

THE RELEVANCE OF ARTS AND CRAFTS FOR THE ADVANCED LEVEL CURRICULUM IN CONTEMPORARY SRI LANKA

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This study aims to clarify the path to establish Arts and Crafts as a subject in the Advanced Level curriculum, which has been limited to the curricula of Grades 10/11 only. A primary objective of the study is to logically justify the educational and economic needs to establish Arts and Crafts as a Technology subject with the Advanced Level Technology Stream which was introduced in 2013, or to introduce it as a subject in the Arts Stream. While research was conducted using the survey method, data collection was done through questionnaires and interviews. Twenty-seven schools where the subject was taught were selected as the sample for data collection, while 27 teachers, along with 54 students, and 27 principals were chosen for the survey. In addition, ten subject experts who were involved from the inception, giving leadership to the introduction of 'Arts & Crafts' to the school curriculum, participated in the survey through questionnaires and direct interviews. While the information gathered was presented using percentages, data was presented using tables and percentages. According to the information gathered, it has been clearly revealed that the current period is the most appropriate time to establish Arts and Crafts as a subject in the Advanced Level curriculum as the necessary subject competencies have already been developed. While the development of the teaching–learning process must take place as per the competencies that have been identified, what the collective study has revealed is the clarification of the process to be followed to add Arts and Crafts to the Advanced Level curriculum. In this study, it was revealed that in addition to the use of textbooks and teacher's manuals, it is very useful for students to go to the field for external activities such as conducting training camps, organizing field expeditions, etc. Since the subject content is very much related to the world of work, it was revealed that the subject was identified as a guide to enter self-employment, even for students who did not have the privilege of studying the subject for the general and advanced levels. Finally, according to the findings of this research, the Arts and Crafts subject should be included in the Advanced Level curriculum in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Aesthetic studies, arts and crafts, technology education, curriculum development