# Analysis of Factors Affecting Academic Performance of Undergraduates of Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

SURAWEERA SMBL[1], KURUPPU KADTD[2], DR. KAPPAGODA UWMRSSCB[3]

[1, 2, 3] *Department of Business Management, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihinthale*

*Abstract- High failure rates at universities result in unacceptable levels of attrition reduced graduate throughput and increased cost of training a nation's labor force. This study is, therefore, designed to identify and analyze the factors affecting academic performance of undergraduates of Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. Since the majority of the students' performance poor although some students' performance is high rose a commanding necessity to distinctly colligate the factors that lead to the lower academic performance of these students. Thus, this study realizes on the objectives of examining the impact of each factor on the academic performance and identifying the most influencing factors on the academic performance. The variables under consideration were the academic performance (student's GPA) as a dependent variable and competency in English, student commitment, personal characteristics, financial socio-economic and cultural influence, extra- curricular activities, learning environment, course structure, and teacher performance were the independent variables. Data were collected from 100 students through a self-administered questionnaire from all the four departments of Faculty using simple random sampling technique. Regression analysis, correlation analysis, and descriptive analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that competency in English, student commitment, personal characteristics, financial socio-economic and cultural influence and extra- curricular activities are significantly impacting and are the most influencing factors towards the academic performance of undergraduates while factors of learning environment, course structure and teacher performance did not reflect a significant impact on academic performance.*

*Indexed Terms- Academic performance, Undergraduates, Faculty of Management Studies*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The university education is a sound investment made by a person in his life and any society is benefited by having an educated population. The university degree is still considered as a stepping-stone in the globalized world and the rise of demand for university education ascent significantly. There are bunch of universities worldwide contributing to bequeath an enlightened citizenry to the universe. Sri Lanka too is a country in its process of establishing a pool of intellectuals in the island and at present 15 universities are parts of this progression. Rajarata University is one of such academic institutions playing a prominent role at this process. Rajarata University of Sri Lanka is a non-profit higher education institution placed in the urban area of Anuradhapura in North Central Province.

University education improves one's quality of life by means of providing better career opportunities, enhancing personal growth, enabling to increase the understanding of the world and the community and plenty of other ways. So such university education must be provided in an ameliorate manner. Thus, the quality of academic education must be ensured and it should be affirmed through the academic performance of the undergraduates. Mlambo (2011) stated that there is a need to undertake corrective measures that improve the academic performance of students, especially in public funded institutions. He emphasized that the throughput of public-funded institutions is under scrutiny especially because of the current global economic downturn that demands that governments improve efficiency in financial resource allocation and utilization. Although there has been considerable debate about the determinants of

academic performance among educators, policymakers, academics, and other stakeholders, it is generally agreed that the impact of these determinants vary (in terms of extent and direction) with context, for example, culture, institution, course of study etcConsidering that not all variables are important for a certain setting, the recognition of situation specific determinants for sounds decision making is c rucial via formal studies.The studies carried in the area of academic performance have identified lot of factors affecting this sphere such as students 'continuous commitment, medium of instruction, their own qualities, teacher performance, course structure, family and peer influence, extra-curricular activities, socio, economic and cultural influence learning environment.

Therefore, this current study is carried out to emphasize the factors that affect the academic performance of the undergraduates of the faculty of Management Studies in Rajarata university of Sri Lanka and explore factors that are strongly associated with academic performance in order to suggest for monitoring and improving their performance.

## II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The universities in Sri Lanka are a remarkable sphere in the national scenario and the academic performance of the undergraduates has a panoramic influence on the sector. As a considerable amount of the Sri Lankan GDP is devoted to university education the output of such institutions is of a crucial importance to the country. According to University Grant Commission (2017) there is a gradual increase in the expenditure spent on the university education. Thus, when the government provide greater attention on uplifting the level of education it is the responsibility and duty of the undergraduates to concentrate on performing well on their academic activities to return what they have received from the public. The following figure I shows the increment of the expenditure on the education.
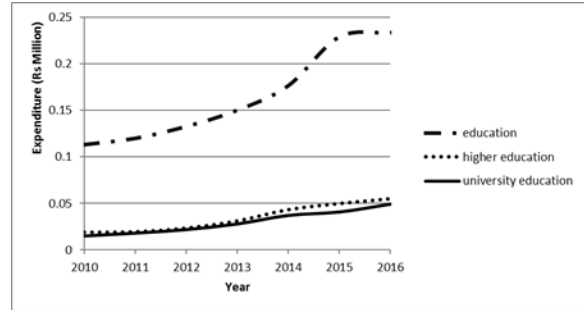


Figure I: Expenditure on education: 2010-2016 (Source: University Statistics 2016 published by the University Grant Commission on June 2017)

In contrary to the disbursement made by the government the output received in line is objectionable. In the international context, most of leading position in both government and private sectors are hold by graduates and provide immense support to the progress of their countries. Nevertheless, in the context of Sri Lanka there is huge gap between graduates and their employability.

The quality of the output is determined by the academic performance of the students in the universities. Thus, the academic performance of the undergraduates must be in a satisfactory level in order to get their contribution to the economic development of a developing country like Sri Lanka. In the same manner, the performance of management studying undergraduates too has a great influence in this domineering commercial world as today's most of the global development is led by and revolved on the wisdom and experience of intellectuals. The performance of the students in a particular study program is varying from course unit to another and from student to student within a course unit. Nevertheless, the academic performance of the undergraduates of Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata university of Sri Lanka is exhibiting a substandard state at the most recent past and the present in relation to other faculties of the university.

When examining recent past data connecting with the degree received by the undergraduates from FMS in RUSL, it noticeably validates that there is a significant enactment lag in academic performance. Most students seem to be contented with the general pass rather focusing on first class, second class upper- or second-class lower divisions. From 2001/2002 to

2010/2011 there were only 18 first class divisions, but there were 226 second upper divisions, 354 second lower divisions and 1982 general passes out of the graduate output of 2580 graduates. Albeit this situation evidently demonstrates that there is a significant poor performance in the academic culture of FMS in RUSL.

A bad image has been developing about university students in society and subsequently, some employers reject graduates. At times, university students are seen as a burden to families and to society rather than a valuable resource. As a consequence, it is required to identify why majority of the students of the Faculty of Management Studies perform poor although some students 'performance is high. It is a commanding necessity to distinctly colligate the factors that lead to lower academic performance of these students.

Thus, this research has concentrated to investigate what are the factors that are mostly influencing on the academic performance of the undergraduates of the faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata university of Sri Lanka.

- Research Questions
1. What are the factors that affecting on academic performance of the undergraduates Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka?
2. What is the impact of each factor on academic performance Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka?
3. What are the most influencing factors on academic performance Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka?

- Research objectives
(a) General objective
The main objective of this study is to investigate the factors influence on the academic performance of the undergraduates of Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka.

(b) Specific objectives
1. To investigate the factors that effect on the academic performance of the undergraduates.
2. To examine the impact of each factor on the academic performance.

3. To identify the most influencing factors on the academic performance.

## III. LITREATURE REVIEW

As cited by Weerahewa et al., (2012) English language proficiency, family background and academic efforts made by the students are key factors that determine the academic performance at every level.

Paranthaman (2014) has found that factors of students' commitment and teaching context influence on the academic performance of students. The study findings reveal that the students' commitment, teaching context and students' academic performance are in satisfactory level. Students' commitment has positive moderate influence and teaching context have weak positive influence on the academic performance of students.

The study conducted by Mushtaq & Khan (2012) at private colleges in Rawalpandi and Islamabad has discovered that communication, learning facilities, proper guidance and family stress affect the student performance.

They also stated the positive impact on student perfor mance on communication learning facilities and prop er instruction and the family stress, however, indicate s a negative impact on student performance, but that t he degree is significant.Therefore, it is indicated that the communication is more important factor that affect the student performance and the learning facilities and proper guidance are affect the student performance. Family stress also affects the student performance, reduces the performance of the student, and affects negatively the student performance.

Steinmayr et al., (2015) defines academic achievement as whether one can take part in higher education, and based on the educational degrees one attains, influences one's vocational career after education. Besides the relevance for an individual, academic achievement is of utmost importance for the wealth of a nation and its prosperity. The strong association between a societies' level of academic achievement and positive socioeconomic development is one reason for conducting international studies on academic achievement Academic performance is

commonly measured through examinations or continuous assessments but there is no general agreement on how it is best evaluated or which aspects is most important-procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts (Ward, Stoker, & Murray-Ward, 1996).

The medium of instruction during primary and secondary education for most of the students is their native language. However, the medium of instruction turns to English once the student enters the university. Due to globalization, English language plays a vital role in every Higher education system.

The child learns it effectively in native languages owing to the favorable environment and a large degree of language exposure. Attention is nevertheless needed to learn a second language in most cases and access to a second language is restricted in most cases (Bose, 2007).

Navaz (2016) mentioned in his study that with regard to specific language skills that are difficult for students, majority of the students reported that writing is the difficult skill for them. Similarly, speaking is also difficult. They are somewhat confident that they could read and understand the texts. We have already seen that understanding lectures has been a problem for almost all the students. In addition, they perceive that their listening skills improve over the period of study at the university.

A study conducted by Ibrahim (2001) among the undergraduate students of an Indonesian University brings to light the several issues in conducting courses in English medium. He found that due to poor language proficiency of students and teachers, there were problems academically, socially, and psychologically. Academically, teachers" and students" low proficiency may lead to inefficient and ineffective teaching and learning processes. Therefore, if second language (English) isn't developed properly, will have difficulty expressing oneself in it and this may cause frustration or impotence, which in effect can impact one's self-esteem or trust. In the sense of "English as Foreign Language" (EFL), Yousif (2006) explores explanations for lecture comprehendingproblems. The study was conducted among English students from Saudi Arabia.He found that

five kinds of problems affect students" lecture comprehension such as linguistic and conceptual variables, discourse variables, acoustic variables, environmental variables and psychological variables.

The learning environment refers to the whole range of components and activities within which learning happens and learning and teaching environment ought to implement six functions: inform, communicate, collaborate, produce, scaffold, and manage (Basque & Dore, 1998).

Perera (2013) states that the phenomenon of "university learning environment" is a very complex one. It can be considered as the whole university system. At the same time, a major factor determines the learning atmosphere

Duruji et al. (2014) described the reasons for the learning and success of secondary school students such as classrooms, the size of the college, school place and facility design, the architecture, maintenance culture and sanitation. Kamaruddin et al., (2009) investigated how the quality of the learning environment effect on academic performance and they have revealed that the organizational factors, the extra class and motivational programs provided too has an effect on academic achievement. In addition, by having student own study table, own room and computer will be an added advantage to their achievement. Perera (2013) attempted to analyze contributing factors of university learning environment outside the classroom on undergraduates' problems. The study found that 48 percent of students have problems related to schooling, especially in the areas of housing, food and nutrition, medium teaching, library facilities, financial aid and teacher ties. Sparkles (1999) and Considine & Zappala (2002) cited that the students ' atmosphere and teachers ' standards often affect student performance.

Students have to show personal commitment by giving time and effort to their studies, taking every effort to meet assessment requirements, attending to all the required activities, taking responsibility for managing and progressing their knowledge including using feedback given for them to improve and taking advantage of learning resources and facilities available to them (Molano, 2015). It is not uncommon for a

student with high potential to underperform in the classroom. With many activities competing for a student's time, success comes with commitment. Mohr (2011) showed that commitment is most likely when the behaviors to which someone is committing are written, made public, and voluntary. Further, Firestone & Rosenblum (1988) suggested five strategies for maximizing commitment: relevance, respect, support, expectations, and influence.

Paranthaman (2014) has identified important factors that influence on students' commitment. He has identified that both attending lectures and reviewing lectures explain significance positive influence on the academic performance of students. It is found that even students have good attendance, students who reviewing lectures have significant positive influence on the academic performance.

The lack of practical knowledge and analytical skills are also challenging with students who prefer to mem orize information rather than to read and comprehend . (Annual Report, 2001). The major reasons given by students for non-attendance include assessment pressures, poor delivery of lectures, timing of lectures, and work commitments (Newman-Ford et al., 2009). Research on this subject seems to provide a consensus that students who miss classes perform poorly compared to those who attend classes (Devadoss & Foltz, 1996; Durden & Ellis, 1995; Park & Kerr, 1990).

Teixeira (2014) highlighted "….that although class attendance is an important facilitator of academic success (Moore et al., 2008),(Crede, et al., 2010), (Barlow & Fleischer, 2011) it does not per se guarantee success. It is not a matter of 'just showing up'. It is a fact that students will achieve little in academic terms if they only show up in class to socialize, complete work for other classes/activities or sleep."

The students, who have high levels in their ability for experimentation and innovation in their level of internal control, show a greater academic performance. Personal qualities are personal characteristics of an individual. They are what make up one's personality. They help a person get along in a new situation. There are lot of characteristics

identified by different scholars in their articles with regard to the person. A study conducted by Akinleke (2012) has found that low anxiety students had higher GPAs than high anxiety students and that there is a positive relationship between self-esteem and academic performance. Twinomugisha (2008) showed that there was a positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement although the relationship was weak.

As Siraj et al., (2014) found Students' perception on the impact of stress toward academic performance that 76% respondents considered stress positively and agreed that stress motivated them for better academic performance.

The difference in the gender too has an influence on the academic performance. Weerakkody & Ediriweera (2008) explain that there is a significant difference between female and male students' academic performance. It was confirmed that female students outperform their male counterparts of the Department of Human Resource Management of University of Kelaniya.

Education is an important tool that can shape an individual and allow creativity, opportunity, and growth. As a teacher, it is necessary to motivate students and help them recognize their strengths and weaknesses. Educators are important role models for students and have a big impact on helping shape, create, support, and establish students' strengths, goals, and knowledge. Therefore, it is essential to be aware of the effective qualities, skills, and characteristics that one brings into a learning environment. Competencies are the skills and knowledge that enable a teacher to be successful. To maximize student learning, teachers must have expertise in a wide-ranging array of competencies in an especially complex environment where hundreds of critical decisions are required each day (Jackson, 1990). Paranthaman (2014) identified that present teaching practice, even though at satisfactory level on the perception of student, did not have sufficient impact on students' academic performance. Therefore, current teaching context (teacher performance, course composition and learning environment) at the university need to be improved towards students' centered. Further, he illustrated the quality of teacher

performance and course composition depends on the nature of learning environment, which are supported by strong positive correlation. Teachers have the responsibility to present value added knowledge that goes beyond the information students can get from reading textbooks and/or class slides, specifically by incorporating active learning in lectures, linking lectures to assessment, adding additional insights into what is already in the notes (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011). In short, both students and teachers must be actively engaged for class attendance to provide the most academic value.

The three primary components of a course are the learning objectives, assessments and instructional strategies. The course structure refers to the choice of topics and the organization and sequencing of course content. The choice of topics and their organization should always support the learning objectives for the course (Eberly center). Weimer (2008) highlights "Across a range of majors, students preferred classes that meet twice a week. They reported that classes that meet only once a week resulted in lower levels of learning. Despite those beliefs, the faculty researchers found that "class format had only a marginal impact on students' grades. Grades were a bit lower in the classes that met once a week and a bit higher in those classes that met three times a week. But the effect sizes were small."

One of the questions address in course structure is its relevance, applicability in the real world scenario and in addition the use of updated and modern course materials. Students have to learn theories that are outdated for decades and it reduces their interest in learning. Uses of case studies in the course structure have been analyzed by researchers. The research results reported here suggest that case studies, regardless of the source, are significantly more effective than other methods of content delivery at increasing performance on examination. Case studies facilitate interdisciplinary learning and can be used to highlight connections between specific academic topics and real-world societal issues and applications. This has been reported to increase student motivation to participate in class activities, which promotes learning and increases performance on assessments (Bonny, 2015).

A university structure should be such that it is highly impact focused and expose the students to a wide array of social, scientific and environmental issues. With the real-world issue students will have the opportunity to challenge the prevailing concepts and the opportunity to deliver purposeful contributions to the business world.

Bartkus et al., (2012) defined extracurricular activities as "academic or nonacademic activities that are conducted under the auspices of the school but occur outside of normal classroom time and are not part of the curriculum." Bartkus et al., (2012) also stated, "Extracurricular activities do not involve a grade or academic credit and participation is optional on the part of the student." ECA participation facilitates students to achieve better academic performance through acquiring life skills and attitudes (Holland & Andre, 1987; Larson et al., 2006; Lewis, 2005; Mahoney et al., 2003; Marsh, 1992). Holland & Andre (1987) suggested that ECA participation helps students to acquire organizational, planning and time-management skills. They also suggested that ECA participation helps students to develop attitudes such as discipline and motivation; and to receive social rewards that influence personality characteristics (Holland & Andre, 1987).

Total extracurricular activity participation (TEAP), or participation in extracurricular activities in general, is associated with an improved grade point average, higher educational aspirations, increased college attendance, and reduced absenteeism (Broh, 2002).

Socioeconomic status is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position relative to others, based on income and education, and occupation. Wilkinson & Marmot (2004) indicate when analyzing a family's social economic status, the household income, earners' education and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed. Socio-economic background or status refers to a person's position in a given group, society or culture as determined by wealth, occupation, education and social class (Onyancha et al., 2015).

Pedrosa et al., (2006) in their study on social and educational background pointed out those students who mostly come from deprived socio-economic and educational background performed relatively better than others coming from higher socio-economic and educational area. They named this phenomenon educational elasticity. An investigation conducted by Agus & Makhbul (2002) indicated that students from families of higher income levels perform better in their academic assessment (CGPA) as compared to those who come from families of lower income brackets.

Various studies had been done and found that peers influence does have impact on student performance. Gonzales et al., (1996), Goethals (2001) shown that peer influence has more powerful effects than immediate family. Peer support was positively related to students' cumulative grade point average.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

This study is based on eight independent variables and one dependent variable.

Figure II: Conceptual Framework
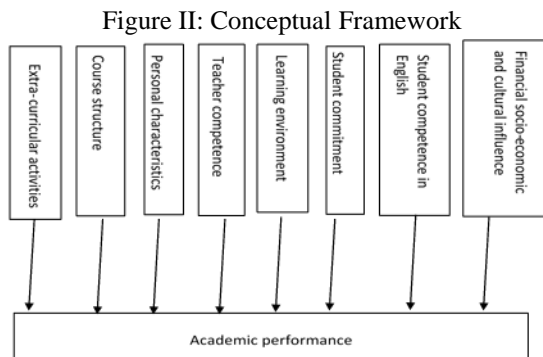


Accordingly, the dependent variable named as academic performance is tested against the eight independent variables, namely; Student competence in English, Student commitment, Learning environment, Personal characteristics, Teacher competence, Course structure, Extra-curricular activities and financial socio-economic and cultural influence. The independent variables have been selected by the researcher as it has been identified these variables have a considerable influence on the dependent variables through the review of the literature. Thus, the conceptual framework is illustrated as follows to implement the relationship among variables.

In this study researcher constructed eight hypotheses to test the relationship between dependent variable and independent variable.

H1: There is a significant relationship between student competences in English on academic performance.
H2: There is a significant relationship between learning environment on academic performance.
H3: There is a significant relationship between student commitments on academic performance.
H4: There is a significant relationship between personal characteristics on academic performance
H5: There is a significant relationship between teacher performances on academic performance.
H6: There is a significant relationship between course structures on academic performance.
H7: There is a significant relationship between extra - curricular activities on academic performance.
H8: There is a significant relationship between financial, social/economic, and cultural problem on academic performance.

This study falls into the category of basic research. The purpose of this study is to spot and determine the factors that influence on the academic performance of the undergraduates in the Faculty of Management Studies in the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. The researcher has ascertained eight factors that are considerably causative towards the dependent variable.

This analytical survey is designed by using a questionnaire and 49 questions in this questionnaire were filled by undergraduates of fourth year in the Faculty of Management Studies.

The population of this study is consisted of the all the undergraduates in the academic year of 2012/2013 of the Faculty of Management Studies of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. The total number of students in this academic year is 300. In this study researcher, use the simple random sampling method and selected 100 undergraduates as the sample.

## V. RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION

The majority of the respondents was from the Department of Business Management, 51% and 31% from the Department of Accountancy and finance. The

respondent sample consists of majority of female counting to 64% and male is 36%.

Table I: Detailed description of the sample

| Description | Range | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Department | Accountancy and Finance | 31 | 31 |
| | Business Management | 51 | 51 |
| | Business Information Technology | 06 | 06 |
| | Tourism and Hospitality Management | 12 | 12 |
| Gender | Female | 64 | 64 |
| | Male | 36 | 36 |
| Ethnicity | Sinhala | 76 | 76 |
| | Tamil | 17 | 17 |
| | Muslim | 07 | 7 |
| | Other | - | - |

(Source: Survey data, 2017)

The following table (Table I) describes descriptive statistics of responses of respondents related with independent and dependent variables of the study. According to the above table, mean value for competency in English indicates that English competency among the undergraduates of the Faculty is significantly low (M=2.46, SD=0.63). Mean value of student commitment (M=2.98, SD=0.62) and personal characteristics (M=2.76, SD=0.43) too are significantly low indicating that both variables are unfavorably impacting towards academic performance. But in case of Financial socio-economic and cultural influence (M=3.58, SD=0.50) and extra-curricular activities (M=3.49, SD=0.55) is high indicating that those two dimensions have high impact on academic performance. Learning environment (M=2.6, SD=0.30) and course structure (M=2.38, SD=0.47) are having significantly low impact towards academic performance whereas teacher performance impact is relatively high (M=3.12, SD=0.28). The academic performance in terms of GPA is significantly low proving that most of the respondents' performance is at an unsatisfactory level.

Table II: Descriptive statistics

| Variables | Mean | Std. Deviation | Skewness | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error |
| Competency in English | 2.4680 | .63769 | 1.137 | .241 |
| Student commitment | 2.9860 | .62813 | .789 | .241 |
| Personal characteristics | 2.7638 | .43841 | .715 | .241 |
| Financial socio-economic and cultural influence | 3.5833 | .50391 | .121 | .241 |
| Extra-curricular activities | 3.4900 | .55949 | -.490 | .241 |
| Learning environment | 2.6000 | .30567 | -.402 | .241 |
| Course structure | 2.3800 | .47183 | .070 | .241 |
| Teacher performance | 3.1222 | .28536 | .223 | .241 |
| GPA | 1.8800 | 1.01782 | .832 | .241 |
| Valid N (listwise) | | | | |

To test whether the performance is differing on the various demographic characteristic of undergraduate's independent sample t-test and ANOVA were used. To evaluate whether there is a significant difference between male and female on academic performance, independent sample test was performed. Their results are showed the following Table III.

Table III: Result of t-test

| Gender | Mean | Std. Deviation | t value | sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 1.5556 | .77254 | -2.696 | 0.012 |
| Female | 2.0625 | 1.09653 | | |

According to the above table, both female and male have taken lower mean values respectively (M=2.06), (M=1.55). The results of t-test further reveals that there is a significant difference between these two groups on academic performance (t= -2.696, p<0.05). Furthermore, differences of departments on academic performances of the respondents were identified

through one-way ANOVA. The results are reported in the following table IV.

Table IV: Results of ANOVA

|  | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 12.367 | 3 | 4.122 | 4.388 | .006 |
| Within Groups | 90.193 | 96 | .940 |  |  |
| Total | 102.560 | 99 |  |  |  |

Table V: Differences between departments

| Department | Mean | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accountancy and Finance | 1.6275 | 4.388 | .006 |
| Business Management | 2.3871 |  |  |
| Business Information and Technology | 2.0000 |  |  |
| Tourism and Hospitality Management | 1.5833 |  |  |

When considering Table V, one-way ANOVA test was conducted to identify the difference of departments on academic performance in the selected sample. The results of the ANOVA test reveal that undergraduates' academic performance is differ between at least two groups in the departments (F=4.388, p<0.05). The mean value for each department is significantly lower and lowest is resulted in Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management which is 1.5833. None of the departments have not impacted on enhancing the academic performance according to the above table and the differences between each group is significant.

- Hypothesis testing

According to the correlation sig values four independent variables depicted significant positive correlation with the dependent variable academic performance while with the regression results, the same variable reflected a positive significant relationship. Namely those independent variables are: between student competences in English, student

commitments, personal characteristics and financial and social/economic and cultural problem. The independent variables learning environment, teacher performance and course structure did not show a significant relationship with the dependent variable, thereby rejecting the three hypotheses. However, extracurricular activities showed a significant negative correlation with a positive relationship resulted through regression results.

Table VI: Hypothesis testing

| Hypothesis | Correlation analysis | | Regression analysis | | Accepted /rejected |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Pearson correlation | Sig. | B | Sig. |  |
| H1: There is a significant relationship between student competences in English on academic performance. | .841 | .000 | .244 | .000 | Accepted |
| H2: There is a significant relationship between learning environment on academic performance. | -.192 | .055 | -.092 | .184 | Rejected |
| H3: There is a significant relationship between student commitments on academic performance. | .967 | .000 | .755 | .000 | Accepted |
| H4: There is a significant relationship between personal characteristics on academic performance. | .901 | .000 | .253 | .008 | Accepted |
| H5: There is a significant relationship between teacher performances on academic performance. | .070 | .487 | -.095 | .115 | Rejected |
| H6: There is a significant relationship between course structures on academic performance. | -.190 | .058 | -.008 | .844 | Rejected |
| H7: There is a significant relationship between extra-curricular activities on academic performance. | -.321 | .001 | .073 | .026 | Accepted |
| H8: There is a significant relationship between financial and social/economic and cultural problem on academic performance. | .926 | .000 | .672 | .000 | Accepted |

- Regression results

The R Square value is 0.976 which means 97.6% of the factors affecting on academic performance can be explained by the predictions Competency in English, Student commitment, Personal characteristics, financial socio-economic and cultural influence, Extra- curricular activities, Learning environment, Course structure and Teacher performance.

Table VII: Regression analysis (Model summary)

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .988[a] | .976 | .974 | .16300 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Competency in English, Student commitment, Personal characteristics, financial socio-economic and cultural influence, Extra- curricular activities, Learning environment, Course structure, Teacher performance

The P value from the ANOVA table is less than 0.001, which means that at least one of the eight variables Competency in English, Student commitment, Personal characteristics, financial socio-economic and cultural influence, Extra- curricular activities, Learning environment, Course structure, Teacher performance can be used to model the impact on academic performance.

Table VII: Regression analysis (ANOVA Table)

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 100.142 | 8 | 12.518 | 471.153 | .000[a] |
| | Residual | 2.418 | 91 | .027 | | |
| | Total | 102.560 | 99 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Competency in English, Student commitment, Personal characteristics, financial socio-economic and cultural influence, Extra- curricular activities, Learning environment, Course structure, Teacher performance

b. Dependent Variable: GPA

## VI. DISCUSSION

The main purpose of the research was to identify the factors that are most likely to impact on the academic performance of the undergraduates of the Faculty of Management Studies at the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka. Eight hypotheses were established and five of those accepted while three hypotheses were rejected.

The first hypothesis of the study proposed a significant relationship between student competence in English and academic performance. The results of the correlation analysis identify that there is a significant as well as relatively a strong positive relationship between the dependent and independent variable. In this thesis students' competency in English was tested in all the spheres of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The majority of undergraduates depicted paucity in all the spheres and such students' GPA too is inferior. According to Navaz (2016) too majority of students have felt that poor knowledge of English affects the performance in their main subjects.

The second hypothesis established was that there is a significant relationship between learning environment and academic performance. But this hypothesis was unable to accept in the sample considered in the current study. Even though the empirical evidences highlighted that there is a strong impact of learning environment on academic performance, a relationship was unable to build up in the present study.

The third hypothesis considered in the thesis was that there is a significant relationship between student commitment and academic performance. The correlation results and the multiple regression results found that a significant positive relationship between the two variables. Paranthaman (2014) too has identified that factors that influence on students' commitment have significance positive influence on the academic performance of the students. He found that even students who have good attendance, students who reviewing lectures have significant positive influence on the academic performance. As the present thesis underlying that majority of the students' academic performance is inferior, it reflects that student's do not highly commit to their studies.

The fourth hypothesis in the thesis was there is a significant relationship between personal characteristics on academic performance. This hypothesis too was accepted revealing a significant positive relationship between the considered two variables. Arshad, Zaidi, & Mahmood (2015) in their study have revealed that there exists a strong

positive correlation between self-esteem and academic achievements in university students. Weerakkody & Ediriweera (2008) explain that there is a significant difference between female and male students' academic performance. Thus, the dimensions that were considered in determining the variable personal characteristics were positively related with academic performance.

The fifth hypothesis considered was there is a significant relationship between teacher performances and academic performance. But this hypothesis was not accepted as the results of the study. Paranthaman (2014) too has identified teaching context has a weak positive correlation on academic performance. He further stated that the present teaching practice, even though at satisfactory level on the perception of students, did not have sufficient impact on academic performance.

The sixth hypothesis established in this research was there is a significant relationship between course structures on academic performance. As per the results of both correlation and regression analysis it did not show there is a significant relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. A weak negative correlation was resulted while such relationship becomes insignificant. But Bonny (2015) highlighted that the course context has been reported to increase student motivation to participate in class activities, which promotes learning and increases performance on assessments.

The seventh hypothesis of the study proposed that there is a significant relationship between extra - curricular activities on academic performance. A negative correlation has been identified, but this is not a significant relationship. However, a relationship does exist even it is not significant. However previous research works provide an opposite view in this aspect. According to Broh (2002) Total extracurricular activity participation (TEAP) or participation in extracurricular activities in general, is associated with an improved grade point average, higher educational aspirations, increased college attendance, and reduced absenteeism.

The eighth hypothesis of the study proposed a significant relationship between financial, social/economic, and cultural problem on academic performance. A significant positive correlation was identified through correlation analysis and it was supported by the multiple regression analysis. This result was supported by the empirical evidences too. Graetz (1995) conducted a study on socio-economic status of the parents of students and concluded that the socio-economic background has a great impact on student's academic performance, main source of educational imbalance among students and student's academic success contingent very strongly on parent's socio-economic standard. An investigation conducted by Agus & Makhbul (2002) indicated that students from families of higher income levels perform better in their academic assessment (CGPA) as compared to those who come from families of lower income brackets

## VII. CONCLUSION

According to the research result, it was identified that Competency in English, Student commitment, Personal characteristics, and financial socio-economic and cultural influence factors has a significant positive relationship with academic performance. Similarly extra-curricular activities too had a significant relationship with academic performance but it negatively impacted on the dependent variable. However, Learning environment, Course structure and Teacher performance factors did not reflect a significant inducement towards the academic performance within the sample considered.

As per the third objective of the research it was identified that factors like that Competency in English, Student commitment, Personal characteristics, financial socio-economic and cultural influence and extra-curricular activities have the most influencing effect on the academic performance.

According to the results the overall academic performance was considerably low among the undergraduates selected in the sample as well as a significant difference was exhibited among male and female undergraduates. Male undergraduates' performance was highly unsatisfactory compared with the female undergraduates in all the four departments.

In addition, there is a difference of performance between the departments too.

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