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**A STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THE REASONS FOR LOW
INTEREST IN THE AREA OF PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS IN
G.C.E.(A/ L) COMBINED MATHEMATICS STUDENTS IN
KURUNEGALA DISTRICT**

A PROJECT REPORT PRESENTED BY
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INTEREST IN THE AREA OF PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS IN
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ABSTRACT

Mathematics education in Sri Lanka has under-gone major reforms since independence. The subject Combined Mathematics was introduced instead of Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics with the educational reforms in 1998. Combined Mathematics syllabus was prepared to cover topics in eight areas: Algebra, Calculus, Geometry, Trigonometry, Statics, Dynamics, Descriptive Statistics and Probability Theory. The purpose of this study was to investigate the reasons of low interest in the area of Probability and Statistics in G.C.E.(A/L) Combined Mathematics students in the Kurunegala district.

Documentary survey was conducted using G.C.E. (A/L) Combined Mathematics syllabuses, G.C.E. (A/L) Combined Mathematics teacher guides, Chief examiner's reports and Annual statistical reports - Department of Examination. Data were collected from type 1AB schools in all educational zones: Kurunegala, Giriulla, Ibbagamuwa, Maho, Kuliypitiya and Nikaweratiya in Kurunegala district. The sample consisted of randomly selected 50 Combined Mathematics teachers and 100 Combined Mathematics students who suppose to sit for the G.C.E.(A/L) examination in 2010.

Results revealed that, the content in the area of Probability and Statistics is reduced under the reforms in 1998. It was found that the percentage of the students attempted the Statistics question remains low in many years comparatively other questions. Further,

selection of the Probability question was in second or third position from the lowest selection. The figures illustrated that the percentages of the students who scored more than fifty is in satisfactory level comparatively other questions. Although majority of students bare positive attitudes towards the unit Probability than Statistics., they do not confident about their knowledge. And also findings revealed that the students do not satisfied about the teaching approach and methodologies used in their classrooms. The majority of teachers believed that the time periods allocated to teach these units are not suitable and the number of periods allocated for these units are also not sufficient.

By referring the content of the present study few suggestions are made for the improvement of the quality of G.C.E (A/L) Combined Mathematics education in Sri Lanka.