

The Role of University Lecturers in Developing Human Talents

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Abstract

There is an unemployment problem of graduates in Sri Lanka, because of low demand for graduates from the business sector. Industry perceive that the management education is somewhat cognitive and conceptual in approach and lacking in sufficient practice bias and skill orientation. In other words the argument is that the management education in the universities still has the features of colonial and traditional era and not matches with the current complex changing environment. Keeping in view the criticisms of management education and the competence required for being an effective graduate, this study attempted to explore the learning preferences of the management undergraduates and the teaching methodology in relation to the demand of the field of management. The total sample consists of 100 final year management undergraduates and 40 lecturers that consist of Assistant Lecturers, Lecturers and Senior Lecturers drawn from a university. The index of learning style- the instrument was developed by Richard M. Felder and Barbara A. Soloman of North Carolina State University was used to measure the four learning styles of students. To assess the perception of the students about the course, another questionnaire was used in this study. Based on the learning styles questionnaire to assess the teaching methods and congruence between the learning style and teaching methodology the researchers used the questionnaire designed by Luciano Mariani, Milan. This study found that most of the management students are active, sensing, visual and sequential learners. This indicates that there is a shift of students' learning style from traditional to modern except one style (sequential) of learning. Most of the teachers are in practice reflective, sensing, verbal and sequential. It was found that there is a disparity between management students' style of learning and the teaching styles, in terms of the rate of change. In other words the changing of learning styles of students towards the modern is faster than the changing of teaching methods.

Key words: Traditional style, Learning styles, Teaching styles, Industry demand, Management education