



HIGHER EDUCATION

SUSANWEDA – 2022



DEPARTMENT OF MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT

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Higher Education System in Sri Lanka

1. Introduction

The higher education system contributes to the development of a country is a sign of sound human capital formation by producing competent graduate, professional or technical expert and a responsible citizen enriched with social and cultural values, which eventually enhances the quality of the labor force. However, Sri Lanka is in challenging period of overall education, mostly with higher education system. Considerable number of school dropouts (School Census Report, Ministry of Education, 2021 & UGC, 2021) at the stages of before GCE O/L, after GCE O/L, before GCE A/L and after GCE A/L produce unskilled and semi- skilled labor in to the economy in each year. Since, the apparent contradictions as much higher number of inactive population, unemployment, higher number of NEET segment, increasing the number of unemployed graduates, much higher number of informal sector employment and informal employment without any social security, the said uninterrupted accumulation to the labor market is heightened the contrast of economy with the stable vulnerability.

Difference between the candidates qualifying and selection for the undergraduate courses of the higher educational institutions parades the huge unjustifiable gap. Further, less than half of the rest is covered by the skilled sector production and residuals is yet to be solved. Amongst the graduates output HEMS education output is higher than STEM education output whilst the labor market demand is oriented with the STEM. And Gross Enrollment Ratio in higher education in Sri Lanka was considerably low. It is divulged the inadequate reflection of educational contribution in labor market. Further, Sri Lanka is still stated in lower rank of Global Innovative Index. Thus it also needs inputs in human capital for research and development.

And the sound labor market system required the automated data repository in relation with the higher education and adjacent sectors. Even the composition of labor demand should be sign of the current and future investment, whilst absence of the perfect data repository is yet to be deployed.

Therefore, it is needed to identify the pressure on policy making upon the said policy challenges with the participation of conversant officials of diversified sectors in the higher educational scenario. With the objectifying for the most convenient platform, the Brainstorming

Session was conducted along with the topic of “Higher Education in Sri Lanka” as a remedial tool for the policy pressures identified.

2. Background

The standard of the human resource of a country is a reflection of outcome of the educational attainment. Thus high educational performance shows almost matured labor force without the externalities generated since vulnerability. Hence, the countries as Japan, Finland have been showing the developed Model to the world along with the perfect application of educational tools. Sri Lanka still is indeed in need of higher educational reforms with the apparent application promptly.

The output of primary and secondary education is a function of higher education. Thus there is a relationship between the Variables. Hence, Sri Lanka needs to weight on interconnected comprehensive solution for the interoperability mechanism. The dropping rate divulges the need of prompt action to raise them up toward the higher education achievement. Thus, all candidates sat for GEC (O/L) in 2020 was 339,450 and thereby percentage of qualifying for GCE (A/L) was 73.61. And all candidates sat for GEC (A/L) in 2020 was 301,771^(b) (b - Includes candidates of both new and old syllabuses) and thereby all candidates qualifying to enter university was 194,297^(b) (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2022 Economic and Social Statistics). However, 43,882 of candidates have been admitted to undergraduates’ courses of higher educational institutes for the academic year 2020/2021 (Exhibit 1) and it is 39.68 percentage change occurred, compared to the 2017/2018 admission year. Further, 30.61 percentage change of admitted has happened in 2019/2020 admission year compared to the adjacent year. However, considerable output of graduates Was Arts & Oriental Studies – B.A./B.A. Special Graduates (Includes External & Open University). It was 11,795 of graduated in 2020^b (b – Provisional) (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2022 Economic and Social Statistics).

Exhibit 01 : Number of Candidates Qualifying and Selected to Undergraduate Courses of the Higher Educational Institutions : Academic Years 2017/2018 - 2020/2021

(Universities and HEIs established under the Universities Act.)

Year of GCE (A/L)	2017		2018			2019			2020		
Year of Admission	2017/2018		2018/2019			2019/2020			2020/2021		
	No. Qualified	No. Admitted	No. Qualified	No. Admitted	% change of Admitted*	No. Qualified	No. Admitted	% change of Admitted*	No. Qualified	No. Admitted	% change of Admitted*
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
No. of Students Qualified/Admitted	163,160	31,415	167,992	31,881	1.48	181,206	41,641	30.61	194,366	43,882	5.38

(1) All the candidates who attained the minimum requirements for admission to the universities at the GCE (A/L) Examination.

(2) Excludes 36 students who admitted under foreign intake and Teachers intake.

(3) Excludes 21 students who admitted under foreign intake and Teachers intake.

(4) Excludes students who admitted under Special intake (excelled in fields other than studies), foreign intake (28) and Teachers intake while including 510 additionally increased number.

(5) Excludes 45 students who admitted under foreign intake and Teachers intake.

Source : University Grant Commission, 2021

*Own Calculation

Exhibit 2 : Students by Institute of Vocational and Technical Training Sector 2020 – 2021`

Institute	Total no. of Students					
	Intake		Completed		Dropped	
	2020	2021*	2020	2021*	2020	2021*
1. Dept.of Technical Education and Training (DTET)	24,877	25,339	11,604	14,281	8,033	11,393
2. Vocational Training Authority(VTA)	23,444	33,375	19,222	20,401	3,439	3,879
3. National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA)	14,207	17,277	15,630	13,613	6,266	2,977
4. National Institute of Business Management (NIBM)	7,482	8,939	7,454	8,138	196	140
5. NSBM Green UniversityTown	2,834	2,784	2,116	1,939	150	491
6. University of Vocational Technology (UNIVOTEC)	0	1,143	0	0	34	0
7.Ceylon German Technical Training Institute(CGTTI)	2,396	1,994	1,252	1,847	177	391
Full time courses	631	92	524	520	15	29
Part time courses	1,765	1,902	728	1,327	162	362
8. Ocean University	1,273	1,144	571	657	178	160
9. Sri Lanka Institute of Printing (SLIOP)	506	677	387	564	119	113
10. University Colleges	0	1,387	195	248	84	97
11. National Youth Corps	11,515	8,046	9,684	3,966	1,831	4,080**
12. National Youth Service Council	13,232	15,948	10,794	11,825	2,438	2,797#
Total	104,162	120,047	80,161	79,326	23,122	26,909

* Provisional

** In 2021, the no. of dropouts has increased due to Covid – 19 pandemic.

2nd Batch's courses of 2021 stated after end of the September, due to Covid 19 pandemic. So these courses have not been completed yet.

Source – Statistical Pocket Book, 2022

As per the exhibit 1, it is observed the whopping gap between the number of candidates qualifying and selected to undergraduate courses. It seems higher number of dropouts while entering in to the higher education on the other way, accumulation of considerable number of semi-skilled labor into the economy. Exhibit 2 divulges the contribution for producing skilled labor in to the economy by the vocational and technical training sector. It seems that intake has been increased by 15.25% in 2021 compared to the adjacent year. And completion has been

decreased by 1.04% and dropped has been increased by 16.38%. The gain has been deviated since the effect of Covid 19 pandemic.

In brief, 140,000 number of students was produced in to the skilled sector out of total intake 340,000 number of school students in recent years. Even though the higher education has been providing certain standards, update process should be suit with the demand of modern world. Ultimately, the influence of the said overall process becomes a factor of the labor market statuses in the country. National and international grading is based on the said inheriting and experience is given a value addition to the matured labor. The earnings are determined by both required levels of education and actual skills possessed. Eventually, low per capita income, poverty, income distribution, dependent, skill mismatch, unemployment, underemployment and any more contradiction with balanced labor market pathways. This hampers the ability of economies to innovate, grow and compete.

Labor force participation rate was 50.6 (Population 15 years and above) in Sri Lanka. And the same for the educational level of GCE A/L and above segment was 10.1 in first quarter 2021. Further, economically inactive population for the same educational segment was 15.9 and unemployment rate for the same share was 9.8 and underemployment was 1.5. Meanwhile, youth unemployment rate of the same educational group was 36.6. Moreover, NEET (Age 15 – 24 years) share of the same educational group was 23.5 and computer literacy was 74.3 of the same segment. As per the employed population by occupation, elementary occupation was 22.9 and 43,074 were unemployed graduates. And employed population by occupation was 22.9 of elementary occupations (Department of Census and Statistics, 2020). Total registration with the SLBFE by manpower level, 25.91 was low skilled (SLBFE, 2021). Persistence at labour-market is structural unemployment, which occurs when the labour market does not react to a situation of simultaneous unemployment and unfilled vacancies, and long-term unemployment arising from reduced reemployment chances of those facing longer spells of unemployment. Skill mismatch may be resolved or reduced by internal or external mobility, by investment in education and training and by adapting jobs. Anyhow, higher education sector is responsible for creating human resources to accelerate the knowledge economy.

3. Objective of the Session

The main objective of the brainstorming session is to make possible recommendations and inputs to concern authorities on insight of the way produce adequate and qualified human resources to strengthen the higher educational output. To explore the prompt remedial measures

in higher education sector with the formation of well-equipped human capital is a prominent factor in this session expected.

4 Mode of Intervention

Brainstorming session on Higher Education is to be conducted to mitigate the operational gaps as a solution for students to get convenient exposure to adapt to the rapidly changing world with science and technology upon unemployment, underemployment, discouraged employees, NEET population and immensely for employees who are in need in inadequate skills possessed. Unless screening considerable number of GCE (A/L) dropouts, marginal involvement in vocational training and it's dropouts, higher number of Arts graduates without sufficient skills and experience is being caused to sustainable labor market mechanism with quality and adequacy of human resource supply.

The findings of the survey are to be expected to raise up the youth, job aspirant and employees and ultimately, promote them upon experienced labor market scenario as highly educated supply of labor by mitigation the limitations upon accessibility of challenging job market, minimize the exceeding time spent looking for a job, discourage job seekers, NEET, potential labor force and uplifting timely available job vacancies, self-orientation for job matching through effectiveness, remedial measures for technical and educational driven inadequateness on application of digital technology, ability to talent on absorption the unexpected shocks (As COVID 19, Global economic depression..), multi talent helps to promote Multiple Job Holders and Secondary Job Holders and ultimately minimize the most vulnerable forms from the labor market along with the comprehensive higher education system.

5. Methodology

The brainstorming Session is planned to identify the apparent status of higher educational development along with the changes of policy patronages, overlook on the contribution of skills development towards the global competitive workforce and challenges in the higher educational inspiring, covering the local and global perspectives. And higher emphasis is given to grab foreign earnings by developing sustainable transit for international students to mitigate current economic crisis and open the higher education institutes to the global by enriching the quality and relevancy of the output with international recognize standards.

The Brain Storming session is driven with the constructive 2 presentations that presented by 2 officials who are conversant with the assigned scope of the presentation. The coverage of the presentations is as follows.

- Higher Education Contribution for Skilled Workforce
- Higher Education Trends in Local Universities

Just completion the each presentation, there will be an open discussion on the same scope with the audience (Audience was comprised 52 no. of participants who represents the governmental and non-governmental bodies regarding the scope of higher education. The list of invitees is annexed) and open the discussion on Higher Education for Global Competitive Workforce and Challenges inheritably, eventually grab all the generated information with the scope of higher education. Along with the generated afresh information, the report is compiled with the recommendations and inputs for the operational bodies of higher education scenario.

6. The Vital Points raised in Brainstorming Session

i. Human Capital Formation

While a large number of students are qualified for higher education, the opportunity to get admitted to universities is very low. Therefore, the contribution of Sri Lanka's human capital should be increased. Science students are in more probability to get into universities, whilst those who are in the arts stream are less probability. The challenge is how to maintain and change the said composition. Although a large number of arts students did the GCE (A/L), relatively few get university admission. Also, from the point of view of the economy, the demand for STEM education products is still changing to meet the demand even for the information technology and technology sectors. The challenge is how to make this change. Output of tertiary education, 22910 will join the labor market under HEMS. In computers, the output is 2409, but the demand is about 10000. Accordingly, we are at a place where human capital formation needs to be addressed.

ii. Contribution of Higher Education on Development of Human Capital

Considering how Sri Lanka is positioned in the world, due to the recent economic downturn, Sri Lanka fell from an upper middle income country to a lower middle income country. As a country in upper-middle income status, Sri Lanka did not show high education status. According to the way the countries of the world are ranked, the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) is low. Along with the calculations, Sri Lanka is stated in 20%, Pakistan is below our country, and Bangladesh and India are above. The world average is 40. In upper middle income countries, the average value is between 45 - 50. Accordingly, it seems that higher education in the Sri Lankan economy has not been reflected in the labor market as it should be. It is

clear that the contribution for the development of human capital is not enough. Further, Higher education opportunities are not available for more than 50 percent of students.

iii. Contribution upon Research and Development

In addition to graduate production, researchers should also produce in to the economy. In terms of global innovation index, in 2021, Sri Lanka is at the 95th position. Therefore, the low level of human capital has become a problem to raise this rank. High concentration should be paid upon tertiary education, research and development (QS university ranking top 3) and scientific and technical articles under the human capital and research. Thus, there are obstacles to increase in some innovation indexes. There is a great necessity of increasing the magnitude of the fund on this. Funding is a vital tool on contribution for human capital formation of researchers.

Lack of research and development is a major problem at present. All stakeholders in the higher education sector should look into those problems. Most of the discourses on higher education only discuss with the 17 universities under the University Grants Commission. But as a country, there are matters that need to be paid more attention.

iv. Need of a Regulatory Body and Mechanism for Data Repository

About 25,000 people migrate for education. It is spread over forty countries. In addition, there are several higher education institutions operating in the country that is not subject to the regulation and monitoring of the Ministry of Higher Education. These are affiliated institutions of foreign universities. A certain amount of students from those institutions are engaged in educational activities within the country. These institutions are not subject to any regulation authority. Therefore, non-availability of data in those institutions is a problem. The relevant laws are currently being processed with the intervention of the MoHE. There is a proposal to form a quality assurance and accreditation council. Once the Institute is established, all the above institutes will also come under its regulation and then the problem of getting the numerical data will be solved.

Along with the figures school to work transition, there is a big problem with our higher education opportunities. In considering these numbers, there are other diagnosed problems beyond this. When considering vocational education, it can be seen that the same student enrolls in a number of courses at the same time. These cannot be identified in calculations.

Such problems exist not only in vocational education but also in higher education. It was revealed in an interview that the same person enrolled in several courses concurrently, and in the calculations, those four cases is counted as four cases as well. Apart from the number admitted to universities, there is a problem with the data of other institutions. That is because the same person is included in the calculation in several cases. Therefore, it appears that this problem exists at a more acute level.

Several projects of the Ministry of Education are implemented as consultancy under the World Bank project and ADB projects in connection with the Department of Census and Statistics. In the coming year, we must do a job of collecting data more clearly on enrollment and output. Without accurate and up-to-date data, decision-making cannot be done. The task of gathering that data should be done in a certain way, that is, capture all sectors and include the number of students who are studying in Sri Lankan government institutions, private institutions, affiliates from foreign universities, the number of students who have gone abroad, etc. Although it is not possible to identify a fixed number, a better idea of the current situation can be obtained. It is better if it is commissioned and done as a consultancy.

Dropouts of internal students remain very low. About 25,000 are admitted to external degree every year and their dropouts are considerably high. The dropouts of internal students may increase to a maximum of 10%. But due to recent economic difficulties, this situation may increase. External degree courses have a high in-completion rate. The completion rate of internal degrees can be between 90% - 95%. Therefore, proper data collection methods should be identified and continued in the recent future. National survey of graduate's employability tracer survey should be continued. Thus, national system must be identified. Then it can be reviewed a lot of big issues as what happens to the graduates, how much time is spent in employment, etc

v. Expansion of the Higher Education Scope on Students Intake and Courses Initiation

In the enrollment of students recently, 10000 more students were taken, and a large number of medical and engineering students increased. At the same time, a large investment is made and the medical, technology and engineering faculties are newly constructed. It is acknowledged that there is a gap between student recruitment and this investment. There is some time lag between this intake and construction. After allocating the money, it takes about two years for the construction, but the new admission took place at a faster rate than that. But it will take

between one to two years to solve the problem. Equipment should also be purchased. Hence, the problem has been intervened to some extent, but there is some time delay for its results.

Although it is encouraged to increase the number of students enrolled in the courses, there is a problem of not creating the environment necessary to increase the quality. Even though the enrollment of students has been increased, due to the inadequacy of the existing facilities, it has become difficult to maintain even the original quality of the degree without increasing the facilities. Therefore, if the quality of the final product is not increased, it will be a problem especially in the international labor market, but it is a common situation for all courses in terms of creating a quality workforce.

Every year new courses are created through the University Grants Commission and other institutions. But the thing that needs to be looked at is whether these courses are aimed at the labor market and whether the number required maintaining stability in the market was included in these courses. However, when introducing new courses, first need analysis is done. Then identify the local and foreign job market potentials and identify it ten years ahead. It takes three to four years for a student to enroll up to graduate. Hence courses are introduced with an understanding of the situation ahead. But there are also some problems. However, the number of students to be admitted and the need are identified by reviewing the need analysis and forecast future trend.

In particular, how to provide information technology to students in general, how to improve their English knowledge, how to match their skills with the requirement of job market, on the one hand, to improve the curriculum, to change the teaching environment, to increase the lab facilities. In terms of quality, it comes forward with the qualification framework.

Especially in the last two and a half years, these increases have been made. Also, new courses are started based on analysis of feasibility reports on a job oriented basis. Especially after review through the quality assurance council, this new course has started with the approval of the commission. During that process, 53 new courses have been introduced in the last period. The problem emerged is how these degree graduates especially in the humanities faculty get employment as expected.

To cater it, a separate department is currently being established to provide English knowledge to those faculties. Providing English and information technology knowledge in each approach

is done. There is a high demand for computer software in the Sri Lankan job market. As a solution, a new program is being initiated by the University Grants Commission to study the degree while receiving on-the-job training by contacting various universities.

When introducing new courses, both quality and relevance were considered together and more emphasis was placed on STEM, and many discussions were held on how to convert to STEM due to the large amount of Arts stream. Methods are being prepared for the factor of relevancy.

In the digitization of higher education, in the future expansion of higher education, this fact and side effects that arise with digitization, such as quality, relevancy components, should be considered. Discussions have started for this at present and need inputs by the stakeholders. There are certain limitations in digitization, especially in the university sector. That is, it cannot be used for all sectors. Within those limits, the education systems should be digitized because many things that the students gain from the online teaching are lost, so it should be balanced.

When looking at digitization, the problem is that when hiring someone to provide computer technology in SME business, need to hire a software engineer, hardware engineer, network engineer, and multimedia engineer. A SME business does not have the capacity to hire such a number. There are no corresponding degree courses that produce graduates to provide computer and the necessary knowledge to such small and medium institutions. Thus, we need to develop manpower at an affordable level with the necessary computer technology that in need in the society.

It is difficult to move forward with innovation only in the university system. Especially the research institutes as well as the whole society need to be aware of this. If innovation takes place only in universities, it creates an imbalance in the entire society.

vi. Urgency on a Career Guidance Mechanism

Quantitatively, the next biggest problem to face after getting enrolled to university is getting a job. More attention should be paid to career guidance in increasing employability. According to the act of the University Grants Commission, career guidance units are currently operating in the university system. If these works can still be modified and reconstructed in a way that

suits the time, there is a strong need for such a discussion. At present, the demand of the industry has changed. Whatever the stream is, there is a demand for digitization. With a qualification given to graduates, they will be able to provide the necessary support to match the opportunities in the external market through career guidance. Then it would be more appropriate if there is a possibility to have a separate discussion on career guidance in the higher education sector. It has been heavily influenced especially humanities faculty and management faculty have been made an urgency over the medicine and engineering.

Career guidance is important not only for university students but also from school education itself. One and a half years ago, work on this was started by introducing career guidance courses to school teachers through technical universities. It is possible to identify the student's existing skills and direct the students to a suitable educational framework from the school level. Career guidance and counseling at the school level is very important. Since we currently do not have such a comprehensive system, many high school students do not have a correct understanding of the various opportunities available for university admission. The school level is lower than this and the teachers in the schools are not aware of this. Apart from imparting subject knowledge by teachers, there is no possibility of career guidance.

When discussing about career guidance, although it is a current situation, the jobs that are under digital transformation will be fully identified by the World Economic Forum - Future Job Report that there will be a drastic change in near future. With machine learning, automation, new knowledge should be acquired. There is currently no method for that. It should be prepared promptly. To reach those points, the world is changing with new trends. Although ready to give competence skills, it is not yet ready for a situation beyond that. According to the current negotiations with institutions as the IMF, there may be a decrease in government jobs. Industry jobs will be increased. Hence, the need for career guidance increases. Existing job market will change in the future.

With the current economic recession, all the best and brightest students coming to higher education should be made job creators rather than job seekers. Career guidance and education of the best students should turn them into job creators (Entrepreneurs).

Global Innovation Index and Economic Complexity Index measure how countries develop. In the last 20 years, a country as Vietnam, which was much lower than our country, is now

much higher than our country. Those countries reached that situation because the education system was completely changed. But that discourse has not yet occurred in Sri Lanka.

Education does not end at universities or higher education institutions, but vocational education is also a part of higher education itself, hence career guidance should start at least from grade 9 to 10 to produce the people needed for the job market that is created through vocational education. If not, those personnel will leave. They do not get the opportunity to reach. The NEET cohort of around 26% can be reduced very quickly by executing career guidance to the school level.

The entire society needs to know about the education system that is currently being implemented, which targets the GCE Ordinary level and the Advanced level. At the view of vocational education, the employability of Vocational Technology Universities is currently higher than 98%. As far as government universities are concerned, it is difficult to get into that situation since much of courses. Many steps have been taken in relation to vocational technology education. There is an opportunity to obtain doctorate degrees too in the field of vocational education. Thus, a person who has obtained NVQ qualification can now enroll in an NVQ 7 course at the University of Vocational Technology and continue through that to study for Ph.D. Accordingly, even if those who have passed the Ordinary level and advanced level do not go directly to the university, there is the possibility of continuing their education in terms of professional education and obtaining the necessary qualifications. It is necessary to be aware of this and further educate the society on this. There is a need to take this discussion forward and make a plan. It was proposed to re-discuss on the career guidance.

There is also hope to bring some work program to career guidance at the school level. There is an education pattern aimed at traditional education, Ordinary Level and Advanced Level. There is also difficulty on the part of the teachers in directing education to the jobs that are available at the professional level, where the most job opportunities are available in the job market. They are not willing to give an opportunity over the scope of syllabus. Therefore, a big change in attitude should come through this process of brainstorming.

7. Issues and Suggestions Identified

No	Issues Identified	Recommendations
1	Although a large number of students are qualified for higher education, the opportunity to get admitted to universities is very low. Higher education in the Sri Lankan economy has not been reflected in the labor market as it should be. It is clear that the contribution for the development of human capital is not enough.	The contribution of Sri Lanka's human capital should be increased. It is needed to expand the gross enrolment rate considering the forecasted demand for labor and the courses initiation should be par with the demand orientation. And encouraging the demanded streams and suppressing the least demanded streams and hanging on courses which give value addition.
2	Science students are in more probability to get into universities, whilst those who are in the Arts stream are less probability.	Need discussions to hold on how to convert Arts to STEM due to the less probability of selection Arts stream. Introducing value added courses to enrich the quality of Arts graduates cling with the forecasted demand.
3	At the view of the economy, the demand for STEM education products is still changing to meet the demand even for the information technology and technology sectors. The challenge is how to make this change.	The global demand for labor should be the basement of preparing for local demand. It is needed the continuous monitoring of global scenario with the support of embassies of highlighted countries.
4	In computer Science, the output was low, but the demand was four times of output.	The intake for the demanded streams of higher education should be

	Thus, we are at a place where human capital formation needs to be addressed.	interconnected with the all higher educational institutes regardless of the scope under the supervision of MoHE. Thus, the limited resources can be shared effectively to make a sufficient output of demanded labor. The online platform is recommended to manage the intake and schedule the daily basis academic requirement.
5	As per the Global Innovation Index, in 2021, Sri Lanka is at the 95th position. Therefore, the low level of human capital has become a problem to raise this rank. Thus, there are obstacles to increase in some innovation indexes. There is a great necessity of increasing the magnitude of the fund. Funding is a vital tool on contribution for human capital formation of researchers. Innovation in Sri Lanka is extremely low. We cannot do innovation develop only human resources. Sri Lanka research and development budget in today is decreased to 0.13. Even though so many human resources are produced in the country, without the necessary environment and funding, innovation cannot take place. IP value will remain and capital can be earned only if innovations are taken. Without the necessary environment, no matter how much it increases the number, the result	Human resource in research and development is mainly a function of fund injected. Thus, sources funding should be found even as the collaboration. Currently, the possibility to spent government is limited. The competition between the institutions should be drawn for grabbing source of funding.

	will not be obtained. All these should be discussed in the same framework.	
6	There are several higher education institutions operating in the country that is not subject to the regulation and monitoring of the Ministry of Higher Education. These are affiliated institutions of foreign universities. These institutions are not subject to any regulation authority. Therefore, non-availability of data in those institutions is a problem.	There is a proposal to form a quality assurance and accreditation council. Once the Institute is established, all the above institutes will also come under its regulation and then the problem of getting the numerical data will be solved. However, acceleration of the process is needed. Since the reflection of all higher education institutes in the economy is mandated to overview the overall functions.
7	It is encouraged to increase the number of students enrolled in the courses, there is a problem of not creating the environment necessary to increase the quality. Even though the enrollment of students has been increased, due to the inadequacy of the existing facilities, it has become difficult to maintain even the original quality of the degree without increasing the facilities. Therefore, if the quality of the final product is not increased, it will be a problem especially in the international labor market, but it is a common situation for all courses in terms of creating a quality workforce.	There is some time lag between intake and construction. After allocating the money, it takes about two years for the construction, but the new admission took place at a faster rate than that. But it will take between one to two years to solve the problem. Equipment should also be purchased. Hence, the problem has been intervened to some extent, but there is some time delay for its results. Hence, it is recommended to establish a collaboration unit for each courses required with the participation and facilitation of all higher education institute to mitigate the time lag and sharing the resources.

8	Every year new courses are created through the University Grants Commission and other institutions. But the thing that needs to be looked at is whether these courses are aimed at the labor market and whether the number required maintaining stability in the market was included in these courses.	When introducing new courses, first need analysis is done. Then identify the local and foreign job market potentials and identify it ten years ahead. It takes three to four years for a student to enroll up to graduate. Hence courses are introduced with an understanding of the situation ahead. But there are also some problems. However, the number of students to be admitted and the need are identified by reviewing the need analysis and forecast future trend. Anyhow, continuous monitoring and preparedness are main factors should be maintained on forecast future trends.
9	Need a Mechanism for Data Repository about higher education students. Thus national system must be identified. Then it can be reviewed a lot of big issues as what happens to the graduates, how much time is spent in employment, etc. The task of gathering that data should be done in a certain way, that is, capture all sectors and include the number of students who are studying in Sri Lankan government institutions, private institutions, affiliates from foreign universities, the number of students who have gone abroad, etc. Although it is not possible to identify a fixed number, a better idea of the current situation can be	It is recommended to establish a comprehensive online platform with interconnection of all government, private and affiliated institutes in higher education sector. The initiation, implementation and operations should be under the ministerial power. Eventually, all functions operate with transparency and generate updated labour market information for policy preparation.

	obtained. It is better if it is commissioned and done as a consultancy.	
10	About 25,000 are admitted to external degree every year and their dropouts are high.	There is a great necessity to enhance the quality and relevancy of external degree programs. And no strict regulation for completion. Hence need a proper regulatory mechanism for intake upon completion of the full course.
11	The problem emerged is how graduates especially in the humanities faculty get jobs.	Providing English and information technology knowledge in each approach is done. However, the aforesaid courses should be included in reflection of overall result. If not, just completion is not a solution for getting a suitable job.
12	There is a high demand for computer software in the Sri Lankan job market.	A new program is being initiated by the University Grants Commission to study the degree while receiving on-the-job training by contacting various universities.
13	Lack of research and development is a major problem at present. All stakeholders in the higher education sector should look into those problems. Most of the discourses on higher education only	As a percentage of GDP, Gross domestic expenditure on research and development is very low (0.13 in 2018). This is major reason to abate the contribution of human capital formation on researches. Hence need a

	discuss the 17 universities under the University Grants Commission. But as a country, there are matters that need to be paid more attention.	collaboration approach to increase the debt of the fund. And recommended a collaboration research approach amongst the similarities and reaching.
14	More attention should be paid to career guidance in increasing employability. According to the act of the University Grants Commission, career guidance units are currently operating in the university system. If these works can still be modified and reconstructed in a way that suits the time, there is a strong need for such a discussion. At present, the demand of the industry has changed. It has been heavily influenced especially humanities faculty and management faculty have been made an urgency over the medicine and engineering. Career guidance is important not only for university students but also from school education itself.	Establishing a comprehensive Career Guidance (CG) mechanism is challengeable task, since fully equipped trained personnel is required for almost perfect CG and counseling. As a prompt remedy need an amalgamation of all trained personnel under the single authorized body and delivering the service on CG as a national service. Priority should be given to vulnerable streams of higher education. And again need a brainstorming session representing all private, public, affiliated higher education institutes and schools.
15	Although ready to give competence skills, not yet ready for a situation beyond that.	The routine pathway of ordinary level & advanced level and injecting the skills is getting matured over the exploring new opportunities. Less contribution of research and development is also demoting factor in this scenario. Thus need a critical investigation on global trends to deploy perfect human capital.

16	In the last 20 years, a country as Vietnam, which was much lower than our country, is now much higher than our country. Those countries reached that situation because the education system was completely changed. But that discourse has not yet occurred in Sri Lanka.	Even though Sri Lanka is now in critical stage, need a represented package of stakeholders (Each and every stakeholders prior to birth and after the death) to come up with the comprehensive solution for macro economy. Ministerial power is essential to successful completion and operationalization.
17	In the digitization of higher education, at the future expansion of higher education, this fact and side effects that arise with digitization, such as quality, relevancy components, should be considered. Discussions have started for this at present. There are certain limitations in digitization, especially in the university sector. That is, it cannot be used for all sectors. Within those limits, the education systems should be digitized because many things that the students gain from the online teaching are lost, so it should be balanced.	The main segmentation about online and offline is the solution for maintain the perfect digitization of higher education. Restructuring the course schedule along with the said segments and implementation can be run through the proposed online platform. Thus practical sessions can be managed easily and can be managed the facilities as well.
18	There are no corresponding degree courses that produce graduates to provide computer and the necessary knowledge to such small and medium institutions. Thus, need to develop manpower at an affordable level with the necessary computer technology that in need in the society.	This is a main task of research and development. Developing a proper course unit addressing the formation of SMEs functionalities is recommended as a collaboration contribution of all stakeholders. Sharing the funds is also essential.

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Annexure

List of the Invitees

- Invitees for Presentations

1. **Mr. G.M.R.D. Aponsu** – Director, Strategic Planning and Policy Research Division, Ministry of Higher Education.

- Higher Education Contribution for Skilled Workforce

2. **Mr. Rasika Karunarathna** - Deputy Secretary, Academic Affairs Department, University Grant Commission

- Higher Education Trends in Local Universities

- Other Invitees

3. Ministry of Labor and Foreign Employment
4. Ministry of Education
5. University Grant Commission
6. Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC)
7. National Youth Service Council (NYSC)
8. National Human Resource Development Council (NHRDC)
- 9 National Productivity Secretariat .(NPS)
- 10.) National Planning Department NPD(
- 11 National Institute of Labor Studies .(NILS)
- 12National Youth Corp
- 13National Institute of Education
- 14.Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science
- 15General Sir John Kotelawala Defense University (KDU)
16. Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (SUSL)
17. Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology (SLIIT)
18. Sri Lanka Technological Campus
19. University of Colombo (CMB)
20. University of Kelaniya (KLN)
21. Wayamba University of Sri Lanka (WUSL)
22. Eastern University, Sri Lanka (EUSL)
23. Horizon Campus

24. KAATSU International University (KIU)
25. National Institute of Social Development (NISD)
26. National School of Business Management Limited - NSBM Green University (NSBM)
27. Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)
28. Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (RUSL)
29. South Eastern University of Sri Lanka (SEUSL)
30. Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration
31. University of Jaffna (JAF)
32. University of Moratuwa (MOR)
33. University of Peradeniya
34. University of Ruhuna (RUH)
35. University of Sri Jayewardenepura (SJP)
36. University of the Visual and Performing Arts (IAS)
37. Uva Wellassa University
38. Ocean University of Sri Lanka
39. University of Vocational Technology
40. Ministry of Skills Development and Vocational Training
41. National Research and Education Network
42. Quality Assurance Council
43. Organization of Professionals Associations of Sri Lanka
44. National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA)
45. Employer's Federation of Ceylon
46. National Chambers of Commerce of Sri Lanka
47. Institute of Chemistry Ceylon
48. Post Graduate Institute of Agriculture
49. Postgraduate Institute of Medicine
50. Postgraduate Institute of Archeology
51. Postgraduate Institute of Science
52. Postgraduate Institute of English