



ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: EVIDENCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SRI JAYEWARDENEPURA, SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Since, last decades education has developed as a major determinant of human life. In many cases, developments in technology is influenced on learning environment of university education in Sri Lanka. Recently, many issues have been raised regarding the learning environment among the students of public universities. The main objective of this study was to analyze the effects of different variables on students' attitudes towards learning environment of the public universities. The study is based on survey data gathered from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce and Faculty of Applied Science at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Data were gathered through a random sample of 433 students using interviewer administered questionnaire. Both descriptive analysis and multivariate analytical methods were employed in this study. The findings reveal that around more than two thirds of students are females of the sample. Respectively, 45.4%, 36.6% and 18% of the respondents from the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences, Management Studies and Commerce, and Applied Sciences were represented. The age distribution of the students varies in between 19 years to 26 years while most of the students are 22 years old. In order to measure the students' attitudes towards learning environment at university, a composite index was constructed using data reduction methods. The average level of attitudes towards learning environment is 66.61. The level of attitudes towards learning environment with respect to the age, gender type, faculty and academic year have revealed that except gender type other three variables significantly influence on the learning environment. It was observed that the positive attitudes towards learning environment including accommodation facilities, learning facilities, cleaning environment, common facilities for day to day activities and sanitary facilities of students at Faculty of Applied Sciences was in higher level than the positive attitudes towards learning environment of students at Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. It can be concluded that the variables of faculty of the student, academic year and age of the student have effect on the university students' attitudes towards learning environment. These results suggests that, there is a need of enhancing the facilities at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in order to increase positive attitudes towards learning environment by the students at the faculty.

Keywords: Students' attitudes, learning environment, university education, providing facilities