

Impact of Student-Teacher Relationships on the Crisis at University of Sri Jayewardenepura: Student Perspective -Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce

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University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJP) experienced the most sorrowful incidents in the recent past, when two undergraduates were killed within the university premises. These killings were due to clashes between the two student groups that were holding opposing views. Accordingly USJP at present faces a crisis situation.

Literature indicates that “a crisis is anything that has the potential to negatively affect the reputation or credibility of an organization. All major crises are caused by a combination of technical/ economic and human/social factors”.

As revealed by the study carried out by Weerakoon et. al. (2004), lack of sound student –teacher relationships was one of the major reasons that gave rise to the crisis at USJP.

This study, considering the human/social factors causing a crisis, attempts to identify the impact of student-teacher relationships on the crisis, through the eyes of the students of Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce (FMSC). FMSC is the largest faculty of the university system and it holds the reputation as the centre of excellence in the management education in Sri Lanka. It is now at a stake because of the violent behaviour of students. Hence the sample was drawn from among the students of FMSC. Both primary and secondary data have been used in this study. Data collection tools used were questionnaire and interview. Questionnaires distributed among a random sample of 180 students addressed the aspects such as the nature of sound student-teacher relationship, present status of such relationships at the faculty, degree of importance of relationships towards eruption and prevalence of the crisis and possibility of using such relationships to resolve the crisis. Interviews covered almost the same aspects.

Key words: Student-Teacher Relationship; Crisis Situation; Crisis Management; Education

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