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ABSTRACTS

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Social Harmony Among Multi - lingual Students Population in Sri Lankan Universities: A Research Special Reference to Eastern University Sri Lanka

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Universities consist of multi religious, multi - cultural and multi lingual student population, where it is expected to have social harmony among those undergraduates. However there have been recorded incidences and evidence to prove ethnic friction and linguistic Barriers in sustaining harmonious atmosphere in university education. Therefore, it is understood that the existing administrative mechanism has not improved social harmony among undergraduates of multicultural and multi linguistic background. Eastern university is teaching social harmony in English to have a common medium of instruction. Most of the Undergraduates who entered the Eastern University come from rural area and poor family background and they learnt in their mother language at the schools. Though majority of the university programmes are taught in English, schools have their curriculum in Sinhala and Tamil. Therefore students enrolled in to the university where their programme is in English will have trouble both in understanding the subjects as well as in communicating with other. These students face some problems such as transferring ideas, communication and interaction, mutual trust. Highlighting one community culture might be perceived as threat to others. Even after teaching social harmony at the university there are notable incidents challenges to normalcy between different students communities. The research intends: a) to learn how teaching social harmony contributes to make stability in the cohesive relationship among the students in the university; b) to learn what are the programmes practised in the universities; C) to learn what are the programme undertaken in other universities; and d) to identify the challenges to sustain the harmony between different students communities. Undergraduate population of EUSL are of Sinhala and Tamil in terms of language, where majority of the programme are conducted in English except. For faculty of Arts and Culture. Social harmony programme no exception. However informal communication is primarily done in their mother languages which might lead to misunderstanding and therefore will widen the gap between different undergraduate communities. Therefore more emphasis should be laid on social harmony programmes that will bring multi ethnic students together. Cultural activities should be encouraged in addition to teaching social harmony in class.

Key Words: Social Harmony, Multilingualism, Sri Lankan Universities.