affected children's academic performance. Results of the study indicated that there was no significant difference between single-parental and two-parent family structures. Even though previous studies have found the information previously mentioned, it is still necessary to ascertain the effect of family structure on the academic success of undergraduate students in Sri Lanka. The parents' demographic characteristics and the family's structure are key factors that determine undergraduate students' academic achievement. Thus, the following hypothesis is derived.

*H4: There is an impact of the family structure of parents on the academic success of the undergraduate.*

**5) Academic Success of Undergraduates:** Academic success, which is frequently defined as the capacity to receive good grades, complete assignments on time, and exhibit a thorough mastery of the subject matter being studied, should be a top priority for undergraduate students. Academic success may be influenced by a student's socio-economic background, educational preparation, level of commitment, and capacity for time management, among other factors, according to the Gbollie & Keamu (2017) study that have been done on the variables that affect undergraduate students' academic achievement in this overview of the appropriate research.

One of the key factors affecting academic success is the student's socio-economic situation. According to information from Rahman et al. (2023), students who come from lower-income families are considerably more likely to struggle academically than students from higher-income families. This is due to the realization that college students from lower-income families frequently lack access to educational resources, including textbooks, tutoring services, and other academic support services.

Based on Ricks and Warren (2021), gender, prior academic achievement, living circumstances and financial situation of family members, socio-economic status, the level and type of high school a student graduated from, their grade point average in high school (GPA), the results of the national university entrance test the amount of time spent studying learning style, and living arrangement are among the factors that affect college success. To succeed academically, undergraduate students must concentrate on enhancing these skills and having access to the tools they require. More research needs to be conducted to determine the additional variables that may influence undergraduate academic performance in Sri Lanka and to examine the relationship between the influence of parents' demographic features and the academic success of undergraduates.

The dependent variable is considered as the undergraduates' academic success. Based on past literature the researchers have determined four variables that contain parental influence. Those four variables, parental involvement, educational level of their parents, economic status of their parents, and family structure of the parents, were considered as independent variables.

### **III. METHODOLOGY AND EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN**

The quantitative research methodology was used for this study to measure the impact of parental involvement and demographic factors towards academic success of the undergraduates. This research was designed as a deductive approach. Since the researchers are observing and one of the famous research strategies is the "survey strategy," which comprises utilizing a gather data from the study's chosen sample. The research team developed a questionnaire by drawing the information from the examination of literature papers. To gather information from university undergraduates, the researchers have created a self-administrative questionnaire.

The participants in this study's population consisted of the university students enrolled in state or private universities in the Western Province. The participants of target population of this study are comprised of the top 10 university students attending universities in the Western Province, according to the University Grant Commission's university ranking list. Undergraduate students from chosen universities used as the

sample for this research. 10 educational institutions are, University of Colombo, University of Moratuwa, University of Kelaniya, University of Jayewardenepura, Open University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, ESoft Metro campus, University of Visual and Performing Arts and National Institute Business Management. The sample for this study was 449 undergraduates selected from a simple random sampling technique. As per the given parameters, Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) minimum number of sample size for our population was 384 ( $N = 165,923$   $S = 384$ ). Hence, the sample size for this study is adequate ( $449 > 384$ ). To accomplish the objective of conducting an accurate analysis of the data, is therefore planned to record the socio-demographic details of a sample that is intended to be representative of the undergraduates and their parents.

The data was collected from primary sources. Under primary data, a cross-sectional questionnaire-based survey was used to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire consisted of three sections, one section to identify the student's demographic background such as, age, gender, A/L z-score, cumulative GPA, parents' income, parents' education level and status of their family structure. Other sections included 24 questions and statements for four independent variables and the dependent variable. Likert's scale is used to measure the variables and data collected as close-ended questions. Under the questionnaire, respondents were required to score these statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree." Furthermore, the questionnaire was conducted in English language. The questionnaire measured the perception of the Impact of Parental involvement and demographic factors towards Academic success of the undergraduates in the western province of Sri Lanka. The study design was based on the past literature and the opinion of the experts. Quantitative data was collected using procedures and methods like those of previous researchers, linked to an online survey that was established using "Google Forms" and distributed via email and WhatsApp. Likert Scale questions were used in the online survey to increase the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the research and carry out a comprehensive analysis. It was determined all respondents were adequately eligible to participate in this study's data collection.

The survey data was analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. SPSS was used to assess the questionnaire's validity and reliability. Validity and reliability are used to judge the quality of research. A measure's consistency defines its validity, whereas a measure's level of accuracy determines its reliability. This study also tested regression to determine which variables have an impact on a particular topic of interest. Regression analysis enables one to accurately identify the most important elements, those that can be disregarded, and the relationships between these factors.

#### **IV. RESULTS**

The purpose of this section is to present the findings of the survey that was conducted to determine the impact of parental involvement and demographic factors on the academic success of undergraduates. The research questions and objectives mentioned in the first section are related to the results.

##### ***A. Reliability Analysis***

Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurement. The question of whether the results of a study can be repeated is called reliability. This term is frequently used regarding the consistency of measures created during data analysis. Cronbach's alpha is a

reliability measure. When the Cronbach's Alpha value of a particular research model is greater than 0.7, it is considered a reliable model. In this case, Cronbach's Alpha values of each variable are greater than 0.7. Therefore, the research data is reliable, shows high internal consistency, and will produce reliable outcomes. Table 1 shows the summary of reliability analysis.

**Table 1. Summary of Reliability Analysis**

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	No. of Items	Decision
Parental Involvement	.795	5	Accepted
Education Level	.785	5	Accepted
Family Structure	.822	5	Accepted
Economic Status	.816	5	Accepted
Academic Success Undergraduates	.755	4	Accepted

Source: Authors' compilation.

### ***B. Regression Analysis***

Multiple linear regression was used in this study to determine the significant impact of parental involvement, educational level, family structure, and economic status on the academic success of the undergraduates. The below table 3 shows the regression analysis of this study. Regression analysis determine the percentage of the dependent variable defined as academic success of the undergraduates that can be predicted based on the independent variables which included parental involvement and educational level, economic status, and family structure.

### ***C. Model Summary***

The strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables can be measured by the coefficient of determination. According to the Table 2, the dependent variable (academic success of the undergraduates) and the predictors (parental involvement, educational level, economic status, and family structure) have a moderately positive association in this case, as indicated by the R-value of 0.616. The percentage of the variance in the dependent variable (academic success of the undergraduates) that can be explained by the independent variables are shown by the R-squared value, which is 0.379. The predictors in the model can accurately forecast about 37.9% of the variation in academic success of undergraduates. The model is acceptable since the variables are significant (Ozili, 2023). The sample size and number of predictors are taken into consideration in the Adjusted R Square value, which is 0.374. Here, it suggests that the predictors in the model represent about 37.4% of the variance in academic success of undergraduates. The standard error of the estimate (S.E.) is the average deviation between the values of the dependent variable as observed and as presented by the model. Here, 0.576 is the average level of error or uncertainty in forecasting academic success of undergraduates based on the predictors. From the analysis found that there is an impact, it exists, but the strength is pretty law.

### ***D. Coefficient Values of Dependant and Independent Variables***

The regression coefficients for the independent variables (parental involvement, education level, family structure, and economic status) and their impact with the



dependent variable (academic success of undergraduate), are detailed in the coefficients table. The estimated impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable is represented by unstandardized coefficients. They enable comparison of the variables' relative importance.

**Table 2. Model Summary**

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
			R Square Change	F Change	Df1	Df2	Sig. F Change
.379	.374	.576	.379	67.799	4	444	.000

Source: Authors' compilation.

Due to their small p-values (all p- p-values are less than 0.05), parental involvement, educational level, and economic status those independent variables represent a statistically significant impact with the dependent variable which means academic success of the undergraduates. The standardized coefficients (Beta) in this case indicate that parental involvement, educational level, and economic status in that order, have the highest effects on the dependent variable. However, family structure doesn't have any significant impact on the dependent variable because it is more than 0.05. The t-values provide additional evidence of the coefficients' statistical significance.

The research used a multiple linear regression model:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{i,1} + \beta_2 x_{i,2} + \beta_3 x_{i,3} + \beta_4 x_{i,4} + \epsilon_i \tag{1}$$

$y$  = Academic success of undergraduates.

$\beta_0$  = Constant value

$x_{i,1}$  = Parental involvement

$x_{i,2}$  = Education level

$x_{i,3}$  = Family structure

$x_{i,4}$  = Economic status

$$Y = 1.183 + (0.316)X1 + (0.156)X2 + (0.351)X4 \tag{2}$$

This regression equation implies that considering further variables are assumed to be constant at zero, the academic success of undergraduates will have an index of 1.183. The outcomes further demonstrated when one-unit increase in parental involvement significantly increased undergraduate students' academic success by f 0.316 into the undergraduate academic success, when all other independent variables are at zero. The P value was 0.000 thus it was significantly impact (0.000 > 0.05). When the educational level of parents increases in a unit, undergraduate's academic success increases by 0.156. The P value was 0.007 thus it was significantly impact (0.000 > 0.007). The study discovered that the impact of family structure is not statistically significant (0.101 > 0.05).

Therefore, this implies that family structure does not have any significant impact towards undergraduate academic success. Undergraduate academic success will increase by 0.351 when economic status of parents increases in a unit. The P value was 0.000 thus it was significantly impact (0.000 > 0.05).

**Table 3. Coefficient Values of Dependant and Independent Variables**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.183	.184		6.442	.000
PI	.316	.047	.299	6.675	.000
EL	.156	.057	.169	2.723	.007
FS	-.096	.058	-.110	-1.643	.101
ES	.351	.053	.380	6.649	.000

Source: Authors' compilation.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Parental involvement significantly impacts the Academic success of undergraduates, according to H1. The T-statistics of 6.675, the p-value of 0.000, and the  $\beta$  value of 0.316 indicate that parental involvement has a significant positive impact on the academic success of undergraduates. Therefore, accepting H1. Based on the study of Topor et al. (2010) was identified a significant association between parent involvement and child's academic performance, over and above the impact of the child's intelligence. Further, Schmid and Garrels (2021) found that their study contributes to the field by explaining the precise forms of parental participation that are important from the perspective of vulnerable students.

According to H2, Education level significantly impacts the Academic success of undergraduates. The T-statistics of 2.723, the p-value of 0.007, and the  $\beta$  value of 0.156 indicate that Education level has a significant positive impact on the academic success of undergraduates. Therefore, accepting H2. According to Naite (2021), The major findings of the study showed that children with highly involved educated parents performed better academically and had higher test scores in all subjects than children whose parents were not involved in their education. Not only that, Rahman (2001) revealed that there is a positive correlation between the education level of parents and the academic success of children.

Family structure does not have a significant impact on the Academic success of undergraduates, according to H3. The T-statistics of -1.643, the p-value of 0.101, and the  $\beta$  value of -0.096 indicate that family structure does not have a significant impact on the academic success of undergraduates. Therefore, rejecting H3. Hanafi & Noor (2016) identified family size as the least negatively significant contributor to academic achievement. When considering the Sri Lankan context, Dasanayake & Jayasinghe (2021) found that students' family background does not affect academic performance. The main purpose of the study was to identify the factors influencing the academic performance of undergraduates.

Economic status significantly impacts the Academic success of undergraduates, according to H4. The T-statistics of 6.649, the p-value of 0.000, and the  $\beta$  value of 0.351 indicate that economic status has a significant positive impact on the academic success of undergraduates. Therefore, accepting H4. According to Budke (2007) identified socio economic status play an important role and it's affected to the children's academic

achievement. Considering the economic status effects on academic success of children, Gobena (2018) also examined that family socio economic status effect on students' academic achievement. When considering the Sri Lankan context Sriyalatha (2016) discovered the undergraduates' academic achievement was significantly influenced by their socio-economic level (family income).

Therefore, among those four independent variables, which are parental involvement, educational level, and economic status, have a significant impact on the Academic success of undergraduates, whereas family structure does not have a significant impact on the academic success of undergraduates.

This research study provides a significant contribution to measure the impact of parental involvement and demographic factors towards academic success of the undergraduates. Based on the regression analysis, there is a 37.9% of impact for the study from those variables which means less impact. However, based on the results, researchers can conclude that parental involvement, parents' education level, and economic status variables were important to the academic success of the undergraduates.

The implications of our findings extend beyond the boundaries of academia, reaching into broader societal and public policy domains. The comprehension of the intricate interplay between parental engagement and demographic characteristics assumes significance considering the prevailing concerns surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion within the realm of higher education. The statement establishes a foundation for the adaptation of interventions, support systems, and policies to enhance the capacity of students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to attain their educational objectives.

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of parental participation and demographic factors on the academic success of undergraduates in the Western province of Sri Lanka. Moreover, this research contributes to the scope of knowledge on academic performance. The study examined the academic success of undergraduates, with four independent variables of parental involvement, education level, family structure, and economic status, derived from existing literature. This research study makes a significant contribution to assessing the impact of parental involvement and demographic factors on undergraduate academic achievement. According to the findings, independent variables have a lower influence on undergraduate academic success. Based on the results findings, researchers can conclude parental involvement, parents' education level and economic status variables have a significantly positive impact on the academic success of undergraduates. However, the family structure has a minor detrimental impact on undergraduate academic success. The authors can conclude, based on the findings, that students' family structure does not affect the academic success of undergraduates. According to past researchers, there is a general agreement that the dynamics in single-parent households can be different from those in two-parent households. Therefore, it's imperative and must address complex variances and specific needs of diverse student cohorts to effectively improve academic success.

This study recommends, for further researchers, that determining other independent factors that have an impact on the academic success of the undergraduates, such as undergraduates' motivation, study pattern, and institutional support can play a more significant when it comes to the academic success of the undergraduates. Further research is necessary to explore to understand those additional factors that impact undergraduate academic success. In addition, since the study has focused based on one province in Sri Lanka, future researchers can conduct their assessment throughout the wider spectrum. A possible future expansion of this research could be having in-depth

interviews with various related parties, including students and parents, and lectures for future understanding of the factors affecting the results of this study.

There are a few limitations in this study. The most challenging hurdle for researchers was data gathering; the number of responses per day was very limited than expected; therefore, the research was investigated with a minimum sample size. However, in order to get a holistic view on this issue the research must look at both quantitative aspects as well as qualitative aspects. Which is lacking in this study; therefore, it is a limitation. The authors had to adjust to the precise time due to that reason limiting the depth of analysis as well as the investigation the specific factors.

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