

Breaking the Mindsets: Issues of Learning and Innovation in Sri Lankan Organizations

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Abstract: Innovation involves creating customer value by converting knowledge and ideas into useful new products and services. It is also considered a means of achieving competitive advantage when used strategically. The key issue focused in this paper is the lack of innovation in Sri Lankan business organizations, which has made them less competitive in the global market place. Innovation and value creation stem from organizational capabilities, which are an outcome of organizational learning. As posited in the paper the capability of an organization to learn or unlearn is influenced by the established mindsets. In the context of Sri Lankan organizations the dominant mindset seems to carry with it several features which are less receptive to innovation. Thus, it is argued that breaking the established mindsets is a prerequisite to acquire the capability to innovate.

The paper has conceptualized the problem of lack of innovation in terms of a conceptual model, which recognizes strategic leadership and achievement culture as critical variables of organizational learning and innovation. The model suggests that strategic leadership and achievement culture unleash the force behind human competence and group synergy creating the conditions necessary to break the established mindsets, which enable organizations to acquire the capability to innovate.

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