

**Study on Involvement in Aesthetic Activities and Academic
Performance of Undergraduates: The Case of the Faculty of
Management Studies and Commerce of University of Sri
Jayewardenepura in Sri Lanka**

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Enhancing knowledge seems to be a partial objective in any education process in the contemporary society. The ultimate goal of the education should be the creation of a good citizen. It is widely believed perception that the involvement in aesthetic activities in the learning process helps to enhance various talents of students and nurture positive attitudes. Several researches confirmed that there is a positive relationship between involving in Aesthetic activities and academic performance of students in educational institutions. This study examines the relationship between involvement in Aesthetic activities and academic performance of the undergraduates of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in Sri Lanka. The study was done through a self-administrated structured questionnaire of a sample of 200 undergraduates (around 5% of the total population) for the year 2010. The sample consists of first, second, third and fourth year undergraduates, representing both students who engaged in aesthetic activities and who did not. Correlation analysis was done to examine the relationship between academic performance and the involvement of Aesthetic activities of the undergraduates of the Faculty. It was found that there is an insignificant weak positive relationship between the involvement in aesthetic activities and the accumulated Grade Point Average of the undergraduates. To identify reasons for this phenomenon, ten in-depth interviews were undertaken with students who have higher academic performance at the end semester examinations conducted by the Faculty. The qualitative analysis revealed several interrelated factors in this regard. Some major reasons are; heavy work load of the students (five subjects with many assignments within a very limited time period per semester), students' involvement in professional examinations and training programs (due to the competition of the job

market), the involvement in any job due to their financial difficulties, a strong determination to obtain a (first) class etc. Due to these reasons, many undergraduates of the Faculty have given their least priority to aesthetic activities during their educational process. This situation leads to produce graduates with lack of essential qualities such as creativity and sensitivity which violate the ultimate goal of education- that is “creating good citizens”. Finally, policy measures are suggested to overcome this situation.

***Keywords:** Aesthetic Activities, Academic performance, Management, Undergraduates*