

GENDER IN UNIVERSITY SUB CULTURE: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO APPLIED UNIVERSITY SUB- LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

A subculture is a culture within a broader mainstream culture, with its own separate values, practices, and beliefs. In a society, there are number of sub-cultures and University sub- culture is one or part of it. University sub- culture in Sri Lanka also presents the same characteristics like encompassing language, social habits, arts, material and non-material elements. The applied University sub language and its impact on gender was the research area with the problem of studying the effect of gender in University sub- cultural language. The main objective was to identifying the gender in applied university sub- cultural language, and to identify the social and mental problems of university students which occurred with university sub cultural language. The researchers employed questionnaire method for basic data collection from randomly selected 50 respondents in five government universities in Sri Lanka. The researchers found that the gender in the universities effected from the applied University sub languages. Than the male students female students were suffered mentally and socially from the harsh, rough and unique sub cultural languages which used by the university students. There were some literature value in University graffiti and some words which were unique to the Universities, but it should be change in positively without any mental or social pressure.

Key words: - university graffiti, sub-culture, language, Mass society

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1. INTRODUCTION

Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught appropriate norms and behavior – including how they should interact with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities and work places. Gender norms, roles and relations influence people's susceptibility to different health conditions and diseases and affect their enjoyment of good mental, physical health and wellbeing.

Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, social habits, music, arts, material and non-material elements. "Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, and its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery,

writing them into the land. The growing society is there, yet it is also made and remade in every individual mind. The making of a mind is, first, the slow learning of shapes, purposes, and meanings, so that work, observation and communication are possible. Then, second, but equal in importance, is the testing of these in experience, the making of new observations, comparisons, and meanings. A culture has two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to; the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested. These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds, and we see through them the nature of a culture: that it is always both traditional and creative; that it is both the most ordinary common meanings and the finest individual meanings. We use the word culture in these two senses: to mean a whole way of life--the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning--the special processes of discovery and creative effort. Some writers reserve the word for one or other of these senses; I insist on both, and on the significance of their conjunction. The questions I ask about our culture are questions about deep personal

meanings. Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind.”

It divides to two parts like,

1. Main culture
2. Sub- culture

A subculture is a culture within a broader mainstream culture, with its own separate values, practices, and beliefs. In a society there can be see number of sub-cultures and University sub- culture is one of part of it. University sub-culture in Sri Lanka also present the same characteristics like encompassing language, social habits, arts, material and non-material elements. There were two specific characteristic in Sinhala University languages from University sub-cultures. They are,

1. Uses the words in main language to interpret completely different ideas.
2. The specific words which are conventional to university sub- culture.

Comparatively these two types of words nurture the sub-cultural language in directly and 2.1 Subculture

Subculture is a group of people limited to a single cultural framework, having similar beliefs and exchanging similar ideas. The results of the constant interactions between these people set the base of

subculture (Cohen, 1995). Subcultures must exhibit a distinctive enough shape and structure to make them identifiably different from their parent culture (Robert, Clarke, Stuart and Jefferson,1975) Furthermore, subculture is a cultural bounded network of people who come to share the meaning of specific ideas, material objects, and practices through interactions (Williams,1958). Subculture is a social sub-division. There are so many subcategories in the society and they have their unique life style, values, and customs, which differ significantly from the mainstream culture (Rathnapala, 2001).

University subculture is one of the subcultures, which usually open for many discussions and analysis. Language is a significant element that makes the university subculture different from the mainstream culture. University language is a restricted language which has so many English words but with different meanings. For an example, fall in love considers as „hitch“, helping a friend in a love affair is „footboard“ and a couple enjoying themselves is „hunting“. Language seems to be the vehicle of the university subculture as it depicts many of the special features of the

university life. Ragging is another important aspect of the university subculture. The expressed intentions of ragging are socialization, understanding each other, wipe out shyness, identify inborn qualities, enhance peace and establish free mental conditions. But ragging has become a political and terror weapon to ensure the continuing domination of political power within the universities.

Most of these applied words are use towards males and females. Junior to the senior, who came to the University at first time, and who finishes his study there were number of addresses can be identified. These addresses are the crucial factor to decide the social entity of youth males and females in a University sub culture and as well as their behaviors also depend on this sub cultural effects.

In University, sub culture this is more important to interpretation the student's behavior and discipline through these sub cultural language. At the first time when a student enter to the University this sub culture is more alien to them and because of that they faced to critical moments like mental and social stress, anomic, collapse of aims, and social and mental problems occur as a result of

that. Furthermore there were some effects to the post university life of the graduate especially in love matters.

2. PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVE

Study the effect of gender in University sub- cultural language.

Main Objective

Identify the gender in applied university sub- cultural language.

Other Objectives

- Identify the social and mental problems of university students which occurred with university sub cultural language.
- Understand the contribution of university sub cultural languages to mold the pedagogy among the university students.
- Study about the application of gender to create the university sub cultural language.

3. METHODOLOGY

Observation, participant observation, interviews and questionnaires were used to collect the data from five government universities in Sri Lanka. Researchers were employee with qualitative method and comparatively studied randomly

chosen 50 respondent's answers to the questionnaire.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The gender in the University was representing through the University subcultural language as well as university graffiti. In the University sub cultural language there were number of addresses which were used to address the male and female in the University structure, and it differs from University to University as well as it differs from profession to profession and different levels in the University.

Ex: -

Vice Chancellor (male/female) - VC mahappa/ Loku amma

Professor (male/female) - profa/profee

Lecturer (male/female) - lecha/lechi

Senior student (male/female) - sinna/sinni

Junior student (male/female) - junna/junni

New Comer (male/female) - fresha/freshi

Batch mate (male/female) - bacha/bachi

Art student (male/female) - ata/ati

Engineer Student (male/female) - inja/inji

Medical student (male/female) - medda/meddi

Doctor (male/female) - doka/doki

Dental student (male/female) - denta/denti

Science student (male/female) - sayana/sayani

Rather than these current words in University sub culture, the senior student uses the harsh and crusty formations to the junior students and that was became a stressful situation to the new comer students who alien to this university sub culture. In some exceptional cases this situation growth until depression. The female student faced this situation badly than male student, but the male student's situation is not better more than that. Other than that pressure it is important pay the attention about the view point of the outer society about the university sub culture.

By adapted the university students to these sub cultural language, it may affect to his or her student life in inappropriate way.

Ex: - Become a senior (*Sinna*)

Become an over acted leader (*Pora*)

Not only that affect to affect to the university life, but also this may be affected to the post university life.

Ex: - Breakdown the love affairs when they finished their degrees (hang the lover (kokka) in the gate).

The words used in university sub culture has completely different and represent allusion ideas than the outer society. When consider about 'love', there were totally different language in university. Comparatively these words are differing from university to university.

Table 01: The applied University sub language for love affair in different Universities

Univer sity	Love	Girl friend	Boy friend
Perade niya	(හිචි වෙනවා) Hich	(හිචි එක) A hich	(පොර) Pora
Rajarat a	(කොක්ක ක් ගෙනවා) Kokka/ Hook	(කො ක්ක) Kokka	(කොක්ක)Kokka
Jayewa rdanep ura	(කොක්ක ක් ගෙනවා) Kokka	(කො ක්ක)K okka	(කොක්ක)Kokka
Kelani ya	(කොක්ක ක් ගෙනවා) Kokka	(කො ක්ක)K okka	(කොක්ක)Kokka
Colom bo	(කොක්ක ක් ගෙනවා) Kokka	(කො ක්ක)K okka	(කොක්ක)Kokka

Furthermore there were number of erotic words which used to explain love affair and the some actions of lovers.

- The male partner touch the female partner for concupiscent - (ඇඟ හෝදනවා)
- Frisk by couple - (හන්ටින් යනවා)
- Sexual intercourse from girls thighs - (ගලේවෙල යනවා)
- Secretion of sperms on girls thighs - (වැලි ගොඩදානවා)
- Break the love affair- (ඇණ කරනවා)
- Beloved talking - (කැරටි කෑම)
- Start a love affair - (කොකු ගැසීම)

Accordingly there were used completely different ideas to the above words which normally use in outer society. Apart from that there were specific places in the universities for lovers and the names of those places are different from university to university. Through this areas the core idea spreads beyond the love, but the sexual attraction to the lovers and as well as some students try to complete their unrewarding sexual desires from their lovers with the motivation of such like words and places. The names of these specific places are

mostly sacred words, and it was harm to the identity of our traditional cultural heritage. As examples,

Table 02: Applied University sub language for lover's spots in different Universities.

University	Lover's spot
Colombo	(සිරිපාදේ, අලි කන)
Peradeniya	(රනි පියය) Lover's lane
Jayewardenepura	(බරණැස)
Kelaniya	(සයිබෙ)
Rajarata	Hunting area (මොණරගල)
Ruhuna	පූජා භූමිය
Mortuwa	කපු කැලේ

And also the student in the universities start the love affair for many purposes and have different addresses like (බත් කොක්ක, ආතල් කොක්ක, නෝටි කොක්ක, සිරා කොක්ක, ලැම්බටි කොක්ක) and for ugly girls they use the word 'yaka' and it divides four categories as (යකා, සොමී යකා, සිරා යකා, අම්බ යකා). When broke that love affairs there is another set of words for that as 'Ana'(ඇණ, සිතින් ඇණ, වැටළුව ඇණ, අහල ඇණ, පාවෙන ඇණ).

Likewise there were well maintained the university sub cultural language and sometimes this gives bad or inappropriate ideas and improved adaptive behaviors which

not suitable for an intelligent young generation.

The language uses in the University sub culture are unique to the Universities and the effects of these languages were studied through the questionnaire which gave to the internal students in five government Universities. According to the respondents, the following results were the answers for following questions which asked through the questionnaire.

Table 03: Familiarity of University sub cultural language within new comer to the University

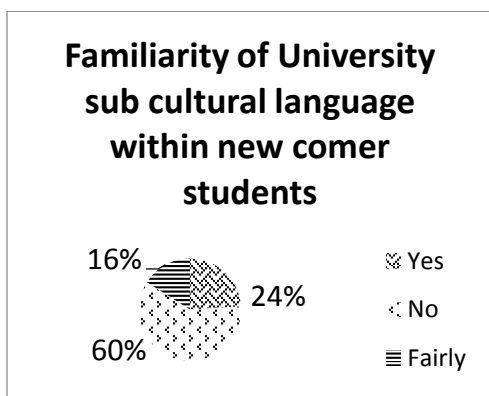
Familiarity of University sub cultural language	Yes	No	Fai rly	Total
Female	4	18	3	25
Male	8	12	5	25
Total	12	30	8	50

When asking the familiarity of University sub cultural language as new comers 30 respondents out of 50 said that University sub cultural language was not familiar when they enter to the university. 8 respondents out of 50 said that language was fairly familiar while 12 respondents said they were familiar with University sub cultural language

usage when entered to the University.

The following chart represents the percentage of the familiarity of University sub cultural language usage among the new comer students.

Figure 1: Familiarity of University sub cultural language within new comer students



According to the chart 60% of respondents were not familiar with University sub cultural language while 24% familiar and 12 % fairly familiar with University sub cultural language. The University sub cultural language is only used by the university students and it was unique to them, because of that the language used in universities differ from the language used in main culture or mass society. University student's language usage was not familiar to outer society, when university students move with the

mass society. Furthermore there can be seen special identities through University to university with that language usage.

When we studied about the hardship, distress or pressure that new comer student faced with the language usage in University sub culture the respondents were gave following answers.

Table 04: Hardship, distress or pressure that new comer student faced with the language usage in University sub culture

Suffering From University Sub Cultural Language usage	Yes	No	Fairly	Total
Female	18	5	2	25
Male	3	20	2	25
Total	21	25	4	50

According to the table 2, most of the male respondents (20 out of 25 male respondents) said they were not faced to hardship, distress or pressure because of the language usage in the University sub culture by the senior students while molding them to the university sub culture. But the situation faced by the female respondents was completely different and 18 out of 25 female

respondents faced to the hardship, distress and pressure by the language usage. Total 21 respondents said that they faced to the hardship, distress and the pressure by the language used by the senior students in their first period of the University life.

The following hardships were faced by the 21 respondents out of 50 include both genders.

Table 05: Hardships were faced by the new comer students due to University sub cultural language usage.

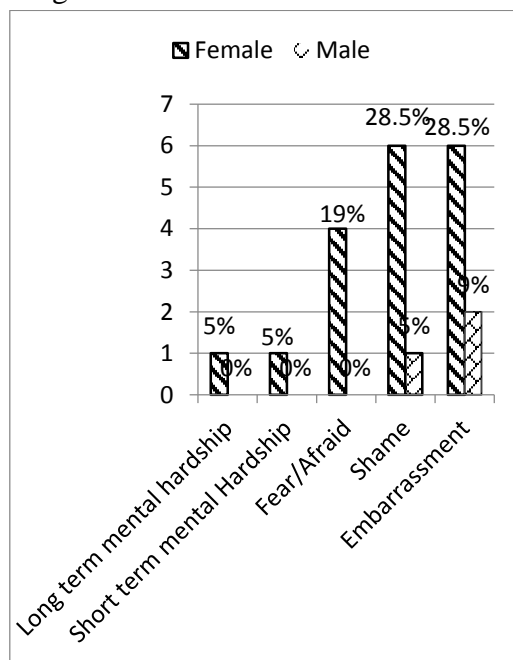
Hardship	Female	Male	Total
Long term mental hardship	1	-	1
Short term mental hardship	1	-	1
Fear/Afraid	4	-	4
Shame	6	1	7
Embarrassment	6	2	8
Total	18	3	21

Most of the student who faced to shame and embarrassment due to University sub cultural language usage while their first period of University life. Other than that shame and fear or afraid were the common hardship that faced by the new comer students, specially

female ones. Some of the respondents said that they fainted while senior student used harsh and rough language to mold them to the University sub culture. And also one respondent suffer from depression and the stress because that she couldn't bare such language usage who delivered by the senior students.

The below chart represent the data in clear and as percentage that hardships faced by the 21 respondents out of 50 respondents.

Figure 2: Hardships were faced by the new comer students due to University sub cultural language usage.



From this chart proved that both male and female faced to the hardships because of the University sub cultural language usage by senior student and rather male students the female students suffer badly even in long term and short term mental hardships. Basically male respondents were suffer from the shame and embarrassment than the other hardships'

By the time Most of the new comer students were compatible with the University sub cultural language and they used to use that language. Among the whole respondents 40 out of 50 were accustomed to the University sub cultural languages while 8 out of 50 didn't. The reason that said by the respondents that who didn't compatible the language were the unsuitableness of some words with their educational levels and that language rejected by their family backgrounds and the culture which they come from.

Researchers asked the question from the respondents that were they faced any embarrassment from the mass society by using the University sub cultural language in the mass society. The answers were listed in following table.

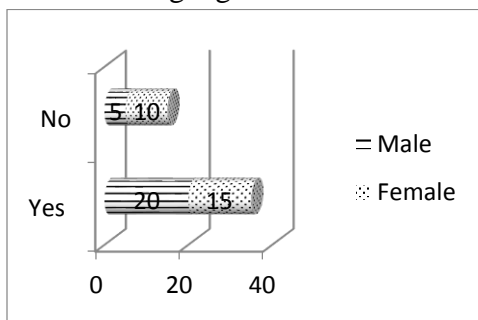
Table 06: Embarrassment from Mass society by using University Sub Cultural Language

Embarrassment from Mass society by using University Sub Cultural Language	Yes	No	Total
Female	15	10	25
Male	20	5	25
Total	35	15	50

The 35 respondents out of 50 embarrassed from the mass society by using the University sub cultural languages in the mass society. Than the female students the male student embarrassed from the society, because that male students were mostly conflicted with the mass society compare with the female students. The reasons that respondent said were that University sub culture were not common or familiar with the mass society and because of that mass society rejected that university languages.

The following chart represents the data clearly.

Figure 3: Embarrassment from Mass society by using University Sub Cultural Language



According to the chart both male and female respondents were suffering from the embarrassment in the mass society when they used the University sub cultural language in the mass society. Furthermore the mass society rejected, questioned and disgrace the university sub cultural language because that they haven't any conception about that sub culture.

Gender was affected from this University sub cultural language. The respondent who gave the data for this research said that gender was affected by the University sub culture.

Table 07: Gender was affected by University sub cultural languages

Gender was affected by University sub cultural languages	Yes	No	Total
Female	21	4	25
Male	12	13	25
Total	33	17	50

From the respondents 21 female out of 25 female and 12 male respondents out of 25 who were the participants for filling the questionnaires said that University sub cultural language was affected to the gender. The total 17 said that University sub cultural language did not affected to the gender. More than half of the respondents were said that applied University sub language affected to the gender.

Among that respondents who said the applied University sub language affected to the gender was clarified the gender who badly affected.

Table 08: The gender who affected from applied University sub language

Who had the effect of University sub cultural language	Male	Female	Both Genders	Total
Female respondents	1	18	2	21
Male respondents	4	5	3	12
Total	5	23	5	33

According to the following data the Female respondents said that 18 females out of 21, faced to the effects of gender while 1 male out of 21 and 2 both genders out of 21 faced to the effects of gender which emerge by applied University sub language. The male respondents declared that 4 males out of 12 faced to the effect of the gender while 5 females out of 12 and 3 both genders out of 12 were faced to the effects of the gender due to the applied University sub language. As the result the female gender was the badly effected party by the applied University sub languages.

Finally the researches asked should that language change? More than the half respondents gave the

positive answer to that question and following table represent the answers that gave by the respondents.

Table 09: Should that applied University sub language change?

Should that Language change?	Yes	No	Total
Female	21	4	25
Male	5	20	25
Total	26	24	50

Among the 25 female respondents 21 said that University sub cultural language should change while 4 said not. The 5 male respondents said that applied University sub language should change while 20 of them said not. The reason behind that was the female party was the one who suffered mostly from the applied University sub languages than the male one.

When a girl or boy selected to the university by won their A/L land marks, they were dreamed to feel the full freedom that they couldn't gain from the school. The school teachers also whitewash about the University life, but when they realized the reality of inside life in the Universities they were mentally collapsed their hopes. Especially due to the applied

University sub language the female students were faced to many hardships, mentally and socially. By the time most of the new comer students were socializes to the University sub language, but some are not because of many reasons. The applied University sub language force indirectly as well as directly for broken love affairs. That was also mentally and socially effects to the gender. Especially outer society decided that female students in the University had one or more affairs in the University and that thought were embarrassed the gender. The mass society rejected and opposed with the language usage in the University sub culture. The male students were embarrassed from the mass society while used the University sub language. There was the idea of changing that applied University sub language in positive way among the University students, but the concept of university sub culture toughly bound with the University students. Finally all respondent said that they want the University sub culture to protect uniqueness of the University system as well as the collaboration of the each other.

5. CONCLUSION

When discussed about the gender in university sub culture, the concept of love take the prominent place. The university love is a direction to art, literature and the enjoyment of romantic feelings, but the sub cultural language provide undesirable reputation about university love which basically build with sexual needs. This was badly affected to the student's life, when they practice such like habits in their university life. Specially most of loves affairs end with the end of university life, for that the sub culture is directly conduce. As females in the university, males also faced this situation similarly; as well they are mentally attacked from these situations. Other than that applied University sub language was not common in the mass society, so that the new comer students suffered from various hardships when their first period of University life. The senior students tried to mold new comer students to the University sub culture and basically for that they used the unique language as well as harsh and rough language in the rag season. Because of that language most of the female students were mentally affected and it may be cause for the long term or short term mental hard ships such like stress or

depression. University sub cultural language had some value in literature such like graffiti. But it should positively change with the polite and disciplined language.

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