Analysis of Student Feedback on Program Evaluation and Academic Environment – 2020

Department of Performing Arts, Sri Palee Campus

INTRODUCTION

The academic program offered by The Department of Performing Arts at the Sri Palee campus was the first academic program among Sri Lankan universities to adopt this new progressive modernist approach in Arts education. While positively engaging with new academic discourses of performing arts being developed around the world, Sri Palee Campus took a unique course to advance a new critical aesthetic foundation for performing arts, breaking its centuries long isolation from actual socio-political life. Currently, undergraduates are given the choice of completing a degree program specializing in one of the five offered streams; Drama and Theatre, Arts and Design, Film Studies, Music and Dancing. However, the syllabus is designed in a strategic manner with the aim of paving the way for students to have a strong grounding in general foundations of Performing Arts, while they specialize in one field. The vision of the department is to become a center of excellence in producing, transmitting and learning of transformative knowledge and skills in arts and humanities with special emphasis on performing arts. The mission of the department is to produce and promote transformative knowledge in the field of performing arts and in array of social studies to nurture human values, enhance aesthetic capacities and to enrich the cultural life of the Sri Lankan society. Furthermore, generate, transmit, and apply transformative knowledge and skills, responding to the challenges pertaining to national and global transition processes. Also, developing generic skills among graduates empowers us to meet the challenges of employability in the current local and global job market.

The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the campus has continuously been working on quality improvement and the betterment of student learning experiences. In order to analyze the gaps in the program and improve the program further, obtaining feedback from various stakeholders and analysis has become an integral part of the department. This report focusses on analysis of the feedback obtained from the final year students of the department of performing arts related to the honors degree program they had been following and the learning environment in which they had been studying during the four-year study period.

Table 01. No. of Students (2016-2020 batch) and the Response Rates

Gender Distribution	Total no. of Students in the batch	%	No. of students who filled the questionnaires	%
Female Students	66	82.5	60	91
Male Students	14	17.5	06	9
Total	**80**	**100**	**66**	**100**

Table 01 shows the number of students in the 2016-2020 batch as well as the response rates to the questionnaire. 91% of responses were female students, while 9% were male students.
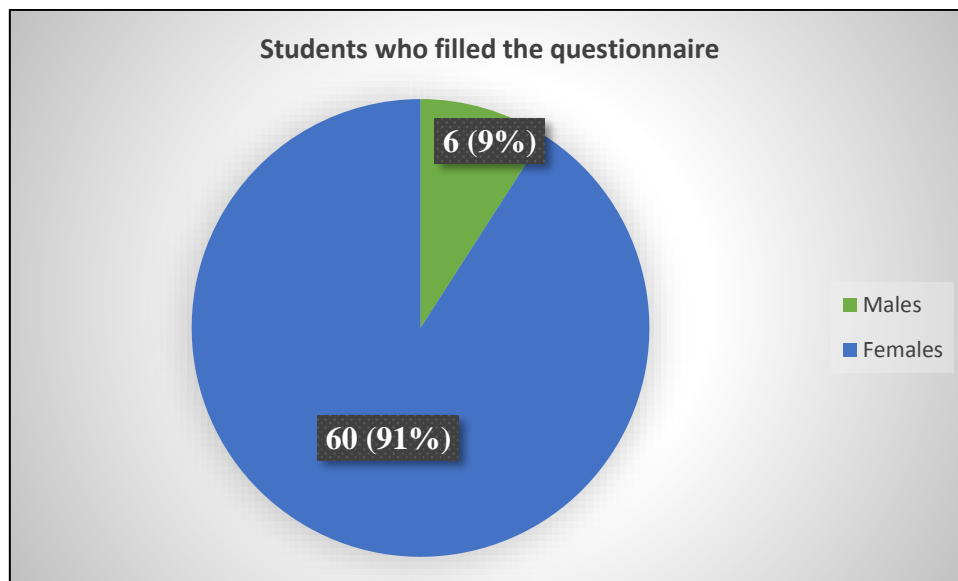

Figure 01. Percentage of the students who participated in the survey

Analysis of the Study Program - Part I

The program evaluation questionnaire is a 25-item questionnaire developed by both CQA of the University of Colombo and the IQAC of the Sri Palee Campus to measure the study programs of Performing Arts of Sri Palee Campus. Each item was measured using a five point Likert scale: 0 is strongly disagree, 1 is disagree, 2 is neither agree or disagree, 3 is agree and 4 is strongly agree. Respondents were presented with a statement and asked to select a response. Items 4, 10, 19 were negatively worded and these items were recoded prior to calculating the total and subscale scores. The analysis of the six subthemes, individual questionnaire items under the subthemes and the open-ended questionnaire items are presented below. Apart from five subscale scores, all 25 items were given an individual mean score out of a maximum of 4 to identify specific strengths and weaknesses; Items that have a mean score of 3 and over are considered to be real positive points. Items with a mean between 2 and 3 are aspects of the climate which could be enhanced and any items with a mean score of 2 or less, need to be examined more closely as they indicate problem areas.

Total number of items	**25**
Sub themes	**06**
Total marks out 100 (item 25 X 4 highest scale in each item) for the program evaluation	**71.45%**

Table 02. Sub-Themes of Program Evaluation

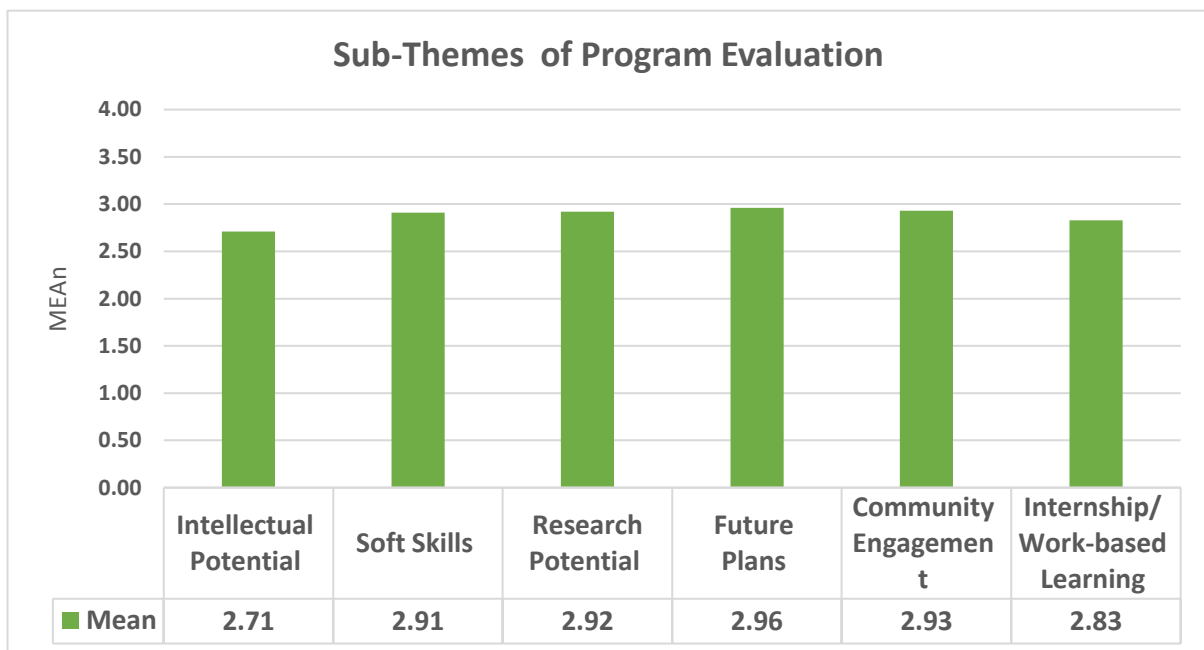| Sub Themes	Mean	Standard Deviation
01. Intellectual Potential	2.71	0.80
02. Soft Skills	2.91	0.72
03. Research Potential	2.92	0.68
04. Future Plans	2.96	0.75
05. Community Engagement	2.93	0.63
06. Internship/ Work-based Learning	2.83	0.65

Figure 2. Sub-Themes of Program Evaluation

Table 03. Sub-Theme 1 of Program Evaluation: Intellectual Potential

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
01	Methods of teaching (Lectures, Discussion, Presentations, Tutorials, Case Studies, Blended Learning …etc.) stimulated me to think creatively.	2.65	0.63
02	The degree programme developed critical thinking in me.	2.88	0.72
03	The degree programme developed creativity in me.	2.60	1.12
04	The assessment was a good test of what I was taught.	2.84	0.75
05	I was involved in inquiry-based learning.	2.64	0.72
06	Knowledge gained and skills developed were suitable to reach my career objectives.	2.67	0.78

Table 03. Sub-Theme 2 of Program Evaluation: Soft Skills

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
07	I gained confidence in communicating ideas effectively.	2.84	0.49
08	I learnt to make justifiable decisions.	2.94	0.73
09	I developed values and attitudes useful for me as a person and as a professional.	2.91	0.61
10	My personal skills such as level of confidence and leadership developed as a result of my taking this degree programme.	2.67	0.99
11	I learned personal and team responsibility and accountability.	3.17	0.58

Table 04. Sub-Theme 3 of Program Evaluation: Research Potential

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
12	I learnt the art of scientific inquiry.	3.24	0.53
13	I learnt to conduct research independently.	2.74	0.65
14	I am motivated to be engaged in research networks.	3.07	0.56
15	I learnt how to collect reliable and valid data for research.	2.97	0.69
16	I learnt how to analyze data in a scientific way.	2.93	0.54

Table 05. Sub-Theme 4 of Program Evaluation: Future Plans

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
17	I am competent to join the world of work.	2.96	0.72
18	I am motivated to find my own future path.	3.00	0.94
19	I am prepared for life-long learning.	2.74	0.76

Table 06. Sub-Theme 5 of Program Evaluation: Community Engagement

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
20	The degree programme enabled me to understand social realities at the ground level.	3.07	0.47
21	I understood ethical practices to be inculcated within myself.	2.97	0.59
22	I developed a sense of responsibility towards the society.	2.57	0.73

Table 07. Sub-Theme 6 of Program Evaluation: Internship/Work-Based Learning

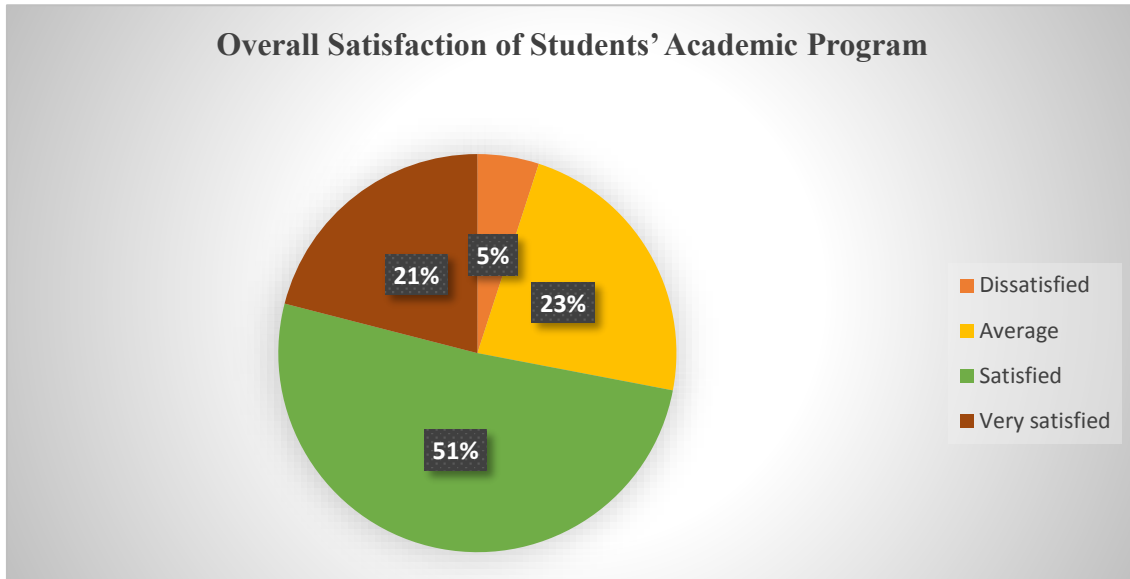| No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
23	I was able to grasp the 'big picture'.	2.94	0.61
24	I learnt how to understand practical settings applying my theoretical knowledge.	2.96	0.52
25	I understood group dynamics that are possible within a work environment.	3.13	0.79

Figure 3. Overall Satisfaction of Students' Academic Program

Students' Comments/ Suggestions for Further Improvement

Commendations
1. Students were satisfied with the degree program
2. The degree program assisted in gaining important knowledge timely and globally.
3. Students were able to participate in a higher learning process when compared with those of the other universities.

Suggestions for Further Improvement
1. Students should be given the opportunity to receive more practical skills.
2. The students felt that it would be better if both theoretical and practical aspects were balanced.
3. Students should be given more opportunities to improve English language skills and IT knowledge.
4. No satisfaction with the learning process
5. Subjects and learning activities should be more focused on the relevant field.
6. Infrastructure facilities should be improved.

Analysis of Program on Academic Environment - Part II

The Academic Environment questionnaire is a 25-item questionnaire developed by both CQA of the University of Colombo and the IQAC of the Sri Palee Campus to measure the academic environment of the Sri Palee Campus to study performing arts subjects. Each item was measured using a five point Likert scale: 0 is strongly disagree, 1 is disagree, 2 is neither agree or disagree, 3 is agree and 4 is strongly agree. Respondents were presented with a statement and asked to select a response. Items 4, 10, 19 were negatively worded and these items were recoded prior to calculating the total and subscale scores. The analysis of the four subthemes, individual questionnaire items under the subthemes and the open-ended questionnaire items are presented below. Apart from four subscale scores, all 25 items were given an individual mean score out of a maximum of 4 to identify specific strengths and weaknesses; Items that have a mean score of 3 and over are considered to be real positive points, Items with a mean between 2 and 3 are aspects of the climate which could be enhanced, and the items with a mean score of 2 or less, need to be examined more closely as they indicate "problem areas".

Total number of items	**25**
Sub-themes	**04**
Total marks out 100 (item 25 X 4 highest scale in each item)	
for the program evaluation	**67.51%**

Table 08. Sub-Themes of Academic Environment

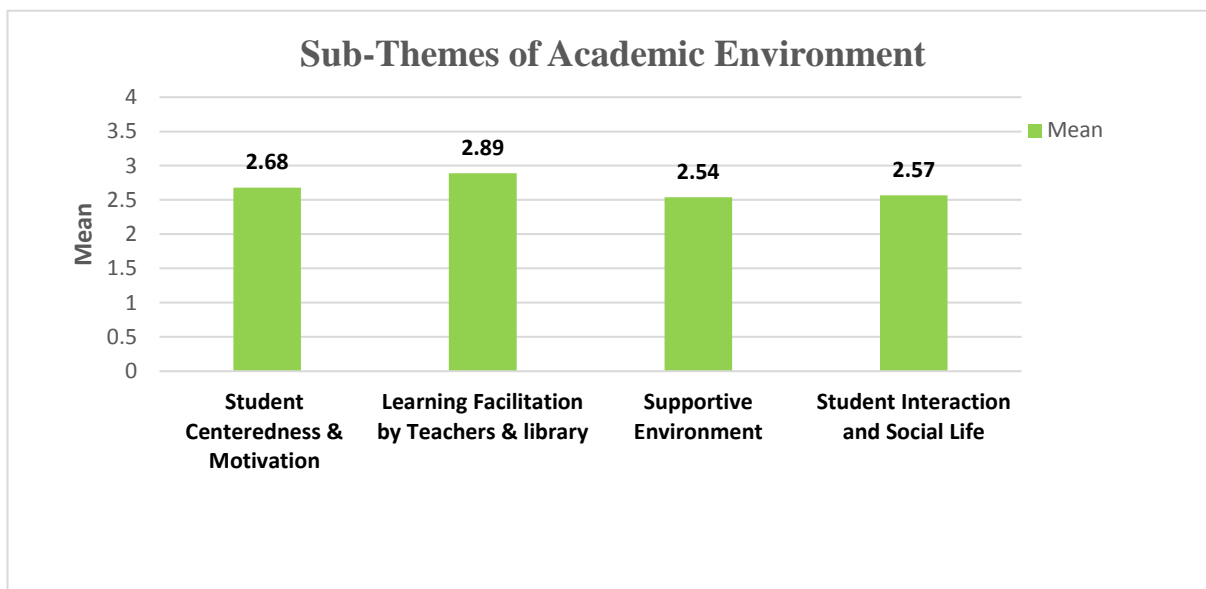| No	Sub-Themes	Mean	Standard Deviation
01	Student Centeredness & Motivation	2.68	0.77
02	Learning Facilitation by Teachers & Library	2.89	0.82
03	Supportive Environment	2.54	0.83
04	Student Interaction and Social Life	2.57	0.82

Figure 4. Sub Themes of Academic Environment

Table 09. Sub-Theme 1 of Academic Environment: Student Centeredness & Motivation

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
01	I feel I am being well prepared for my future career.	2.56	0.82
02	I was encouraged to participate in teaching/learning activities	2.90	0.57
03	Courses are structured in a way to progressively develop my thinking.	2.60	0.81
04	The atmosphere did not motivate me as a learner.	2.77	0.87
05	The learning environment catered to different types of learners.	2.56	0.73

Table 10. Sub-Theme 2 of Academic Environment: Learning Facilitation by Teachers & Library

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
06	Teachers were supportive of my learning.	3.04	0.69
07	Teaching encouraged me to be an active learner.	2.84	0.81
08	Teaching helped to develop my knowledge, skills and attitudes.	2.84	0.75
09	The resources provided by the library fulfilled my academic needs and requirements.	3.02	0.58
10	My supervisor was supportive in carrying out my research project successfully.	3.33	0.85
11	Teaching helps me to acquire up-to-date knowledge in the subject.	2.97	0.73
12	Teachers guided me to identify career paths.	2.68	0.82
13	The facilities provided by the campus helped to improve my practical skills.	2.40	0.97

Table 11. Sub-Theme 3 of Academic Environment: Supportive Environment

No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
14	Learning environment was physically uncomfortable for me.	2.4	0.97
15	There was a good support system for students who needed counselling.	2.36	1.00
16	I was comfortable learning with my peers.	2.16	0.82
17	The facilities (classrooms and teaching facilities) were suitable for learning.	2.97	0.50
18	My colleagues in the campus treated me with respect.	2.45	0.76
19	Staff (administrative, welfare) are available to answer my questions / help to solve my campus related problems.	2.93	0.72
20	Gender equality was not equally active in the learning environment.	2.4	0.66

Table 12. Sub-Theme 4 of Academic Environment: Student Interaction and Social Life

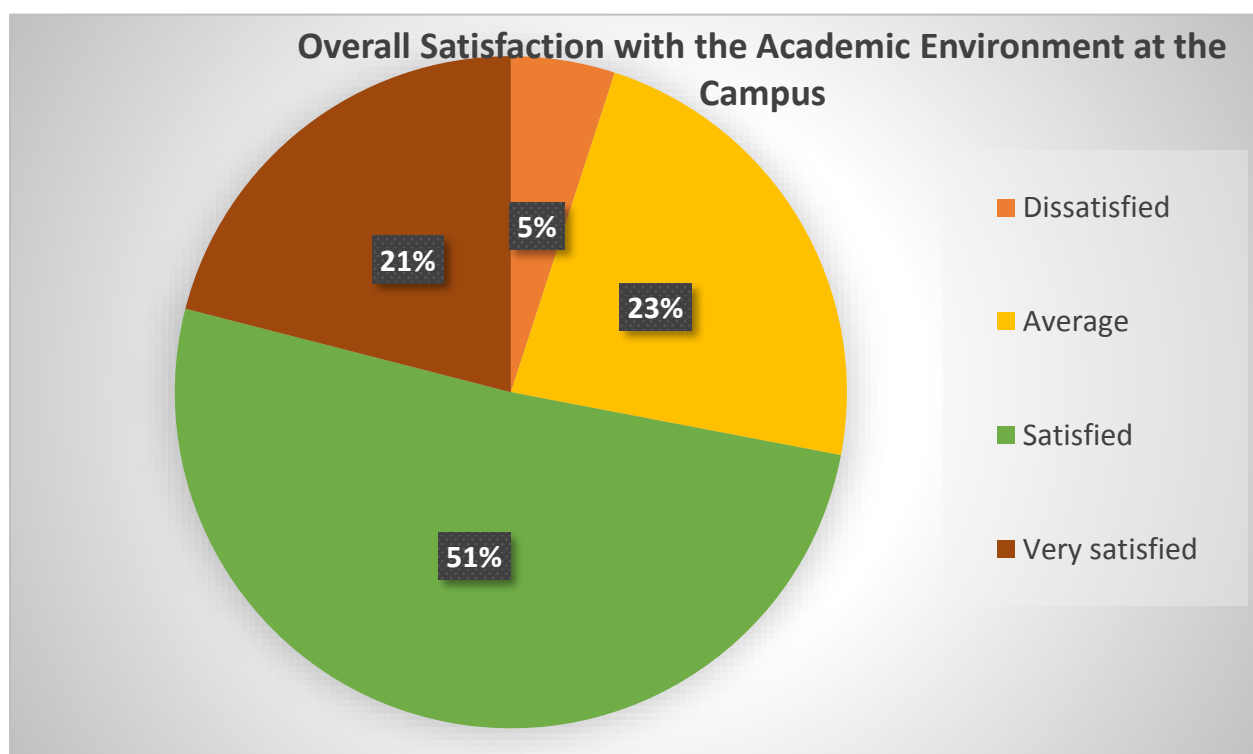| No	Individual Items	Mean	SD
21	There were good welfare facilities to support my learning.	2.48	0.94
22	The atmosphere was relaxed and safe during classes.	2.13	0.86
23	I made good friends in this course.	2.51	0.69
24	I had adequate opportunities to continue my interests/ hobbies.	3.05	0.65
25	I got involved in community outreach.	2.59	0.81

Figure 5. Overall Satisfaction with the Academic Environment at the Campus

Students Comments/ Suggestions for Further Improvement

Commendations

1. Students have been provided the guidelines and background for conscious and critical study.
2. Learning environment was created in which a substantial knowledge of the subject and the skills required to enter the world of work.
3. Students got many opportunities to pursue new knowledge and the program helped them develop their knowledge.

Weaknesses:

1. Dissatisfied about the academic environment

Suggestions for Further Improvement

1. The dilapidated Campus road should be repaired immediately.
2. Both theoretical and practical aspects should be balanced.
3. Need to develop lecture hall facilities, projectors and technical facilities, sports facilities and internet facilities.
4. Infrastructure facilities should be improved.