

EFFECT OF DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING MOTIVATION AMONG MANAGEMENT UNDERGRADUATES: EVIDENCE FROM UNIVERSITY OF RUHUNA

A.M. Madhumani, K.S.S. Abeygunawardana, D.M. Liyanage and R.M. Rathnayake

*Department of Management and Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Management and Finance,
University of Ruhuna, Matara, Sri Lanka*

Corresponding author: mekhalamadhumani@yahoo.com

As an international lingua franca, today English language has become a popular subject matter in the linguistic researches. English is a paramount language in higher education sector in Sri Lanka for a long time, based on the view that English is the language of science. Nevertheless, many worldwide universities concern more about English in the fields of management, finance, engineering and science etc, the transition from school to higher education is a big trauma for the students, mostly because of the English language problem. Lack of motivation is the foremost reason of this language trauma. Learning motivation has therefore, long been identified as one of the main factors affecting English language learning success. Linguistic researchers emphasize that demographic factors such as age, sex, culture, identity and emotional factors are momentous in language learning motivation. Four demographic factors named as gender, medium of learning, results for the English language at senior secondary examinations (G.C.E O/L and A/L) and regions where students live were addressed in this study in terms of English language learning motivation (ELLM) among management undergraduates. Despite the substantial amount of researches conducted worldwide in the study of demographic factors affecting to foreign language learning motivation, very little attention up to date has been made in Sri Lankan context. Thus, the main objective of this paper is to identify the effects of demographic variables on ELLM in regard to Sri Lanka. Data were collected from 100 (n=100) management undergraduates of University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka using a self-administered questionnaire. Independent sample t- test revealed a significant difference between male and female students in terms of ELLM ($t=2.364$, $p= 0.020$). Similar results were found between Sinhala and English medium learning students as well. However, no any significant difference found between students' senior secondary exams' results for English and ELLM. Further, ANOVA test ensured that there was no statistically significant difference among students' living area in terms of ELLM ($p < 0.05$). Since this study endeavours to identify the effect of demographics on ELLM, future researches can be conducted focusing on various other motivational factors.

Keywords: Demographic differences, English language learning motivation, Senior secondary examinations