

## Indigenous Management & Buddhism: The role Buddhism to Indigenous Management Practices in Sri Lanka

N. W. K. Galahitiyawe<sup>1</sup>

The concept ‘change’ has been subject to much discussion among scholars and practitioners in the discipline of contemporary management. Though change is a well-accepted phenomenon, Taylorism still prevails dominant both in the west and East for hundreds of years. Once reflecting upon Sri Lankan history and legacy, it provides evidence with regard to the existence of a strong resource management system. Yet, the country is labeled as underdeveloped well over one century, and the reason behind this is not the lack of funds or resources, but the mismanagement of both. Thus, it is commonly argued that a localized management system, which resembles the socio – cultural requirements of the country is an urgent need. “Use foreign theories as base; test before apply and adjust them; if necessary re-conceptualize them and localize”.

The objective of this paper is to critically evaluate the divergence of the existing management practices and to identify the appropriate indigenous management practices based on Buddhist ideology, which would suit the Sri Lankan context. The empirical data for the survey was collected from 10 Managers (Sinhala- Buddhist) and 20 Employees in two Sri Lankan organizations. Questionnaire and informal interviews have been used as the methods of data collection.

The paper presents a model, which focuses on managing Sri Lankan employees and decision-making with a set of recommendations. The research concludes that the employee moral conducts are deep-rooted in the religion, beliefs and values, while 70% of managers are seeking for social power through power distance. Buddhism largely complies with postmodernism and therefore, requires to state past in new forms, because people rarely go against their traditions.

**Key Words:** Buddhism, Employee behaviour, Indigenous management practices, Organizational culture

---

<sup>1</sup> University of Sri Jayawardhanapura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka. E-mail :nilakshi@sjp.ac.lk