

# **TERTIARY EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

**Nithiyaluxmy THARMASEELAN**

*University of Jaffna, SRI LANKA*

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**Abstract.** The paper reviews the contemporary issues and challenges faced by the Sri Lankan higher educational institutions and justify the need for immediate changes needed in the system. Based on survey conducted among the past graduates of Sri Lankan tertiary institution, it highlights the areas need improvement and suggests different models for various areas to enhance the quality in tertiary education.

*Keywords:* higher education, Sri Lanka, quality of tertiary education

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## **1. Introduction**

A fundamental shift is occurring in the world economy. We are moving rapidly away from a world in which national economies were relatively self-contained entities; isolated from each other by barriers to cross-border trade and investment; by distance, time zones, and language; and by national differences in government regulation, culture, and business systems. And we are moving toward a world in which barriers to cross-border trade and investment are tumbling; perceived distance is shrinking due to advances in transportation and telecommunications technology; material culture is starting to look similar the world over; and national economies are merging into an interdependent global economic system. The process by which this is occurring is commonly referred to as globalization (Hill, 2003, p. 4)

In this interdependent global economy every individual has access to many global products and services where the knowledge needs expansion to cross-border level. Sri Lanka is not an exception in this case. A youth of Sri Lanka may start his/her education at a rural primary school; continue his/her secondary education at a school in near town and tertiary education in the capital of Sri Jayewardenepura. He/she may seek a place for his/her postgraduate education in the UK and work in a multinational corporation located in Australia and transferred to its branch in Sri Lanka. This means that the world we live in is made up of interconnected territories and has become a global village. For a youth to be put in the employment market, this is in many ways the force of knowledge and skill development. As Clark says (1996, cited in Caruana et al., 1998, p. 55) tertiary education institutions are required, like business firm, to monitor and adapt to the continuous changes taking place in the political, economic, social and technological environment. Technology and commoditization of information and knowledge, taking place as a result of electronic revolution, shake the very foundations of how we are currently delivering our products. But, what is the reality in Sri Lanka? Whether the education system of Sri Lanka ensures employability of its output? What are the contemporary issues and challenges of education? How these issues can be overcome? This article tries to bring out the above issues and find possible remedies to provide a better future for those youths who are going to be the sufferers, survivors or winners of the job-seeking game.

## **2. Education system in Sri Lanka: Issues and Impacts**

In Sri Lanka, students from primary to secondary schools pursue a general sequence of courses that are oriented to tertiary level preparation, and all students completing their advanced level education, regardless of their stream of their past track, left in a vague situation if failed in their attempt to enter a tertiary institution. It means that the education system provides little indication for the job seeker or the employer about kinds of vocationally useful skills to a young person seeking employment directly after their completion of secondary education. This is true for tertiary education as well in many qualifications (except Medicine, Veterinary Science, Dental Science, Engineering, Architecture, etc.) while the majority of graduates passing out from the universities pegging for employment from the public sector with no choice of careers.

Competition and examination oriented education starts from the childhood (at the age of 10 or 11) where the competitive scholarship examinations are taken as a strong base for secondary school admissions. Achievements on examinations bring fame to the child and thus to the parents who forces rather than encourages their children towards higher standards of achievement. This situation contrasts most vividly with many developed countries where the education system emphasizes learning rather than teaching, skills development, occupational orientation and experiential learning.

Colonization brought European-style education to Sri Lanka, especially to prepare students for positions in the colonial administrations. But the fact is that Neo-European system of education provides knowledge base to each and every sector while Sri Lanka continues to be aiming at public sector occupations. It is true that the system is continually introducing different structures and styles to education but the basic attitude towards a public sector employment among the public does not change in that speed.

There are strong voices against existing tertiary education system from various bases. Intellectuals, experts and practitioners do always criticize the system and the quality of graduates produced by the universities. But, a different picture is present among the students while they are in the university and they are out. Many of them who are in the employment market as job seekers or employed at a lower level than their expectation say „we have wasted out life“. It is because; the practical life is not that the one they dreamed in the past. The disparities they experience, the discrimination they have to face based on their language skills and abilities and the distance from their dream to the current reality speak from their mind and their heart. A graduate passes out from a university at the average age of twenty-six or twenty-seven has to float in the employment market for three years or more to get into his/her ever first job. He/she finds a younger person is already there in a senior position with higher salary even if he/she is not an academically qualified person. Why is that? He/she may have joined the institution as a leman or trainee immediately after leaving school and grown to a higher state through his/her practical learning, experiences and talents he/she has proved in the organization. But, for a graduate, he/she is academically qualified without any practical knowledge.

In the popular public sector employment imagination, Sri Lankan culture supposedly lived in expectation and high value towards jobs in public sector organizations before the unemployment problem and question of employability of educated youths arose. But competing in the global employment market rather only in the national market has become and inevitable

status quo to any youth seeking for a job in the contemporary world. Education in Sri Lanka in most cases provides basics of theories but not a chance to practice it. Too many courses pay scant attention to the knowledge and awareness of the employment market and the implications of such situation in the career of the graduates, to the country and its economy. Universal free education spends a reasonable amount of country's earnings to educate youths and if that investment does not ensure a solid return to the nation it will have serious implication for the future. A well-structured system of education will have a map in its plan showing that where the output is going to be marketed and how is it going to perform. Relevance and guidance to career direction is important to succeed.

### **2.1. Issues**

Changing nature of the world, mass exodus of highly qualified people from Sri Lanka and their unemployment and underemployment problems in the countries where they struggle for promoting their careers and the increasing intensity of globalization have shown warning signals to the existing education system and its output to the world. The ever growing numbers of unemployed graduates in the country, often disturbing mass protests against governments asking to create routes for employment and the drop outs from the universities for employment purposes are further evidences of this critical situation. What are the major issues behind this scene?

Unemployment problems are not new to the country and it has been a major issue for several decades dictating various reasons for such stage. As Hettige (2000, pp. 326–328) explains about the situation existed in 1960s and 1970s, educational attainment in the country contributed to high rates of unemployment among the uneducated youth. There were several reasons for the high rate of unemployment among the youth in 1960s and 1970s. Expansion of economy was not in proportion in the high rate of population growth was said as one reason however, it is also emphasized that the highly academically oriented school system in the country prepared students for certificate-oriented examinations without equipping them with life skills and practical capabilities. Educated youth were not prepared for skill-oriented jobs; they were mostly looking for white-collar jobs in the public sector, which is a continuing issue in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka's overall unemployment rate has touched double digits in 2003 at 11 percent. That is up 2 percent from 1999.<sup>1)</sup>

If an analysis takes place in the children's learning age, at the beginning, limited opportunities for tertiary education place severe stress on students

to work hard for examinations and mere emphasis on occupational choices and decisional bases. Only two percent of students taking the university entrance examination qualify for entry into universities. Even if they make it, it isn't really a big deal. As University education is not vocation oriented, after graduation they find it difficult to find suitable employment, especially in the private sector<sup>2</sup>). Attractiveness of a course at a university increases with being able to select in its admissions.

Teaching and learning style adopted in the system do not encourage a base of knowledge development among the youths. The failure of many policy and structural changes in education to consider such demands of the employment market is a serious deficiency considering how influential these knowledge and skills bases are in the future career of the graduates and school leavers. Many policies fail to discuss the implications of the various aspects of education for the actual practice of creating jobs. This does not serve the needs of students who will soon be experiencing job search. As Hettige stated (1996, cited in Hettige, 2000, p. 328) highly academically oriented school system in the country prepares students for certificate-oriented examinations without equipping them with life skills and practical capabilities. This is not specific to school education. Tertiary institutions continue the same.

Institutions have a danger of offering programmes that are not relevant to or not match with the needs or demands of the world of work. Subjects are introduced without prior consideration of future market, a review of the needs or long term vision but merely because there are specialists in a subject area in the department and who have an interest to promote their own favorite subjects and forcibly (directly or indirectly) pour the idea of idealism in learning those subjects into the minds of students hanging on their favourite teacher to assist in choosing the subject. Unlike the universities worldwide, Sri Lankan Universities offer a small number of elective subjects amongst which students could choose. The reason presented for less number of electives mostly on the side of scarce resources but this is particularly the drawback of the system. Universities mainly depend on the funding of the Government for all their expenses and their pay roll is limited by the system of funding. Treasury influence is one of the most critical factors in deciding the fund made available to each institution. Number of cadres is limited by the decision of the University Grants Commission (the corporate body of administering tertiary institutions). Number of hours an academic department could borrow from outside specialists is limited by the available funding to the respective department. No chance of self-financing for courses and resources in many cases. And red tapes play a major role in every decision of the department, faculty

or the institution as a whole. No career orientation is considered and students' awareness of the world of work is poor since they never work until they complete their studies. This is especially the case for internal students who are restricted from employment during the course of their study. In many countries, children over 11 years are allowed and expected to work and earn for their own spending where they can learn the skills needed, the environment and the need for a specialist skill development. What is most important is the monopolistic and independent structure of higher educational institutions where competitiveness is not encouraged and demanded. Every institution has its definite number of student intake each year, their portion of government funding based on students enrolment through education system, which is a factor that never encourage them to be competitive.

The system does not give a chance to select the subjects and the time of study. Instead, students have to comply with the fixed timetables and semesters.

Selection of students does not give a room for student's personal skills and interests. Specially, the system of having cut-off marks to each and every course and the prestige indirectly introduced through such selection prevent them from enrolling in to most interested area. Power distance and the social status provided by the cultural norms of the society also have an impact on this issue.

The links between universities and industries are weak (Munasinghe, 1997 cited in Munasinghe and Jayawardena, 1999, p. 72) or none in some cases. The prevailing situation (civil war and political unrest) is expressed as the main cause to this situation however the fact is that some institutions have no linkages with any available small industries or non-profit organizations. Consultancies, industry and other social and institutional linkages are viewed as earning points rather than learning points to academics. Exploring the world is a critical success factor which takes less attention of many academics.

Apart from the structural failings of educational system as a whole exist in the country and the higher educational institutions produce mass of graduates who are being questioned about their future and specially their careers, the general attitude of the society has also contributed to the contemporary situation of unemployment and unrest. Still the academics, politicians and the intellectuals are in support of mass protests asking for government employment which is an inducement for youths to justify their demands and on the other hand a shadow that is against the reality.

Resistance to change, plans are in records rather than in action, and the cultural or social belief of „Be cooperate with the village“ play an important role

in determining the situation exists. The person who initiates changes is viewed as an exception and against the majority. He/She is criticized, alienated, ignored and become frustrated and forced to give up even more creative, innovative and successful ideas.

## **2.2. What do the employers look for?**

Reviewing the family history or listing your qualifications if you've got the stuff to become a successful achiever is not the requirement for any jobs today. The questions are simple. Are you tenacious? Do you have the skills to do the job and produce excellent results? Do you believe in your own ability? Could you work with minimal or less supervision? Do you have a track record in your career? Do you have a willingness to work and improve your skills by learning? Do you have the language skills to communicate effectively? Do you have good customer relation skills to deal with? Those are the markers employers look for, and those are the characteristics the people who provide the capital for growing companies mention when they describe successful applicants. Because, organizations deal with competition and they need competitive workforce to succeed. Capacity building has emerged as a major concern for international institutions and foreign assistance agencies.<sup>3)</sup>

Hettige (2000, p. 331) says that with the increasing integration of the Sri Lankan economy with the outside world over the last two decades, such attributes as computer literacy and knowledge of English have become widely accepted, additional criteria for recruitment even in the public sector. The question is „to what extent these aspects have been taken into consideration by the educational institutions“? To what extent these issues are shared with students and parents? There are still some traditionalist voices against shifting the medium of instruction to English from Sinhala or Tamil emphasizing education through mother tongue. Do these people have an awareness of the world and the challenges faced by those youths in the employment market?

Poor language skills also place Sri Lankan youth at a disadvantage. Since most graduates come from rural areas, they are not conversant in English – a major impediment in securing employment<sup>2)</sup>. Language skills are not problems to specific companies in the country and many companies like to deal with cross-border economies for country's development. In Malaysia, according to a news item of New Straits Times-Management Times<sup>4)</sup>, at least 2000 entry-level executive jobs remain unfilled in the professional service sector because of a shortage of English speaking graduates, a public relations expert has declared. Why do English language skills are so much

emphasized? In many cases, most of the organization's work is carried out in English. Their clients write to them in English, negotiations are in English and the material they exchanges is in English. On top of this, when we look up reference books or websites, they are invariably written in English. This situation forces the employees to look for the language ability of candidates if they need an able person who can communicate well with their clients.

Employers look for the right quality candidates who can fulfill their expectations in the working organizations.

### **2.3. What is in need?**

The role of the institutions in educational development is quality, not quantity. We need to try to make a difference in education starting with the question of „Where we are and where do we want to be? Theories are sources and bases of knowledge but applying them in a practical situation brings experiences and opens paths for further thinking and analysis. No matter how many graduates are passing out from each university but their ability to compete in the employment market and the proving skills that they are of right quality to produce results in the organizations where they start their careers would show the real development of the country and the system which is in place. What the author suggests to academics is to make their outputs marketable. Whatever learning points are, try to bring out them from applied settings rather than presenting theories as they were said. It is not that much difficult. Start from your own organizations where an application is possible. Extend the learning spaces to surrounding organizations, society, village, city, region, country, etc. Review, argue, and criticize works with students individually and severally to develop ideas and evaluate in their own phase. Encourage students to come forward to learn, to look forward to the changes in the world. Share the knowledge and experience of your colleagues, friends and other experts in the field, invite outside experts to present their own experiences, provide students with new faces and phases of knowledge from the environment where they are going to be in the future. Give chance for extensive learning experiences rather than teaching them what you know.

Encourage students to read more rather than be dependent on your study notes. As an expert in the subject, prepare your study guide/material beforehand. Make it available to the students at the beginning of the semester thus give room for enough time to read it and certainly before the lecture. Include your assignments in the study guide to enable them to prepare extensively. Stress their reading and make it an advantage whenever possible.



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Write textbooks to match with the country's need and environment. Self-learning never stops. Be a learner at all times. The reality is what is current today may be outdated tomorrow. Make your system more flexible to adopt changes according to the need.

Sri Lanka is ideally suited for a skill based human capability development because it is endowed with hardworking, achievement oriented people and a high value existed towards higher educational achievements among its members. To make it valuable, make careers portable through a global knowledge base. Migration and new work environment are much more usual and inevitable today than ever before. All developing countries welcome migrants of all categories specially for assisting the economic and industrial development of the country. However, the people from various parts of the world bring new values, beliefs and dimensions that are much different from the existing group of people in a particular host country. It is important to develop the skills and knowledge that make a person competitive in the new environment for their survival and to thrive in the strange set-ups. Careers are important to each and every member of a society and the career satisfaction and success play an important role in their life journey. However, skills, knowledge, adaptability and willingness to learn may have an impact directly or indirectly on the career progression of individuals when they enter into a different territory. Sri Lankans are not exceptional in this case. Sri Lankans in search of foreign employment are a growing number, which emphasizes need for the portability of careers. If you cannot continue your career in a different environment and if you don't have the skills that match the need, you are a loser. As individuals, you have to take responsibility of your own career. It is yours and the outcomes are yours. Take it for yourself and make it portable.

Change in attitudes is another necessary aspect of competing successfully in the world. Higher the positions are lesser the work in the floor or lesser the physical work is the concept behind the attitude of our culture. Power distance existing in the society hinders people to work in the floor if highly qualified. An attitude change is necessary to hit the target and lit the light. Another fact is the crazy for public sector employment, an attitude for power and value imparted by the colonial system.

According to Munasinghe & Jeyawardena (1999, p. 69), Sri Lanka has done very little to improve quality and efficiency in higher education institutions. In Sri Lanka, there is a significant gap between the expectations of employers and what graduates actually possess with respect to most disciplines. They also emphasize that higher education institutions have to

produce quality graduates with sufficient knowledge, skills and experience relevant to national needs. The author adds the idea of global needs. The country is in the critical process of creating partnerships and employment agreements with many other countries all over the world. Sri Lankans are in search of employment in developed countries where sophisticated technologies in place and highly skilled human resources are valued. The needs are different but skills are important in each and every place. If we can produce graduates with necessary skills (social skills, managerial skills or any other), we could win in the employment market. We won't suffer but cover the needs to be able to succeed.

It is only recently that the Sri Lankan university system has started thinking of making a conscious effort to improve quality. Until then it had been practicing, by and large, the same set of traditional methods to maintain standards (Munasinghe & Jeyawardena, 1999, p. 70). A quality assurance programme is in place but its effectiveness has not yet been evaluated since it is in infant stage. Universities recently introduced staff development programmes for newly recruited academic members but never evaluated the effectiveness of such centers. A good teacher is the one who encourages learning among the students and perceives students as his/her teachers to promote his/her academic achievements. He/she needs to search for new knowledge not only in the subject but the changing needs and the environment as well. Traditionalism won't help us to market our products and us in the modern, ever changing, and global and technologically advanced environment. Thinking globally and acting locally is the concept of success these days.

The author suggests that quality in higher education is achieved when continuous evaluation and information sessions take place with necessary reviews and when continuous feedback is received from the graduates who are swimming in the sea of worldwide employment market and when feedback from employers are taken into serious consideration in review sessions and while designing subjects for graduate programmes. Any graduate, vocational or professional programme need to consider the changing requirements of the world of work. Rigid structure in education is no more applicable in the global village. Keeping the same syllabi for five years would not help neither student nor the staff or even the employers in the contemporary world. Flexibility is the utmost need of today's education providers and the system if our output needs acceptance from its customers. A change in curriculum enhancing relevance and quality is important and for that a flexible structure with continuous reviews and need-based adaptability is the basic instrument.

Institution-Society links are lack in many cases in Sri Lanka. A strong link with the society would be able to promote enhanced access of knowledgeable experts to share the needs and wants of the society to the institution. On the other hand, institution would be able to access the needs and assist the society for betterment wherever possible.

Increasing the number of students in take to the universities is limited and the main reason for this is the scarcity of resources in the universities. Why can't you double the number of students in take to the same existing institutions providing that you are increasing the financial resources to keep the system active with incentives to the staff to conduct the same courses twice a year or recruiting more staff and improving the infrastructure in the institutions? It is possible if you could develop your country by your strategies for economic development rather than political wars and personal political successes. Our political leaders, in their eagerness to be in the ruling party for long periods, are noticeable in their verbal promises even if their achievements in the past hardly caused a major development in the country. In politics it is all a matter of promises over reality and this is particularly noticeable in an election year.

### 3. Survey on the university education system

A content analysis of statements provided about their education at universities by 100 graduates from Sri Lankan universities produced some valuable ideas in this issue. All those graduates agree that the system needs improvement to match with world's demands.

**Table 1.** Demography of survey participants

Age	%	Subject	%
25-30	10	Arts	04
31-35	27	Medicine	08
36-40	55	Dental Science	04
41-45	08	Veterinary Science	02
		Engineering	22
		Business Studies (Management / Commerce)	38
		Bio Science	06
		Physical Science	12
		Agricultural Science	04
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>

The sample of graduates was selected on a snowball basis and the major portion of them (38%) was from the field of Business studies either business administration or commerce. The age group of 25–30 represents those graduates left the universities in late 90s and after. The next group, 27% of the participants are in the age range of 31–35 and they would have passed out during the early to mid 90s and 55% of them fall in the age range of 36–40, which means that they would have left the universities during the period of late 80s or early 90s. Only 08% percent of them are in the age range of 41–45 who would have passed out during mid to late 80s. Thus, the survey participants cover the last two decades and it is more useful to get the ideas on the system existed in those times by using this sample.

**Table 2. Feedback from past graduates**

<b>Idea</b>	<b>% Reported</b>
Curriculum should match the contemporary world	100
Resources should be added to introduce new technology	92
More chances to practical experiences should be included in the system	85
Teachers need to upgrade their knowledge	100
Assessment system should be changed to give more weight to application	78
Medium of Instruction should be in English wherever possible	67
Career guidance should be given during the period of study	12
Student-Teacher relationship needs improvement	45
Access to Information Technology should be made available to all students	60
Library services needs improvement	16
Need text books with our own examples	15

The Table above provides the major ideas presented by the survey participants. Considering the changes occur in the fast moving environment and the spread of graduates from Sri Lankan universities around the world, it is important to our institutions produce quality outputs. To represent ideas from the reality of their employment experiences in this survey, past graduates were selected as the sample.

#### **4. Some models to improve quality in tertiary education**

It has long been realized that the academics of Sri Lankan Universities lack in research interest either due to less encouragement or lack of resources. On the other hand, it is on the system that doesn't have a prop-

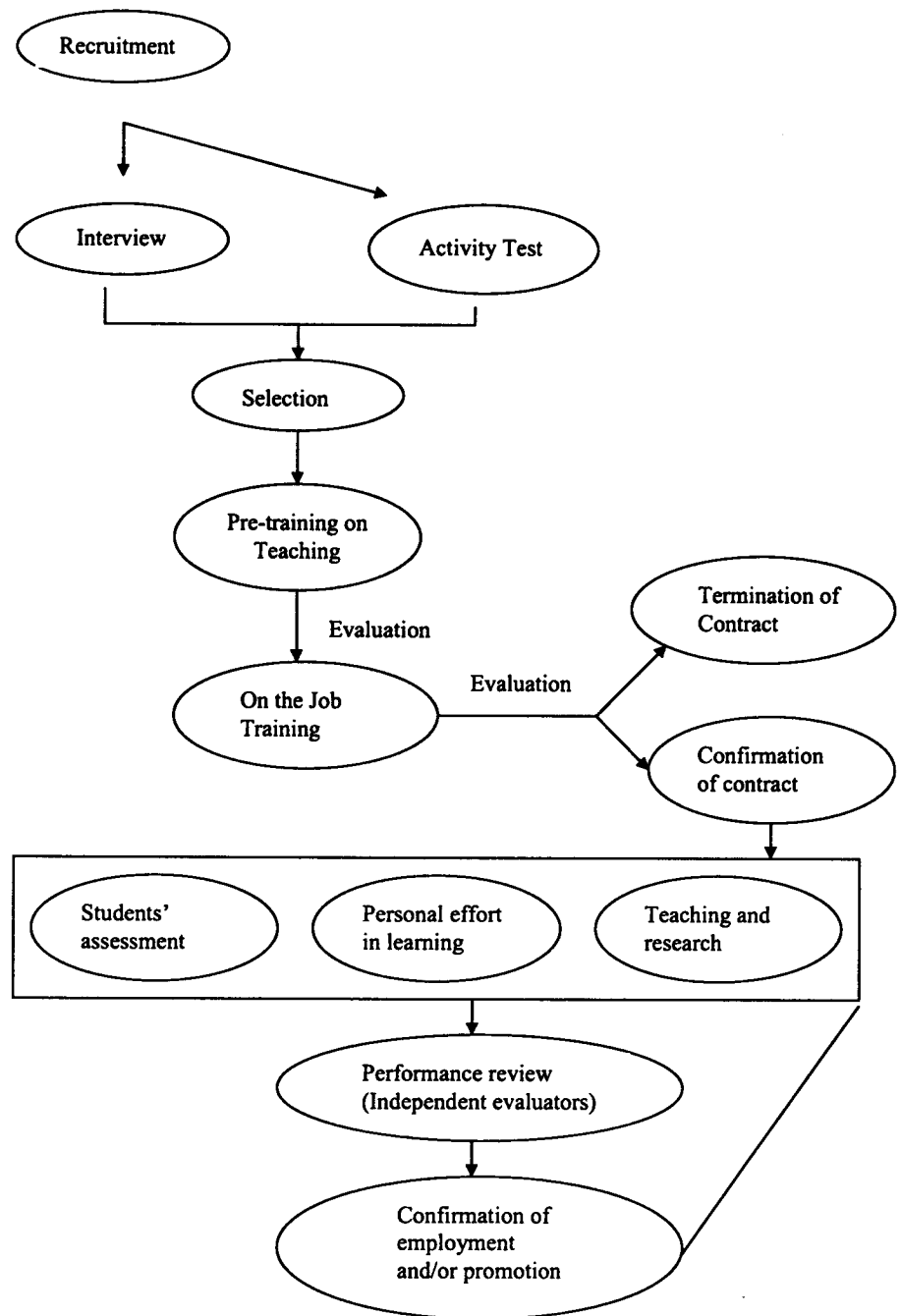
er evaluation and incentive system to encourage learning and research among academics. Individual's performance but regulations play a major role in annual increments and promotions in most cases. The proposed model is based on the concept of continuous performance evaluation to enhance quality of teaching and research. It starts from the recruitment stage of employees.

The above model suggests a continuous performance evaluation among academic staff members in order to ensure a high quality of teaching in the institution. As autonomous institutions, each university has its own phase of decisions for such evaluation. However, commonly accepted norms should play the major role in such case to assure the equity of resource force and therefore a basic model is necessary in this context. The proposed model would have a team of independent evaluators (possibly a pool of academic experts from various institutions). However, the evaluation process starts from the recruitment process where the initial selection of a member depends not only on his/her performance in the interview but the activity test as well. It should be noticed that good teacher should carry knowledge as well as the necessary skills to produce good quality students who can survive and thrive in the world. Training in a job is the first step to ensure the person is ready for undertaking his/her responsibilities. Pre- training and on the job training (Pre-service training and in-service training) are suggested in the model as indicators of quality enhancement. Van Amelsvoort et al. (2000, p.23) present these training contents as few of many staffing indicators from the perspective of educational effectiveness.

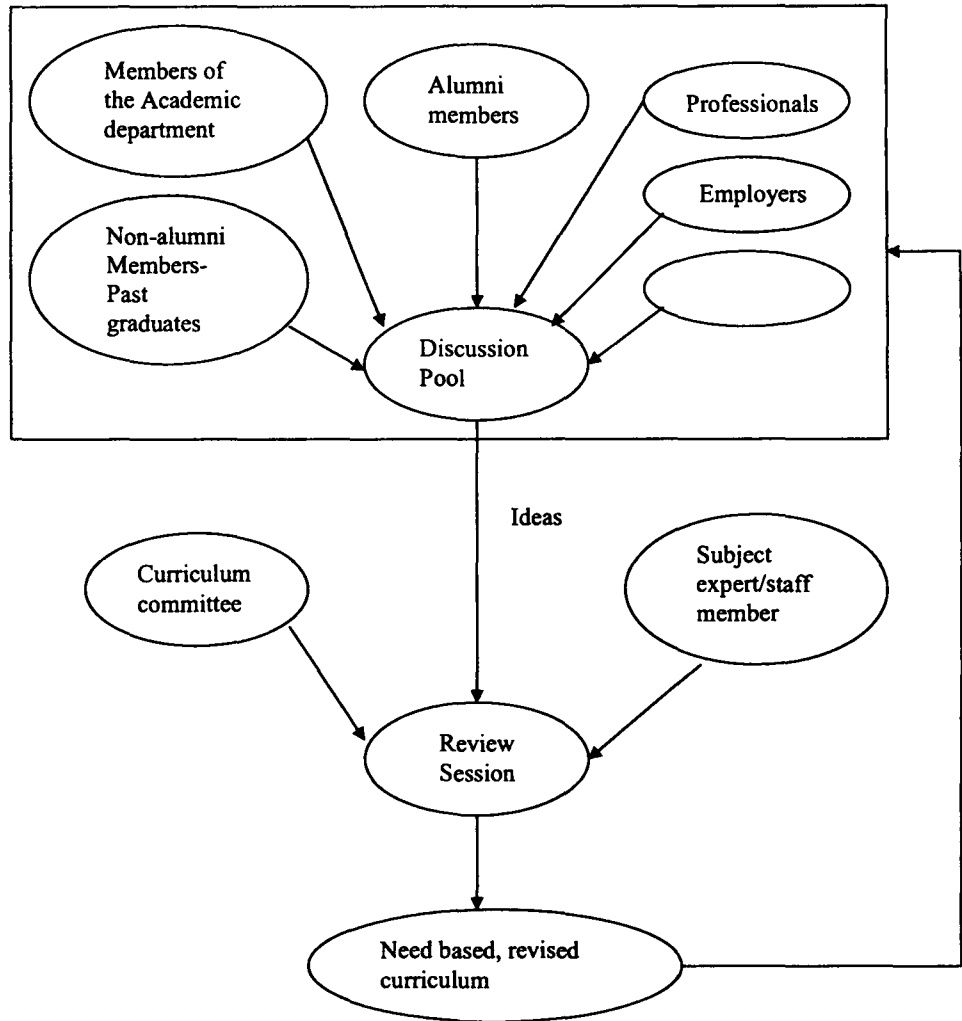
The model also suggests that the employment should be on a contract basis at the beginning and the permanent positions should be based on the evaluated performance of the candidates. Confirmations and continuous promotions on the positions would also be based on standard performances rather than the number of years of service. This would ensure the quality of teachers and thus the courses and students of the institutions.

Most importantly, the model suggests a circular process in the performance evaluation system even after the position is confirmed. This is to encourage and induce continuous learning and research among academics to compete in the modern world. In this case, author agrees with Munasinghe & Jeyawardena (1999, p. 77) that academic staff should be encouraged to establish close links with relevant external organizations with a view to supporting them with consultancy and research work. This would enable them to feel the reality and practice of knowledge gained in the real situations in order to produce good quality graduates.

**Fig. 1. Academic staff quality improvement model**



**Fig. 2. Quality Improvement in Course Structure**



**4.1 Basic improvements needed in the whole education system:  
Some suggestions**

- Make students to feel what they learn.

Memorizing facts and answering questions in examinations do not mean that the person has the knowledge of practical life or is capable of using the knowledge he/she has got.



- Emphasize the language ability and encourage them to make it possible through creating an environment to learn.
- Make career selection comfortable.

There are two possible options to adopt in the system to make the students feel career selection a comfortable phenomenon. The option one is to evaluate students' ability to pursue in a particular field at a middle stage in their school education and guide them in a potential field to choose in. Option two is to make the curriculum more flexible and simple at the school level and providing career guidance programmes to assist the students to choose their future career and decide their field of interest at the end of their secondary school education.

- Make knowledge and careers portable.

Incorporating exposure to outside world and developing technology to the whole education system accompanied by student oriented learning could make knowledge and careers portable. It may be argued that it is not possible to specific situation where the individual has chosen a field that only matches to the country's needs and requirements (e.g. Teaching Sri Lankan Languages). But, the fact is that these situations may no longer exist in the global village where national borders expand and communities spread all over the world. What you could incorporate is the basic skills and attitudes to function in any environment that makes knowledge and career portable.

- Create changes with people standing on the floor.

Implementing any change in the system demands cooperation and collaboration to succeed. Making decisions at the top levels and imposing them to implementers would not bring the results expected. People implementing the changes need to realise such change is necessary and beneficial, understand what changes has been made and the ways to carry out them, and most importantly have an enthusiasm and willingness to see the results of such changes. To achieve this, work with them before a change is decided for implementation.

- Make your institutions results oriented in quality.

Quality should begin from pre-school not only at tertiary education. Basic learning of skills develops among children when they are exposed to learning environment either at home, play-school or Montessori schools or all of these. Skill development at childhood is the most important stage to bring them useful citizens. Therefore, beginning with technical teaching rather than self-learning and exposure presents a danger of damaging self-

development of children. System needs improvement in inducing children to self-learning and development, observe and realise, feel and make it.

## 5. Conclusion

There is a growing concern of unemployed graduates in Sri Lanka presenting a question on university education. On the other hand, many people have become conscious of the vital role that the universities play in producing mass of graduates to the employment market as quality outputs. Only the efficiency and effectiveness in the education system and the educational institutions could make it possible. These may be obtained through several transformations within the organizations. However, some fundamental changes in the system as a whole are necessary in order to improve quality and relevance of the education. The models proposed open some paths for such changes to enhance the capacity of the institutions to respond to the needs of the nation and the contemporary world.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.oneworld.net/article/view/68255/1>

<sup>2</sup> Liyanaarachchi, C. Sri Lanka Gets Jitters as Jobless Threaten Agitation, *OneWorld.net*, 17 September 2003.

<sup>3</sup> <http://magnet.undp.org/cdrb/parti/htm>

<sup>4</sup> New Straits – Management Times. Proficiency in English Gives Job Applicants Competitive Edge, 28 May 2002.

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✉ Dr. Nithiyaluxmy THARMASEELAN,  
Department of Management Studies,  
University of Jaffna, SRI LANKA  
E-Mail: nithyaseelan@gmail.com