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**AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTION OF EASTERN AND SOUTH
EASTERN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ON THE ONGOING
PEACE PROCESS**

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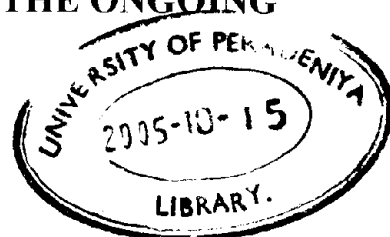
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M.I. Fathah



The current ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is a much more complex issue than a simple straightforward confrontation between Sri Lankan Tamils and the government.

None of the attempts taken by many governments so far have succeeded in bringing about a peaceful solution. However the present ongoing peace process and the truce are considered as the most prolonged one. This study was carried out to investigate the perception of the university students of Eastern University and South Eastern University of Sri Lanka regarding the ongoing peace process.

Stratifying the university population at different stages, the data were collected using a stratified random sample. The bases were university, stream of study and ethnicity. Data were collected on interviewing 172 persons based on a structured questionnaire.

Appropriate statistical techniques were used to analyze the association between variables. The results of the chi-square test showed that there were significant associations among variables, university, stream of study, ethnicity, gender, awareness, knowledge and satisfaction about the content and acceptance of the ongoing peace process and whether it will bring the permanent solution for this ethnic conflict. The majority of both Tamil and Muslim students do not believe that the ongoing peace process would bring a permanent solution to the ethnic crisis. All the students accepted that the proposal of interim administration as an initial step for solving this ethnic conflict of North and East.

However these results do not show the view of the general public because university students represent only a cross section of educated youth. Therefore further studies are needed to find out the view of the general public in implementing the peace process.