Free Speech Situation is Needed Between Academia and Industrialists; Is a Path Way to Solve Unemployment Among the Graduates?

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the level of coordination and cooperation between the academics and industrialists. The data were collected by using in-depth interviews, focus group discussions with different stakeholders of the Management Faculty. This study reveals a lack of coordination and cooperation among the major stakeholders. A lack of trust between the stakeholders, little commitment or heavy workloads among the academics, limited forum for dialogue and unawareness of mutual expectations of each other lead to weak coordination and cooperation between or among them. This low level of coordination and cooperation among the key stakeholders has resulted in low employ-ability among graduates in Universities.

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Introduction

The experiences of universities in developed and developing countries like Germany, China, Thailand and Singapore supported the argument that a lack of coordination and cooperation between the industries and universities creates an environment which gives rise to low graduate employability. These levels of coordination and cooperation among the key stakeholders affect the quality of the output of the university as stated by Khare (2014). The relationship between academics and other stakeholders are very weak particularly, between university and the industry. This poor relationship has resulted low level of employability among the graduates. This paper focuses on understanding how coordination and cooperation between the academia and the industrialists comes about, by using the theory of communicative action and other relevant literature.

A single embedded case study strategy, together with qualitative methodology, was adopted while taking a critical constructivist research philosophy. Twenty nine in-depth interviews, three focus group discussions and documentary reviews were used as data collection methods. Students, academics, academic administrators, non-academic administrators, unemployed graduates, alumni, industrialists, representatives from UGC and MoHE were interviewed from March 2014 to February 2015. The researcher has undertaken a qualitative approach which leans towards constructionists in analysing the data as a critical interpretive framework. The study met its own philosophical, theoretical and logic design. As a triangulation method, the interview, focus group discussions and documentary evidence were analysed.

As mentioned above, Habermas's theory consists of two concepts, the lifeworld and the system (Habermas, 1984). Historically, the term "lifeworld" has signified the pattern of societal action. According to the communicative action theory, the cultural, personal, and social life of the individual converges into his/her lifeworld.

The concept of the 'lifeworld' ('slebenswelt' in German) comes from phenomenology, particularly from the work of Husserl and Schutz. Habermas gave it his own specific meaning. Habermas brings a narrower meaning to lifeworld than Husserl and Schutz. The system is defined as a process which incorporates different aspects such as the language system and the behavioural system. The system is therefore embedded in the lifeworld, and in Habermas' words, colonises the lifeworld.

Bloom (2012) illustrated, with an extreme example, a society where the lifeworld is totally colonized and society is reproduced as a system. Habermas also argues that systems and the lifeworld are radically uncoupled. The uncoupling of the system from the lifeworld means that the organizational structure of the lifeworld, that is, communicatively achieved norms and social networks, have no effect on the systems that can interfere with the lifeworld (Amelia, 2013).

According to Habermas (1984 &1987), cooperative actions should be carried out via deliberation and argument among members. When decisions are being made from the perspective of the lifeworld of stakeholders such as academics, students and industrialists, then such decisions should be appropriate to the present as well as to future contexts. Faculty boards, the Senate, and other statutory bodies are formulated in universities (university Act, 1978 and amended 1995) as forums for discussion and argument. Universities have been structured to make decisions from the bottom to the top such as Faculty boards, Senates, Councils, Standing committees, and the Commission at the UGC. Consequently, universities should function through deliberation and argument among its members.

Mapping Coordination and Cooperation between academics and industrialists

The research participants, academics and academic administrators also stated that developing networks between the university and industry would create a path to gain

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employment for graduates as stated by the following research participants:

"To network with academia as well as the corporate sector and students so that we connect and form a relationship with them. It might be helpful for students to gain employment."(AC06)Respondent 1).

"Only with a close relationship can we do many things. Even doing research and sharing our feelings and our knowledge and actually having a good relationship and thereby improving graduates employability" (AC10 Respondent 2)

According to the academic administrators, he also agreed to have good relationship with industries but it is at the poor stage as shown in the following;

"We have it (coordination and cooperation) now, but it is not adequate. In order to develop the employment level of our students we have to have a good relationship with industries. So the relationship we have now is not very good. It's not at a zero level, but it is at a minimum level" (ADM05 Respondent 3).

"…specially in management faculties, the standard is not there and the output is not fit for industrial requirements, so it leads to unemployed graduates." (AC05 Respondent 4)

Therefore, the research participants highlighted that they understand the importance of the coordination and cooperation with other stakeholders, particularly between the university and the industries. However the ideas are not implemented. In addition, they urge for links among stakeholders in order to produce graduates who have skills and capabilities that match with the requirements of the industries, which will in turn enhance their personal career prospects. The argument is that unemployment among graduates in the management faculties arises due to poor coordination and cooperation among key stakeholders. Therefore, by analyzing the behavior of all stakeholders, particularly those within the university, it can be strongly emphasized that the present university graduates are unemployed due to lack of coordination and cooperation among the stakeholders.

The key stakeholders of the universities are academics, industrialists, academic and administrative administrators, government representatives and students. Some stakeholders perceive that there should be a good relationship with mutual understanding between parties within the university as well as outside. (Forest, 2003; Kiramer, 2010). This relationship creates a space for mutual discussions and arguments in order to have effective and efficient coordination and cooperation (Habermas, 1984 & 1987).

Different models of interaction with industry have evolved, such as business incubators, science parks, technology parks, etc. The university-industry links benefit both parties (John, 2003). Industry expects innovative ideas from the University in order to overcome weaknesses, enhance operations and improve productivity through conducting research. On the other hand, the University needs a platform to conduct experiments/ research on contemporary issues and provide internship training to undergraduates and staff. A comment is made by a participant representing industry as follows.

if we are offering something we also expect something in return. It has to be a win-win situation. If those academics also can study, say come to this organization and study management practices, how will it happen? Also, these academics have a lot of research capabilities. They can research and tell us; the literature says this, you all are doing it in this manner. What if you do it this way, it is more productive and efficient. Then there will be a dialogue between the two parties and both parties will understand. And also these academics can study our patterns and give reports (IND04 Respondent 5).

Moreover, findings show that many mutual benefits arise through this university-industry relationship. Academics obtain practical knowledge from the real life environment and they can apply it to the class room to upgrade their current syllabuses. Similarly, industrialists obtain theoretical knowledge with intellectual advice on how to solve their real work life problems in the organizations. Further, industry gains access not only to technologies, but also to students, lecturers and university facilities. An industry gains prestige and acceptance for its stakeholders though its association with a prestigious university. This is particularly important in many emerging fields where academic research and publications usually lag behind industry, for example, in the area of energy and technology (Chakrabarti, 2002).

Then we will also gain something. It's a win-win situation. Academics are gaining hands on experience as to what is happening on the ground and they are using their theoretical knowledge to give us proposals. So, it's a win-win situation for both business and the university" (IN04 Respondent 6).

The same view is shared by academic administrators about the necessity for creating and maintaining university and industry linkages. Actually the university needs to have a link with industry to produce employable graduates. Nevertheless, industrialists are more interested in having links with the university than with academic administrators. This view is expressed by a participant as shown below:

"They (industrialist) try to develop links with the university system and they are expecting mutual benefits."(ADM03 Respondent 7).

Although academic administrators do not much care about these links, academics emphasize that having the links with industry provide many advantages (Marzbanat.el, 2014), such as learning about the current needs of companies, developing curricula, etc. In addition, it is noted that industrialists wish to have coordination and cooperation with the university, but academic administrators do not recognize their offers, due to barriers in the system and poor leadership qualities. The structure of the university causes a delay due to the hierarchic organizational set up (Taylor, 2010). Every decision has to come from the statutory body. This structure causes delays or reduces opportunities for effective coordination and cooperation between academics and industrialists, as a research participant stated below:

"The forum also does not permit them to think on that line, no? Even the senate, council, commissions, standing committee, there are a lot of forums" (GOV03 Respondent 8)

At the same time, a participant representing the government articulates that industry wants to collaborate with the university to conduct research but that the universities do not facilitate it. He further emphasises that the linkages need to be formalized by signing MoUs. This shows that universities should work with industries.

"Industry wants to collaborate with the university and sign MoUs and conduct some research on their products. But we don't facilitate those" (GOV01 Respondent 9).

In this context, research participants reveal that the current status of coordination and cooperation with industry is enough as articulated below.

"They (the marketing department)have good coordination and cooperation with lots of stakeholders. They have been linked to the corporate sector for a long time before us ….I believe networks are needed with the corporate sector. They should know what we are doing and we should always seek their cooperation to develop our curriculum" (AC03 Respondent 10).

"We are keeping very good relationships with them (Industries) and they are also providing permanent job opportunities for our students. Most of the students got job opportunities at the same organization after their training. They obtained a chance to continue their careers" (ADM06 Respondent 11).

In order to check whether these links are actually sufficient, there are compared with the standard of the National Science Foundation, USA (NSF-USA) related to Industry-University linkages which take several forms. According to the NSF-USA, four interrelated components of University Industry Linkages (2008) are set down.

a) Research Support: Contributions of both money and equipment to the Universities by industry.

b) Cooperative Research: Pursue research and development in some common areas.

c) Knowledge Transfer: Students and staff work on cooperate sector problems for their theses and dissertations. Cooperative Education programmes, internship and job placement for students.

d) Technology Transfer: Basically conducting technologically based collaborative research with industry.

When our practices are compared with NSF-USA practices for industrial linkages, only part of the knowledge transfer practice occurs in the state universities in Sri Lanka, i.e. the university has the coordination and cooperation for internship for students. The real coordination and cooperation between university and the industry could be seen for other purposes as well, as stated by NSF-USA. The analysis shows that coordination and cooperation is not sufficient in Sri Lankan State universities.

Four themes emerged from the theory of communicative action and the relevant literature with which to analyse levels of coordination and cooperation among stakeholders. Those are (a) forum for dialogue between stakeholders, (b) trust between stakeholders, (c) commitment of stakeholders to achieve common goal and (d) mutual expectations between stakeholders. The levels of coordination and cooperation between Academics and industrialists is analyzed in the following sub-sections.

The extent of coordination and cooperation between academics and industrialists is analyzed through the dimension of the forum for dialogue. Research participants reported that there are unsolved practical issues such as, the fact that academics are unaware of current industrial needs, and that industries face difficulties in solving manufacturing, marketing and labour related issues. Those problems are supposed to be solved thorough extensive research with the participation of both parties. This indicates that there is a necessity to have an ongoing dialogue between university and industry as articulated by a research participant.

"The industry, they have to accept the graduates, and give them a training. I mean the inner culture at their industry and help them to fix in their office or culture. But they believe when they recruit marketing graduates they have to bring the market. HR graduates simply sit and have to finish all HR problems in the industry.

So we are also wrong as well as they are also wrong. And we don't have good dialogue between academy and industry. We talk a lot, but still this gap is there and this is widening now" (GOV01 Respondent 12). Accordingly, both parties have different problems, but they do not accept each other's weakness which has been observed through the last decades. From earlier times, the university and the industry did not have a common forum to discuss their own problems or issues (Mintzberg, 1979 & 1989). Industrialists criticize the university, and in turn academics also criticize industrialists as pointed out below:

"They also have very negative perceptions about university graduates. University graduates also have very wrong perceptions about the private sector. … I have been strongly criticized by the private sector" (GOV02 Respondent 13).

"So there is a similar thinking pattern in the academic also. There's an argument that says that academics are not going to industry because they are thinking, we know everything, we are the people educating, so why do we want to go? Similarly the industrialists are thinking, we are the corporate sector, we are the people doing, we have the experience and why should we go there…" (IND04 Respondent 14).

"In some of the industrial partnerships, they are dominating because they think they know better than academics so may be the sometime ideology that they are superior or sometimes they have experiences is not a bad thing if you are smart enough in academics, we need to manage them or catch or capitalise away the opportunity as well, but not opposing … we winning the heart of the industrial people we did it, It is very difficult at the beginning" (AC05 Respondent 15).

Both parties' perceptions are different and they do not have a forum to express their own perception and get the right feedback for rectification. But, still there is a problem with who should initiate the forum to have dialogue, as elaborated in the following comments by a research participant:

"Dialogue should be initiated at the highest level, because we are in our own comfort zone, OK. We don't know, even if we invite the academics whether they will come, because there is a bureaucracy also. Whether they are allowed to come to the private sector, I am not too sure" (IN04 Respondent 16).

Accordingly, industrialists expect that the University or higher authorities in the University must take initiatives to start a dialogue, but they do not start because of bureaucratic barriers. Coordination and cooperation among the actors is possible when they have equal opportunities to communicate. In a communication process, all ideas can be transferred from one person or group to another (Chester & Barnard, 2008). It may be an innovative idea, data or any fact and there should be a free speech situation or a forum where people can express their own views freely (Habermas, 1984 &1987). But it was noted that MoHE took a step to formulate a forum to dialogue for academic administrators and the industrialists in year 2013, but it was not continued due to various reasons.

From the above analysis, it is clear that there is no forum to share views between academics and industrialists. In order to understand the status of coordination and cooperation

between them, the level of trust between academics and industrialists is discussed next.

According to the views of research participants from the group of academics, academic administrators and the government, it can be seen that the University personnel and industrialists do not have mutual trust in each other as stated below.

"Both parties do not trust each other" (GOV02 Respondent 17).

They can't trust. Normally I see that. If we don't trust a person we don't share anything we know. Therefore, we have a limited relationship …It is not very close (AC10 Respondent 18).

"….through the communication. Everything is based on trust". (ADM06 Respondent 19).

The two parties work independently, they do not trust each other and also they do not respect each other. According to the priority list of the important of stakeholders, academics did not consider industrialists as key stakeholders and industrialists also did not consider academics as primary stakeholders for industry. This has happened due to an absence of mutual trust between them. Therefore, industrialists and the academics do not work together and share their own strengths and weaknesses to achieve their own goals due to a lack of mutual trust. The level of employment opportunities of graduates is influenced by the level of coordination and cooperation. Therefore, the levels of coordination and cooperation are studied with the sub-themes derived from the TCA. The forum for dialogue, levels of trust between main stakeholders, commitment towards achieving the common goals and recognition of mutual expectation among the parties. The overall analysis shows that there is a lack of coordination and cooperation between academics and other stakeholders. In other words, due to less room for forum for dialogue within the Faculty and university system, trust between the main stakeholders and commitment towards achieving the common goals are weak. Finally, the recognition of mutual expectations of the parties are poor, thus levels of coordination and cooperation among stakeholders are weak.

In the case of interactions between academics and industrialists, the most academic leaders except (for a few academics who maintain their personal relationship with industrialists) do not like to create and maintain links with industries. Academics know the importance of industries, but they do not maintain relationships with them for several reasons such as their workload at the university, unnecessary delays in the administration process (so many layers) and their lack of interest in undertaking additional work which they perceive as an additional headache for them. Industrialists also do not take the initiatives since they think it is not their responsibility to do so. They also do not have mutual trust, respect and each thinks he is superior to the other. Industrialists always blame academics and/ or students who they claim are maintaining links only for sponsoring purposes but not for mutual discussions. Therefore, the University as a government institution does not have space to invite industrialists for a dialogue and does not provide opportunities to the two stakeholders to work together to achieve their goals.

According to the study, both the lifeworld and the systems have failed to facilitate coordination and cooperation in the case site. The failure of both modes of coordination and cooperation can be attributed to the same cause.

Asymmetrical power relationships among stakeholders, especially in the Management Faculty in the State University, social and cultural factors, personality difference of stakeholders.

Sri Lankan culture operates on a hierarchical system which is influenced by Buddhism and Hinduism as well as the caste system prevalent in the country. All relationships, even those in family life and offices, maintain hierarchies and are conscious of social order and status. In an organization, the heads of the institution are seen as the sources of ultimate responsibility in organizational matters. Further, the national cultural values of Sri Lankans include dependence, lack of self-confidence, work as a means, lack of system and perfection, respect for authority, acceptance of the status quo, political bureaucracy and poor industrial relations (Kaluarachchi, 2009; Dissanayake & Semasinghe 2015). Therefore, all coordination and cooperation takes place within these circumstances which are based on upon people's positions within the hierarchy. Open communication becomes difficult in this culture because people are overly concerned about personal dignity which is extremely important to Sri Lankans (Nanayankara, 1985; Hofstede, 2001). Sri Lankan culture is different in many ways from the culture in which Habermas derived his TCA (Habermas, 1984 & 1987).

Sri Lanka is a diffident society. For example, publicly reprimanding or criticizing someone would lead to a loss of face for both parties. As a result academics are very conscious of protecting their own and others' faces at all times. However, academics and students do like to discuss and argue but cultural barriers do not allow them to express their own opinions freely. Since people do not express their own desires spontaneously, they have alternative ways of communicating, particularly with senior people. Many academics and students do not air their resistance even though they have issues or grievances. Many senior academics also do not accept a culture of discussion and critique and most juniors are also not in a position to question issues or decisions. Away from the university structures, society respects the seniors and do not question for catchy, If juniors question senior academics, their relationship will be affected or they will not respect or accept the criticism since this would sound an attempt to maintain this culture, which does not provide space to accommodate any unacceptable events. This culture manifests itself in many ways. For example, academics or students do not feel comfortable making decisions since this may lead to failure, which then leads to loss of face (Opatha, 2013). Similarly, if asked questions to which the answer is "no", academics prefer not to be blunt and may give rather vague or non-committal answers in order to avoid losing face. Therefore, Sri Lankan culture is one of the reasons for this situation as our culture is different from Western culture (Nanayankara, 1985). In Sri Lankan culture, people respect family members, elders or seniors. They are not ready to point out mistakes made by elders and accept and believe seniors without argument. Therefore, this culture becomes a barrier for junior academics, in particular, to express their own views. For example, the appointment of a Dean of a faculty and Heads of Departments are almost always based on seniority.

Micro-politics in the university system plays a major role during the election of the Dean and the period of Vice-Chancellor nominations. Particularly, in the university, a group of academics in the university community (academics, non-academics and students) work as a small group and

represent a political party of any other benefit, of their own group. When they work as a group it creates an opportunity to form similar groups and create group conflicts among the university community.

This situation in the university creates group conflicts among the co-staff, and most of the time this conflict continues and ultimately affects the levels of coordination and cooperation among the academics or between academics and other stakeholders, a situation which directly or indirectly affects the quality of graduates and levels of employability of the graduates.

This influence of social-cultural factors and personality can be explained through TCA. For instance, Habermas emphasized that mutual understanding is important in order to reach a common goal. However, he did not reveal how a common goal is achieved in the absence of mutual understanding. The unique findings of the study add to the TCA and explains how a university accomplishes its goals in the absence of mutual understanding or a free speech situation among stakeholders.

According to the findings of the present study, stakeholders do not use a free speech situation to express their views, but express their views in different ways such as talking outside the meeting, two parties coming to mutual agreement for common benefits, which is not mutual understanding but only two parties in the common forum making agreement. In this environment, most academics and students lose an opportunity to engage in dialogue and are reserved or expect another "secret place" rather than an "ideal place" for open and constructive dialogue. Habermas believes that if the "ideal speech situation" is allowed, then this would lead to effective coordination and cooperation, but in the higher educational sectors in Sri Lanka that assumption does not hold.

The lack of coordination and cooperation exists between academics and government staff due to insufficient contact in the rigid university system. The government staff instructs academic administrators to implement decisions taken by the higher authority and instructs them to execute the decisions, which are practiced as a vertical top down communication in the Management Faculties in Sri Lankan State universities. In a nutshell, the levels of coordination and cooperation between academic and academic administrators, academics and the industrialists and academics and government staff, are at very low levels due to the lack of freedom of speech, lack of mutual trust, less commitment towards achieving common goals and ignorance of mutual expectations between academics and other stakeholders.

Management Faculties function in traditional ways. Academics, academic administrators, non-academic staff and students behave largely in a conventional mindset. Academic freedom, institutional autonomy and accountability are absent to a large extent in the State universities in Sri Lanka (Uyangoda, J.2015). Bureaucratic leadership is taken over and influence all processes. Academics are voiceless and are unaware of their own freedom and they sacrifice their academic caliber for personal benefits such as promotions.

Individuals are differently active in the decision making process and this level of activity depends on the personality and leadership qualities of the individual. Most of the time, in order to avoid arguments in decision making, individual academics meet decision makers informally influence them before the time of decision making, and obtain their verbal approval before submitting memos and seeking official approval. Those who submit proposals honestly and transparency, their proposal is considered for hot discussion and finally rejected, most of the cases of new proposals are in this nature.

Instrumental action overruns communicative actions in every part of the procedure. Asymmetric power is apparent in the hierarchical levels of the university setup. This affects the levels of coordination and cooperation between stakeholders.

In the case cited, the bureaucratic system in the university overruns the lifeworld of academics through hierarchical (asymmetric) power used as a steering medium and mechanism. The bureaucratic system influences and prevents the ideal speech situation directly and indirectly, through controlling of the lifeworld of academics. Asymmetric powers between academic administrators and academics also control the ideal speech situation through micro- politics, which is controlled by the levels of power among academic leaders and academics. Academic leaders (practicing instrumental action) in the decision making process in the university system in Sri Lankan State university, reduces the space for an ideal speech situation in the universities.

This situation, i.e absence of space for ideal speech, directly influences the level of mutual understanding and agreement among the stakeholders and leads to a lack of coordination and cooperation among the stakeholders of the Management Faculty under study, resulting in the production of unskilled and incapable graduates, whose abilities do not match with the requirements of the labour market and contributes to unemployment among management graduates in State universities in Sri Lanka.

According to the research findings, the free speech situation does not assist strong coordination and cooperation among stakeholders due to cultural and systematic barriers in the university set up in Sri Lankan universities. Individuals are task oriented, and when they work as a group they give their opinion freely among peers, and academic leaders work with their associates with mutual understanding in a friendly manner with the aim of achieving goals with mutual understanding. If academic administrators also do not use their power among their colleagues, they will uphold their own values and beliefs and respect each other's. If the faculty or university could create such a condition for a free dialogical culture among stakeholders, it will create effective and efficient coordination and cooperation among the stakeholders of the university. The academics realise their own roles in the process of producing employable graduates in instances where academic administrators work freely without any personal agenda. If academic administrators work altruistically and implement good governance, the goals of university will be achieved. This would be a 'transformative practice,' that can address the problems of this paper. This transformative practice will help to develop a similar situation to free speech which is highlighted by Habermas (1984) in the TCA.

The issue was explored through the lens of the theory of communicative action. The theory of communicative action states when people have equal opportunities to communicate, they prefer to communicate with each other and reach their goals through agreed mutual understanding. However, the theory argues that contemporary society, i.e. modern society, is characterized by system and bounded by a bureaucracy which uses powers and money as steering mechanisms to reach coordination and cooperation towards achieving its

goals. As a result, people do not have equal opportunities to communicate in the present society, and thus the present society faces challenges in reaching goals through mutual understanding.

Drawing from CAT, four propositions were developed that explain the research issue. Thus it is proposed that the system overrunning the lifeworld, asymmetric power relations among stakeholders, instrumental action overrunning communicative action are likely to result in the weakening of the coordination and cooperation among stakeholders of Sri Lankan Management Faculties, and may minimize the employability of graduates.

According to the analysis of data collected from the case study cite, the study identifies academics, administrators, industrialists, Government staff and students as important stakeholders, where the coordination and cooperation among them are essential to ensure graduate employability. The coordination and cooperation are studied with the sub-themes derived from the TCA - forum for dialogue, level of trust between the main stakeholders, commitment towards achieving the common goals, and finally, recognition of mutual expectations of the parties. Put it differently, forum for dialogue, level of trust between the main stakeholders, commitment towards achieving the common goals, and finally, recognition of mutual expectations of the parties are taken as sub-themes to study the levels of coordination and cooperation among stakeholders. The analysis shows that there is a lack of coordination and cooperation between the academics and the other stakeholders. In other words, there exists less room for forum for dialogue within the faculty and the university systems, trust between the main stakeholders and commitment towards achieving the common goals are weak, and finally, the recognition of mutual expectations of the parties are poor. Thus coordination and cooperation among stakeholders are weak.

Further, it shows, as it is theorised in the TCA, the pattern of implementing bureaucratic systems in universities has negatively influenced coordination and cooperation among the stakeholders due to lack of mutual understanding. Furthermore, coordination and cooperation has become worse because of asymmetrical power. Accordingly, qualitative findings revealed that neither the bureaucratic system nor mutual understanding (i.e. through communicative action) provides a conducive platform to realise coordination and cooperation in this particular Management Faculty, thus it has failed to reach the goal of graduate employability. Power is a steering medium and mechanism in the bureaucratic system which assumes control of all activities of individuals of the universities. The bureaucratic system along with dominant academic administrators/academics who gain power through hierarchical organization, hierarchical society and or personal achievement, does not permit people to engage in open dialogue, people lose their mutual trust, which leads to less commitment towards achieving the common goals.

Conclusions

The paper provides sufficient evidence to accept the four propositions advanced in the present study. Lack of forum for dialogue, lack of trust between the stakeholders, commitment towards achieving the common goals and finally non-awareness of mutual expectations of each other, are emphasized, showing lack of coordination and cooperation that exists among the stakeholders, particularly between academics and other stakeholders of the university, namely academic administrators, students, the government staff and industrialists.

Reasons for the lack of coordination and cooperation are the lifeworld of academics is overrun by the system, as well as lifeworld itself, asymmetrical power relations among the stakeholders and the instrumental action and strategic action followed by the academic administrators, rather than communicative action in the decision making process, from the perspectives of the research participants. This evidence can be taken as additional support for the advancement of the theorem in the present study.

This study has found further that the academics do not work independently and they lose their academic values, and they perceive that they would have ownership and autonomy. Absence of this ownership and autonomy leads to less commitment and less engagement with academic programmes and the activities of the university. Therefore, the bureaucratic system controls freedom of the academic, ultimately influencing the lives and values of academics which contributes to graduate unemployability.

The government imposes rules and regulation on the day to day activities of the academics, which are far away from the concepts in the Hombolt model of the university. The basic principle of the university is academic freedom and institutional autonomy, which support to produce knowledge through teaching and research to contribute to society. Violation of the basic principle, academic freedom and institutional autonomy are taken away from the university set up in Sri Lankan state universities.

Accordingly, based on the empirical evidence of the present study, it is concluded that the bureaucratic system practiced in management faculties overrun the lifeworld of academics and other stakeholders. Instrumental action in the decision making process and asymmetrical power relations among stakeholders prevent free speech space in the university set up, which has resulted in a lack of coordination and cooperation among stakeholders. They express their views in different ways, such as talk out of the meeting, through pre-determined mutual agreement for supporting each other's proposals. These kinds of practices have collectively created asymmetrical power relationships between academic administrators and even some academics.

This asymmetrical power among the academic administrators and academics destroy the communicative action in the university system, mainly through politics with instrumental and strategic actions. The academic administrators use their power to control the process and implement his or her own desires in the universities. Departments or even the faculty functions under one leader's opinions, and once he or she leaves the position or the office, the entire system of the university collapses. Therefore, the role of academic leaders and usage of power, play a vital role in the University System in Sri Lanka.

According to the discourse of the study, three major reasons are explored.

Firstly, overrunning the lifeworld of academics by the bureaucratic system; secondly, instrumental/strategic action of the academic and administrative leaders; thirdly, asymmetric power relations among the academics and academic leaders, which influence on academics are interwoven and destroy the space for communication or free speech situation. In addition, Sri Lankan hierarchical and diffident culture, further impact on the free speech situation which prevents itself in the lifeworld of academics.

These scenarios affect mutual understanding among the stakeholders, which lead to lack of coordination and cooperation among the stakeholders of the university. It creates a gap, particularly between major stakeholders of academic and industry, which results in low graduate employability among the graduates in Sri Lankan State universities.

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