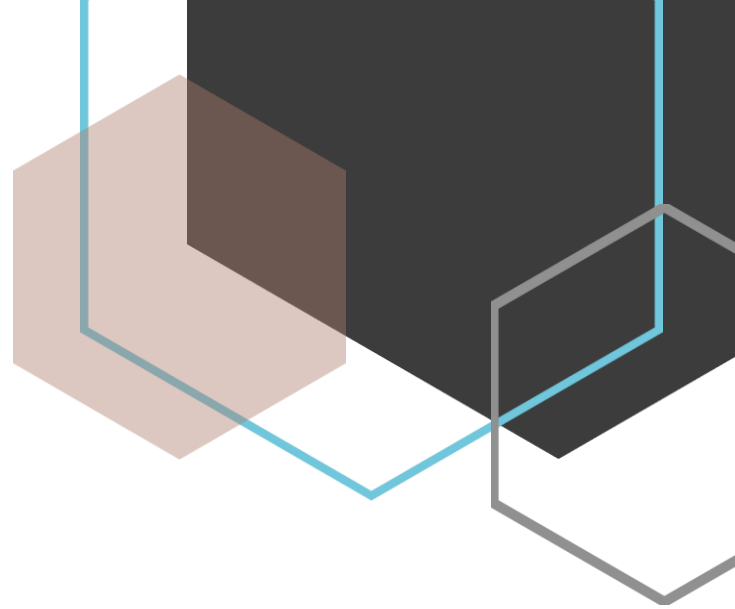




Co-funded by the
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of the European Union



FINAL STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION SURVEY

Results

UNIVERSITY OF RUHUNA, SRI LANKA



**Integrating Talent Development into Innovation Ecosystems in Higher Education
Ecosystems in Higher Education**

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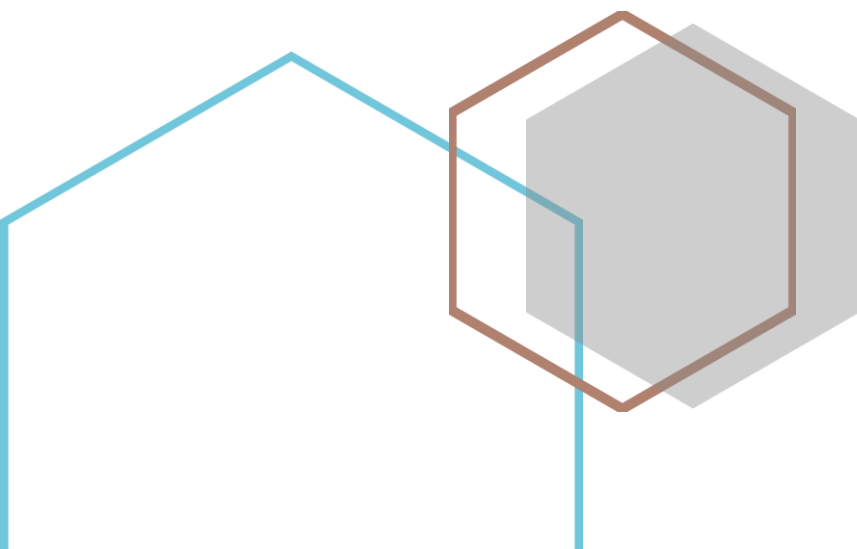




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Each INNOTAL Partner University in Asia has carried out a final survey campaign aimed at mapping the perceptions of key University stakeholders on issues of relevance to the project. The survey has also aimed at analysing the perceived impact of the project at the institution and making conclusions about sustainability actions.

The survey has reached students, faculty members and representatives of University Management and Administration.

This document presents and analyses the results from this survey.

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Introduction and context

Present status of the University

At present, the ten faculties of the University of Ruhuna are located in six locations in Galle and Matara Districts. The main administration complex and the five Faculties, main library, gymnasium, medical centre, Rabindranath Tagore auditorium, and the main playground are also located at Wellamadama complex. Key statistics are summarized in Table 1. With ten Faculties, the University of Ruhuna is the most diversified Sri Lankan University while being the second largest in terms of student numbers. The Webometric Ranking of 2020 placed University of Ruhuna 4th among Sri Lankan Universities, and 2504th among the Universities in the world. Recent World University Ranking (<https://cwur.org/2020-21.php>) for 2020/2021 ranked University of Ruhuna at 2nd among Sri Lankan Universities and 1733rd (within top 8.7%) among Universities in the world.

Table 1. University of Ruhuna: Key Statistics

Establishment of Ruhuna University College	1978
Elevated to fully fledged University status	1984
Number of Faculties	10
Number of academic Departments	55
Number of divisions	13
Number of Centres/Units	14
Number of undergraduate programmes	39
Number of undergraduate students	8355
Number of postgraduate students	1714
Number of academic staff	576
Number of professors	79
Number of academics with PhD	340
Academic support staff	48
Number of administrative and financial officers	46
Library collection	500,000

Student Information

Reporting a 34.8% increase, the annual undergraduate intake of University of Ruhuna has increased from 1818 for the 2014/2015 academic year to 2514 for the 2018/2019 academic year. The number of undergraduates studying in University of Ruhuna increased from 6714 in 2015 to 8355 in 2019. Of the total student population (10355), 17% were postgraduates.

Employability of graduates

The Baseline survey of 2012 shows result of the attempts made by higher education authorities to assess the employability situation of graduates, and the result of the tracer study of graduates in Sri Lanka in 2018 by the UGC, conducted after six years of interventions to improve the situation (Table 2).



Table 2. Baseline Employability Surveys, 2012 and 2018

In 2012

Faculty	Employed %	Under employed %	Unemployed %
Agriculture	73.3	6.3	20.5
Allied Health Sciences	61.3	3.0	35.7
Arts	18.1	14.2	67.2
Dental Sciences	92.9	5.7	1.4
Engineering	92.7	2.8	4.6
Medicine	93.5	2.7	3.2
Science	55.7	8.9	34.6
Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science	36.8	22.8	40.4
All	53.6	8.9	37.2

In 2018

Faculty	Employed %	Volunteers %	Unemployed %
Arts	35.5	-	64.5
Management	60.0	-	40.0
Science	62.2	2.7	53.1
Engineering	95.5	-	4.5
Agriculture	94.1	-	5.9

Sources:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326914393_Graduand_Employment_Census_2012_2013

<https://www.ugc.ac.lk/downloads/statistics/webTracer/2018/Tracer%20Study%202018.pdf>

Strategic plan

The University of Ruhuna has identified six objectives (six Es) such as Expanding access to education and research, Enriching quality of education, Enhancing relevance of education and research, Ensuring good governance, Endowing invention and innovation, and Epitomizing the uniqueness as indicated in its Corporate Plan for 2019 – 2023 timeframe. The fifth objective of the plan is directly related to invention and innovation. The Technology Transfer Office (TTO) has been set up to facilitate in achieving the above objective. The Technology Transfer Office is led by a director who chairs the Technology Transfer Management Committee. Each faculty has a Technology Transfer Cell, and the person in charge of the faculty Cell is serving as coordinator of the TTO. The TTO conducts a number of forums and regular awareness campaigns amongst industries and motivate them to invest in R&D and build a good relationship with the university. The Career Guidance Unit and many students' clubs and societies are also actively engaged in entrepreneurial activities, research and innovations. The INNOTAL project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab, has been an opportunity to strengthen the entrepreneurial culture at the



university, enhance students' motivation towards innovations, and ultimately contribute to enhance the employability of graduates.

The report consists of three sections: Part I provides background and introduction. Part II provides methodology. Survey findings are presented in Part III. The survey findings have three sections: section I consists of responses of Management and Administration personnel, while Section II discusses the responses of students.



Methodology

The survey was conducted using a Google form. The types of questions were slightly different as per the different target group who responded. The questionnaire link was distributed online among the main categories of Management and Administration Personnel, Faculty Members, and Students. As depicted in Figure 1, a total of 101 responses were received representing the above target categories from the University of Ruhuna.

Your position at the University:

101 responses

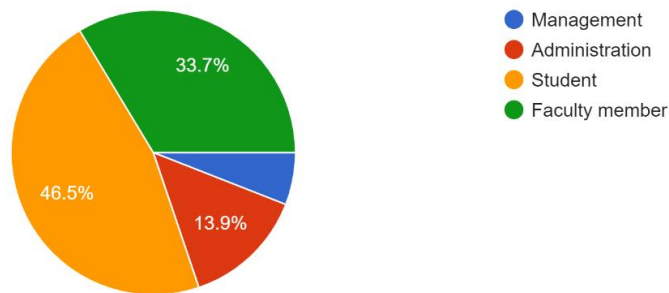


Figure 1: The overall responses for the survey

Among all the respondents, students were higher share (46.5%, Figure 1). Faculty members of the university also had a satisfactory response, accounting to 33.7% of the respondents. Meanwhile, the contribution made by the Management and Administration Personnel is 19.8%. A satisfactory response rate has been achieved by all main categories, and their responses will be important for further appraisal in order to evaluate the impact of the INNOTAL project in several key areas.

Detailed Results

Section I - Management and Administration Personnel

Your exact position (optional)

14 responses

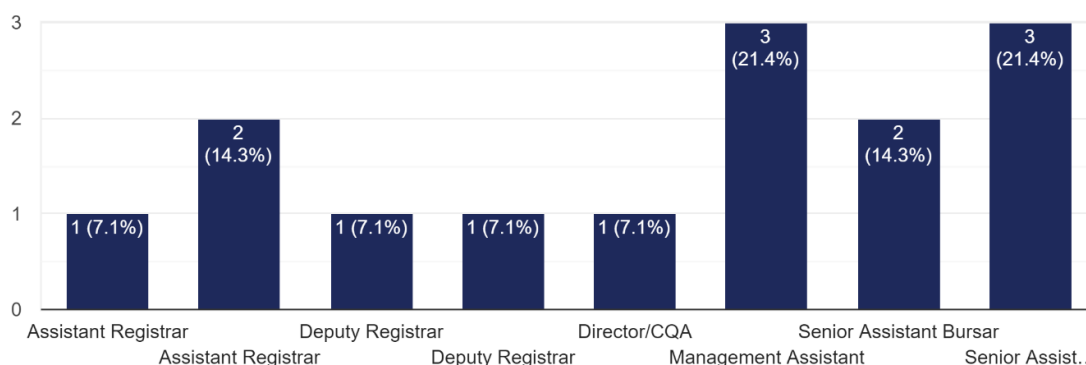


Figure 2: Management and Administration Personnel category responded

Different categories representing the Management and Administration Personnel, including Deputy Registrars, Assistant Registrars, Senior Assistant Bursars, Director/CQA and Management Assistants have responded to the survey (Figure 2). Their responses are important since their understanding of the impact of the INNOTAL Project is important in planning further sustainability.

- **Global trends and best practices promoted by the INNOTAL project**

Do you think that the INNOTAL project has made our university generally more aware of global trends and best practices for promoting graduates...ployability and university-business cooperation?

20 responses

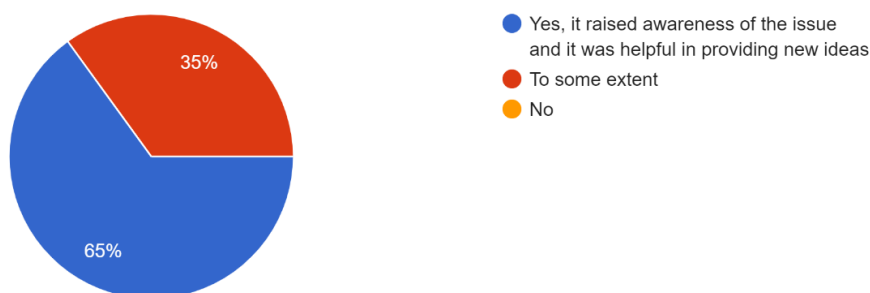


Figure 3: Awareness level of global trends and best practices promoted by the INNOTAL project

Most of the Management and Administration staff of the University believe that the INNOTAL project has contributed to applying and implementing global trends and best practices at the university. The impact of the INNOTAL project on the level of awareness of global trends and best practices appears to be satisfactory, with 65% of the respondents stating that the project was



helpful in providing new ideas and another 35% stating it has been helpful “to some extent” (Figure 3).

- **Improved awareness of the benefits of cooperating with external stakeholders for change and improvement**

Has the INNOTAL Project resulted in better understanding within the university of the benefits of cooperating with external stakeholders in the desi...ation and in the development of students' talents?

20 responses

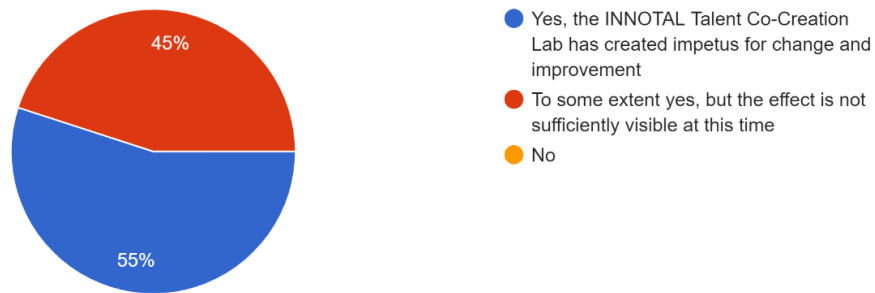


Figure 4: Improved awareness of the benefits of cooperating with external stakeholders for change and improvement

Much of the Management and Administration Personnel (55%) believe that the INNOTAL project has created an impetus for change and improvement within the university while 45% believe the project has contributed “to some extent” and the effect is not sufficiently visible at this time (Figure 4). Not surprisingly, the benefits of the INNOTAL project and its activities will be better perceived in the future since the students’ involvement at present is limited due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The closure of the University due to Covid-19 had a greater impact on academic and extracurricular activities of the students, even though online modes of teaching were implemented as an alternative solution during the crisis.

- **Contribution of the project to identifying weaknesses in the university strategy on promoting students’ employability**

Has the INNOTAL project made our University more aware of any weaknesses in our cooperation with business and in our efforts to promote students' employability?

20 responses

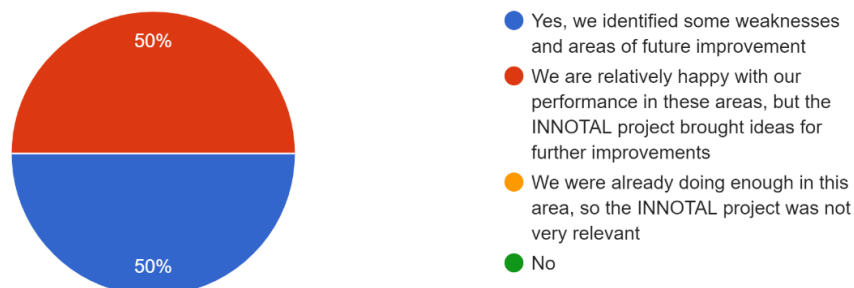


Figure 5: Contribution of the project to identifying weaknesses in the university strategy on promoting students’ employability

The INNOTAL project has greatly contributed to identify the weaknesses in the existing system and to understanding areas of future improvements. This has been confirmed by 50% of the responses by the Management and Administration Personnel. The other 50% declare that they are relatively happy with the current performance (Figure 5). However, they also confirm that the INNOTAL project brought ideas for further improvements.

▪ **Contribution of the project to understanding and monitoring the external conditions on the employability**

Has the INNOTAL project helped our University better understand and monitor the external conditions in the economy and society that may affect the employability of our graduates?

20 responses

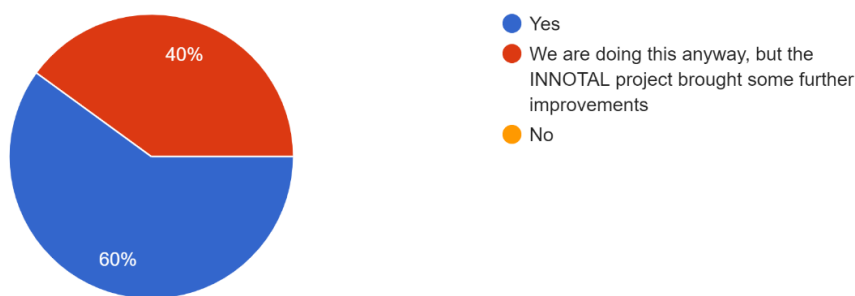


Figure 6: Contribution of the project to understanding and Monitoring the External Conditions on the Employability

University of Ruhuna is keenly interested in the external conditions in the economy and society, and it is continuously working to develop a good network with the different stakeholders in the external economy. The INNOTAL project has further contributed to enhancing this collaboration. This is confirmed by the responses by the Management and Administrative Personnel as depicted in Figure 6.

▪ **Contribution of the project to promoting stronger involvement of external stakeholders**

So far, has the INNOTAL project and its results (e.g. the Talent Co-Creation Lab) actually promoted stronger involvement of external stakeholders in t...urses and in the development of students' talents?

20 responses

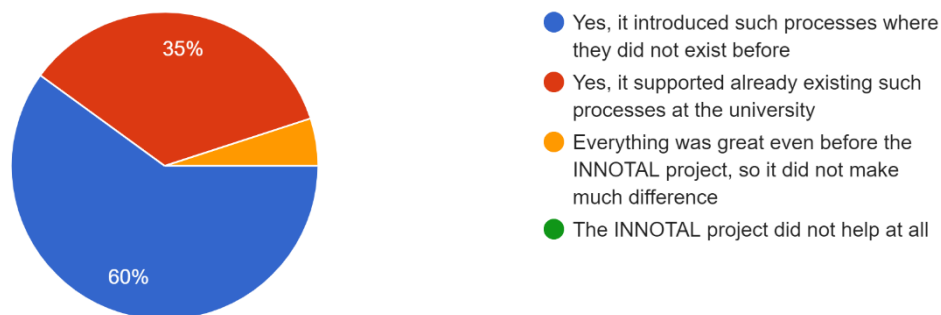


Figure 7: Contribution of the project to promoting stronger involvement of external stakeholders



The INNOTAL project provided a novel concept, especially the Talent Co-Creation Lab, to promote collaboration between external stakeholders and students which has been very successful. 60% of the respondents have confirmed this, and further 35% stated that it has helped by supporting the existing processes (Figure 7). There is a small fraction (5%) that believes INNOTAL did not make much difference. The reason may be that there were some activities linked with industrial training and internships even before the implementation of INNOTAL activities.

▪ **Creation of change-maker coalition at the university**

Has the INNOTAL Project succeeded in creating a change-maker coalition at the University to pursue new approaches to student engagement in ...e student exposure to the economy and society?
20 responses

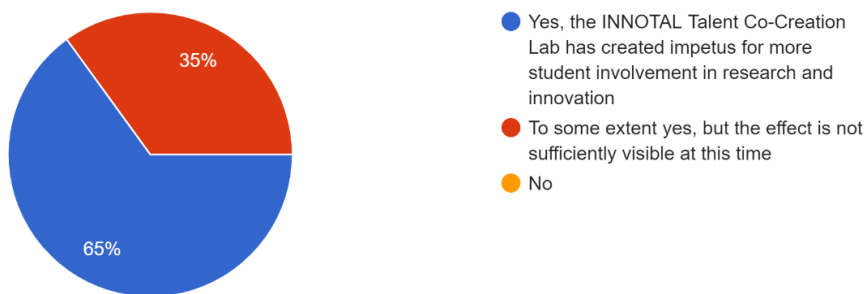


Figure 8: Creation of change-maker coalition at the university

The INNOTAL project, especially the Talent-Co-Creation Lab, has created impetus for more student involvement in research and innovation. This matter is confirmed by the majority (65%) who responded to the survey (Figure 8). The other 35% respondents state that although it has contributed, the effect is not sufficiently visible at current as indicated earlier.

▪ **Improvement of internal institutional dialogue**

Did the INNOTAL project activities manage to improve internal institutional dialogue and make institutional culture more in favour of stronger University engagement with external organizations?
20 responses

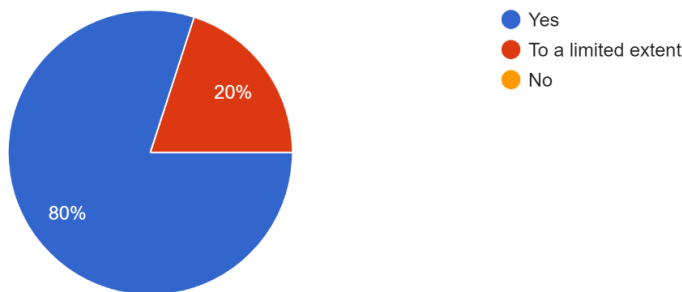


Figure 9: Improvement of internal institutional dialogue

The INNOTAL project activities contributed to improve the internal institutional dialogue and made institutional culture more in favour of stronger university engagement with external organizations, especially with the concept of Talent Co-Creation Lab. The majority of the



respondents in the Management and Administration Personnel category have appreciated the benefits as depicted in the Figure 9.

▪ **Contribution of the project to developing a practical and concrete university strategy**

Has the INNOTAL project contributed to developing(or improving) a practical and concrete University strategy and action plan for improving g...es' employability and links with business/industry?
19 responses

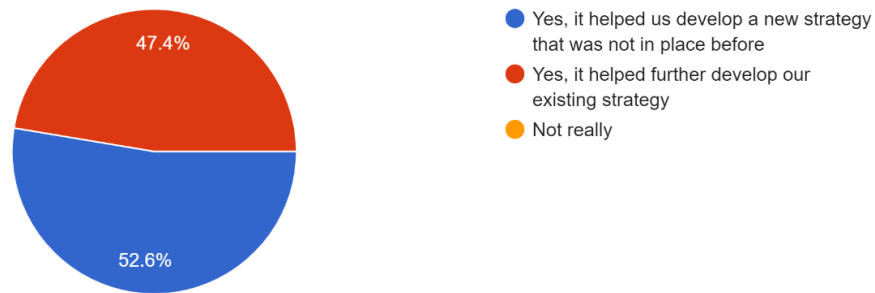


Figure 10: Contribution of the project to developing a practical and concrete university strategy

The contribution made by the INNOTAL project in developing a practical and concrete university strategy is noteworthy, which has been confirmed by most of the respondents (52.6%) (Figure 10). The university has already established a Technology Transfer Office, and the established TTO cells have appointed coordinators at Faculty level. The future activities of the Talent Co-Creation Labs will be managed by the Technology Transfer Office and the faculty coordinators. Accordingly, the INNOTAL project activities also contribute to further developing the existing strategy. Indeed, 47.4% respondents appreciate this contribution.

▪ **Support for the INNOTAL project’s proposed strategy**

Do you support the INNOTAL project’s proposed strategy to embed employability across all institutional activities (curriculum, teaching, research & innovation)?
20 responses

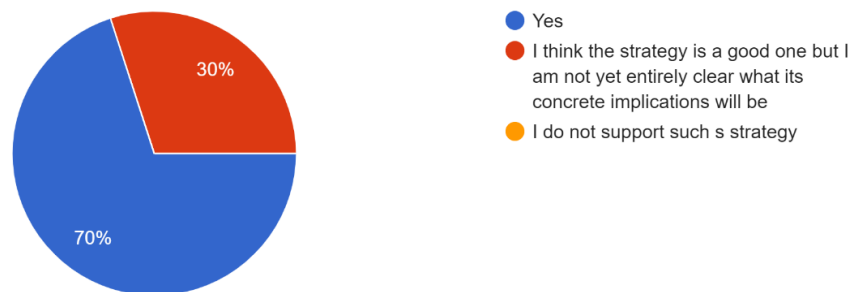


Figure 11: Support for the INNOTAL Project’s Proposed Strategy

The effective implementation of the INNOTAL proposed strategy is of greater importance for the successful outcome and it has sought to embed employability across all institutional activities in areas of curriculum, teaching, research and innovations. In this context, the support extended

by every person in a key position is critical. Accordingly, 70% of the management and administration respondents have stated their interest in extending their support (Figure 11). Moreover, 30% still need more awareness regarding the project activities. Accordingly, more awareness sessions for those individuals should be arranged before and after the project’s end.

▪ **Involvement in Implementing the INNOTAL Strategy**

Would you get involved in implementing the above-mentioned strategy?
17 responses

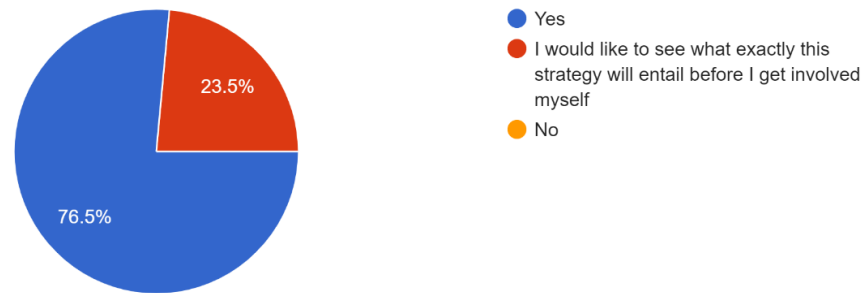


Figure 12: Involvement in implementing the INNOTAL strategy

As highlighted in the previous point, the involvement in implementing the proposed strategy by each stakeholder is of greater importance for successful outcomes in this project. It is noteworthy that 76.5% have expressed their interest to be involved in implementing the proposed strategy (Figure 12). However, 23.5% need more awareness and time to become familiar with the strategy.

▪ **Perceived impact of the INNOTAL strategy on job satisfaction**

Do you think that the implementation of the above strategy will impact you and your job positively?
20 responses

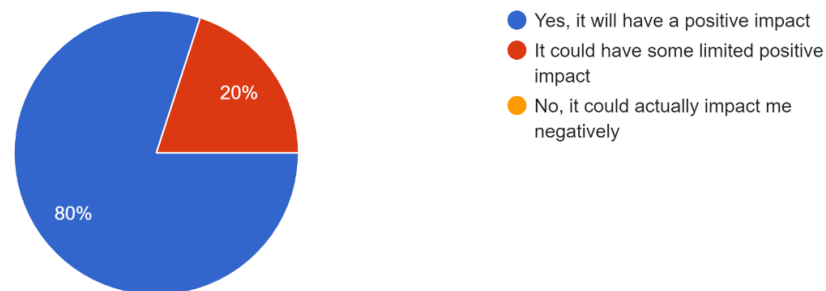


Figure 13: Perceived impact of the INNOTAL strategy on job satisfaction

Most of the respondents, as shown in Figure 13, believe that the implementation of the above proposed strategy will have a positive impact on their job, which can be considered as a good indicator of the success of the INNOTAL project and its intended strategy. However, the strategy is expected to have only a limited positive impact for some 20% of the sample. The results are encouraging as most of the views expressed about the impact on job are positive and there are no negative responses. It should be noted that if employment of graduates deviates

from the specific perceptions of one’s role at the University, the new strategy could be considered as a waste of resources and time.

▪ **Relevance and viability of the INNOTAL plans**

Do you think that the INNOTAL plans for facilitating the uptake of entrepreneurship and innovation training across more disciplines and through extra-curricular activities are viable and relevant at our University?

20 responses

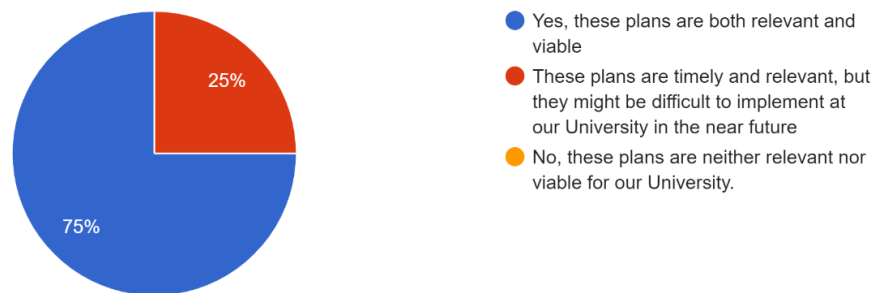


Figure 14: Relevance and viability of the INNOTAL plans

The INNOTAL plans for facilitating the uptake of entrepreneurship and innovation training across more disciplines and through extra-curricular activities should be relevant and viable, especially in order to benefit more students in different disciplines. It is noteworthy that 75% of the respondents have expressed that the intended plans are both relevant and viable (Figure 14).

▪ **INNOTAL project contribution to promotion and acceptance of a more student-centred approach**

Has the INNOTAL project facilitated the promotion and the acceptance of a more student-centred approach to teaching and learning at our University?

19 responses

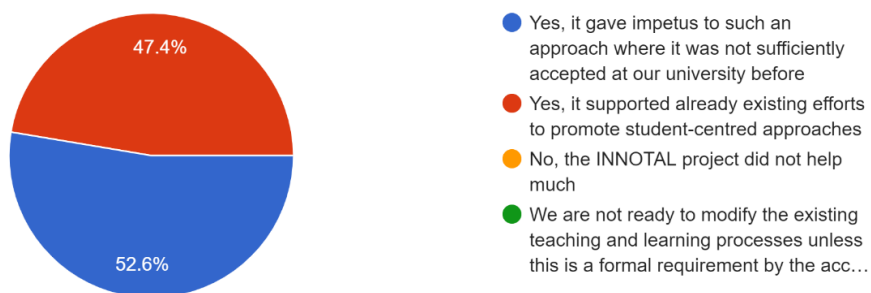


Figure 15: INNOTAL project contribution to promotion and acceptance of a more student-centred approach

The INNOTAL project facilitated the promotion and acceptance of a more student-centred approach at the university. While 52.6% of the respondents accepted this point, another 47.4% mentioned that it supported the already existing efforts to promote the student-centred teaching approach more effectively (Figure 15).

▪ **Future support to promote student participation in research and innovation projects**

Would you support future efforts to promote even more student participation in University research and innovation projects, if these projects also involve external stakeholders?

20 responses

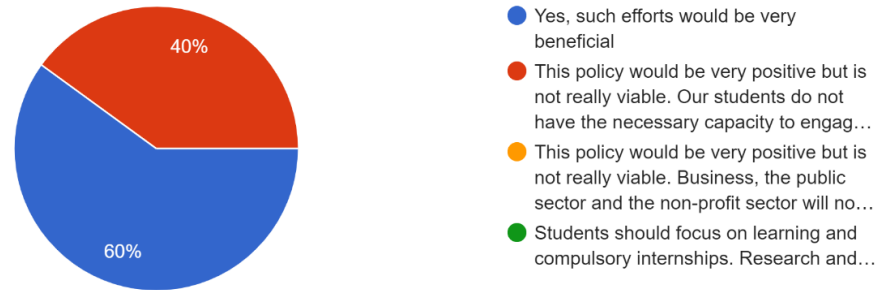


Figure 16: Future support to promote student participation

Some students will raise their voices more than others; this variation is a result of differences in learning preferences as well as differences in personalities. The goal of increasing participation is not to have every student participate in the same way or at the same rate. Instead, it is to create an environment in which all participants have the opportunity to learn and in which the class explores issues and ideas in-depth, from a variety of shows enthusiasm to extend their future support to promote student participation in research and innovation projects implemented in the Talent Co-Creation Lab under the INNOTAL project. Accordingly, 60% of the respondents have expressed their interest. While the rest of the respondents have been positive towards the ideas, they believe they are not viable and the students still have no capacity for such activities. The percentage of those on the latter opinion is alarmingly high and more discussion may be needed among stakeholder about more enablers and more trainings for students.

▪ **Sustainability of the future activities of the INNOTAL project**

In the future, will the INNOTAL project results be sustainable and will they continue to help the University improve the employability of our graduates and our cooperation with business?

20 responses

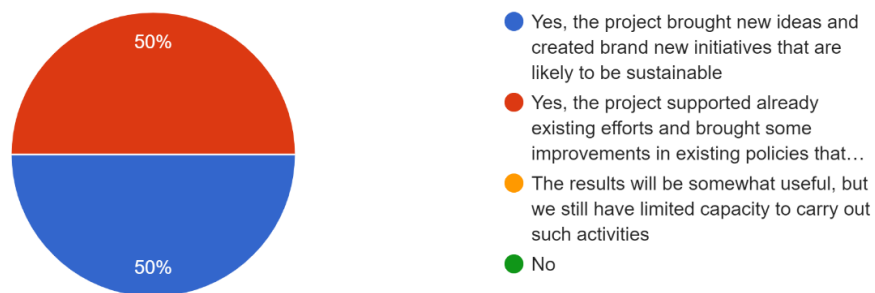


Figure 17: Sustainability of the future activities of the INNOTAL project

Almost all the Management and Administrative Personnel who was involved in the INNOTAL project have confirmed the sustainability of the outcomes. They further believe that the project activities would improve the employability of the graduates and enhance the cooperation with business. 50% of the respondents state that the project has brought new ideas and new initiatives,

while the other 50% declare that the INNOTAL project has brought new improvements to the existing policies.

Additionally, some members of the Management and Administrative Personnel who responded have highlighted some important key points as summarized below. These points are really important and can be considered as good feedback for the INNOTAL project and its activities:

- The Talent Co-Creation Lab is recognized highly as a novel concept and it is believed that it will change the entire system in creating a research and innovative culture.
- Three Talent Co-Creation Labs were set up in three Faculties with available resources and in the location of the Faculties. However, it is suggested to expand this service to the other Faculties as well.
- The link with the Technology Transfer Office has been identified as an excellent idea as far as the sustainability of the INNOTAL project and Talent Co-Creation Lab activities is concerned.



Section II - Faculty Members

The faculty members, including professors, senior lecturers and research supervisors, are treated as the critical human resource of a university. Therefore, their response in this survey is indicative of the overall success of the INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab. Different faculty members representing different disciplines, including Medicine, Engineering, Management, and Information Communication Technology have contributed to the survey as depicted in Figure 18.

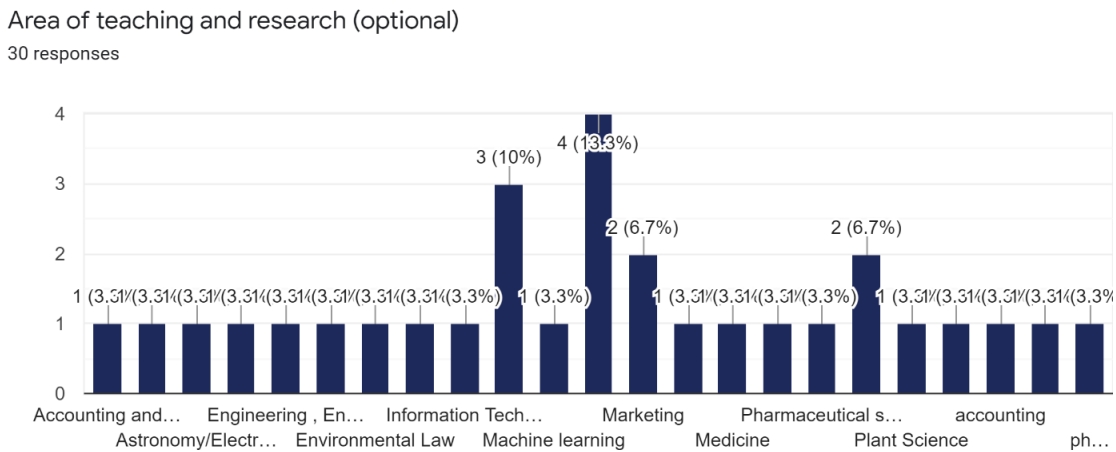


Figure 18: Contribution to the survey by area of teaching and research by faculty members

- **Impact of the INNOTAL project activities on the capacity of the University to guarantee the employability of graduates**

Do you think that the INNOTAL project activities have contributed to the strategic plans, ability and capacity of our University to guarantee the employability of our graduates?

34 responses

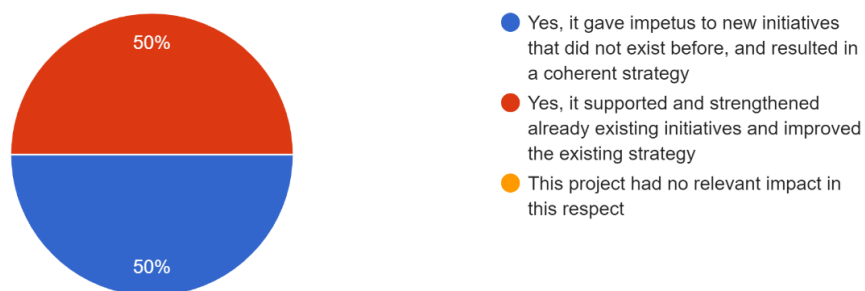


Figure 19: Impact of the INNOTAL project activities on the capacity of the University to guarantee the employability of graduates

The faculty members are confident that the INNOTAL project activities have contributed to the strategic plans and have built capacity to guarantee the employability of graduates. 50% declare that the project provided an impetus to new initiatives, while the other 50% state that it has supported and strengthened the existing strategy (Figure 19). The responses are similar to the responses of the management and administrative personnel. The Technology Transfer Office has

already been established and the projects and the activities of the Talent Co-Creation Lab will be monitored and managed by the Director of the Technology Transfer Office and the faculty coordinator.

▪ **Level of awareness, understanding and willingness to cooperate with external stakeholders**

Do you think the INNOTAL project raised awareness and increased the understanding and the willingness of the University to cooperate with ext...talent and in the design and delivery of education?

34 responses

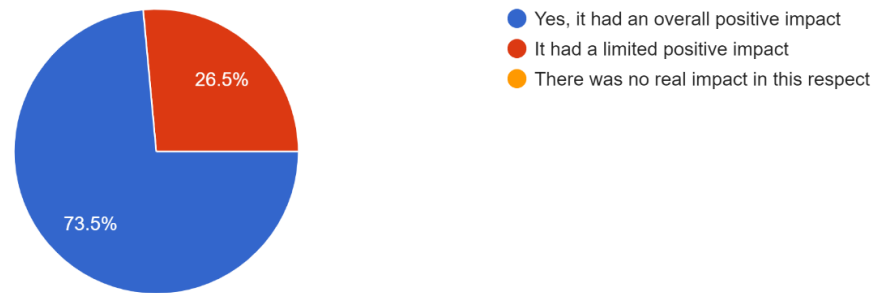


Figure 20: Level of awareness, understanding and willingness to cooperate with external stakeholders

The INNOTAL project has raised the level of awareness and increased the understanding and willingness of the university to cooperate with external stakeholders in the development of student talent and in the design and delivery of education. This level of awareness was increased by having several industry forums. The industry representatives provided valuable inputs in this regards. Accordingly, the faculty members are well aware of this situation and the majority (73.5%) declare that the project activities have had an overall positive impact (Figure 20).

▪ **The involvement of external stakeholders in the design, delivery and evaluation of study programmes**

Do you yourself think that involving external stakeholders more actively in the design, delivery and evaluation of study programs and courses or in the...ent talent would be beneficial for your students?

34 responses

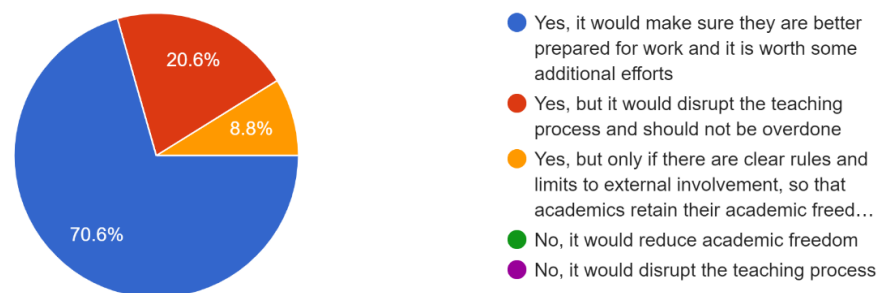


Figure 21: Involvement of external stakeholders in the design, delivery and evaluation of study programmes

The involvement of external stakeholders in the design, delivery and evaluation of study programmes and courses are of great importance in the current dynamic economic context. The active engagement of external stakeholders is greatly appreciated by the majority of faculty



members (70.6%) in the sample (Figure 21). It is notable that another 20.6% declare that it would disrupt the teaching process and should not be overdone. This may be due to the fact that more courses have been designed with purely academic content. In addition, 8.8% of the faculty members in the sample are weary of threats on their academic freedom and require rules and limit on extremal involvement.

▪ **Willingness to contribute to future university efforts to increase the employability of students**

The majority of faculty members (70.6%) are willing to contribute to future university efforts to increase the employability of students and improve their talents (Figure 22). This is certainly a very positive motive and should be well-appreciated. However, 23.5% of the faculty members are willing to commit to such an engagement only if the workload is not significantly increased. The result suggests reconsideration of the existing capacity of the faculty members to deal with the many different tasks related to teaching, research and additional commitments, as well as to review once again the extent to which additional efforts are recognized and rewarded.

Would you be willing to contribute to future University efforts to increase the employability of students and to improve the development of their talent?

34 responses

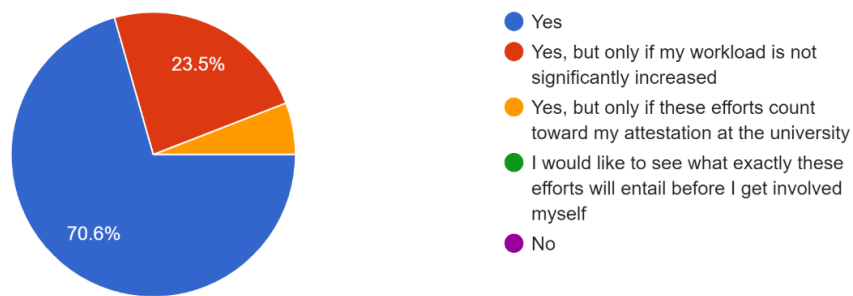


Figure 22: Willingness to contribute to future university efforts to increase the employability of students

▪ **Impact of INNOTAL project events and results on faculty members’ motivation to contribute to the university’s employability strategy**

Did the INNOTAL project events or results increase your motivation, willingness or ability to contribute to the University’s employability strategy?

34 responses

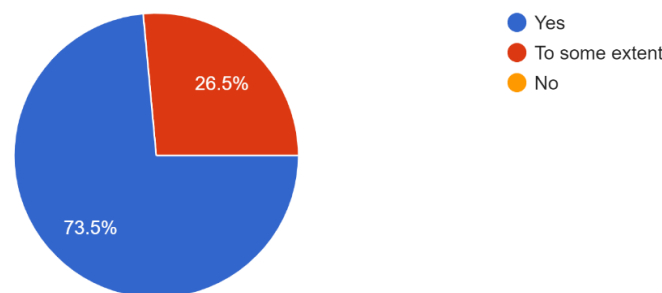


Figure 23: □ Impact of INNOTAL project events and results on faculty members’ motivation to contribute to the university’s employability strategy

The events and results of the INNOTAL project have increased the motivation of faculty members to contribute to the university’s employability strategy. This is confirmed by the majority (73.5%) of the staff members who responded (Figure 23). Meanwhile, the other 26.5% in the sample declare that they have also increased the motivation “to some extent”.

▪ **Support for the INNOTAL project’s proposed strategy to embed employability in various university areas of operation**

Do you support the INNOTAL project’s proposed strategy to embed employability across all institutional activities (curriculum, teaching, research & innovation)?

34 responses

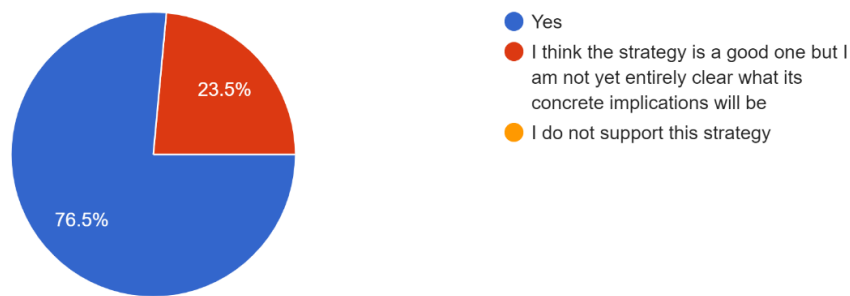


Figure 24: Support for the INNOTAL project’s proposed strategy to embed employability in various university areas of operation

Faculty members’ support for the INNOTAL project’s proposed strategy is for the overall project impact. The majority of faculty members (76.5%) have extended their support to embed employability across all institutional activities including curriculum, teaching, research & innovation (Figure 24). However, 23.5% of faculty members in the sample declare that they need more awareness since they are not yet clear about the concrete implications of the project. This presupposes more extensive awareness campaigns, especially after the lifting of the Covid-19 restrictions.

▪ **The impact of the proposed strategy to the job satisfaction of faculty members**

Do you think that the implementation of the above strategy will impact you and your job positively?

34 responses

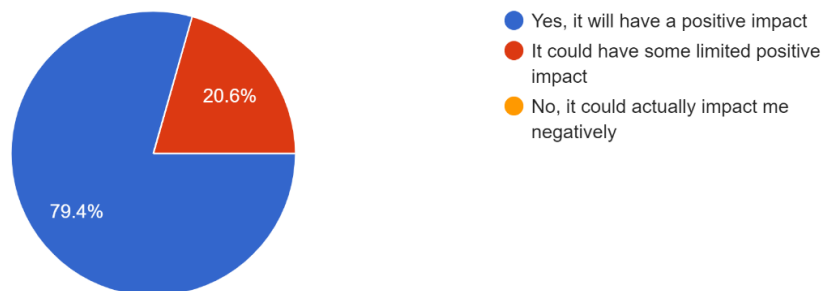


Figure 25: The impact of the proposed strategy to the job satisfaction of faculty members



It is noteworthy that the majority of faculty members (79.4%) believe that the implementation of the proposed strategy will have a positive impact on their job (Figure 25).

▪ **Impact of the INNOTAL project on motivation to introduce more student-centred approach in teaching**

Has the INNOTAL project motivated you or helped you to introduce a more student-centred approach in your teaching?

34 responses

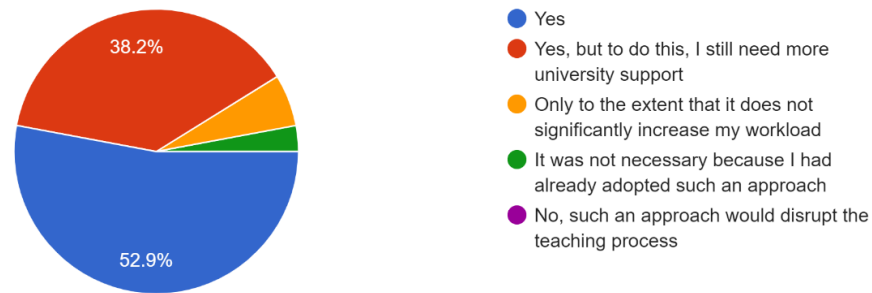


Figure 26 Impact of the INNOTAL project on motivation to introduce more student-centred approach in teaching

Student engagement is a perpetual issue in higher education across the world. Many students describe university as boring due to the traditional way of teaching. This is one of the issues that must be addressed at the University of Ruhuna as well. For most of the faculty members (52.9%), the INNOTAL project has boosted their motivation to introduce a more student-centred approach in their teaching (Figure 26). However, 38.2% declare that they need more support from the university. Also, there is a very small fraction (8.9%) that believes it may increase the workload too much or are confident that they had already adopted such approach even before INNOTAL.

▪ **Willingness to design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in future**

Would you be willing to design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in the future?

34 responses

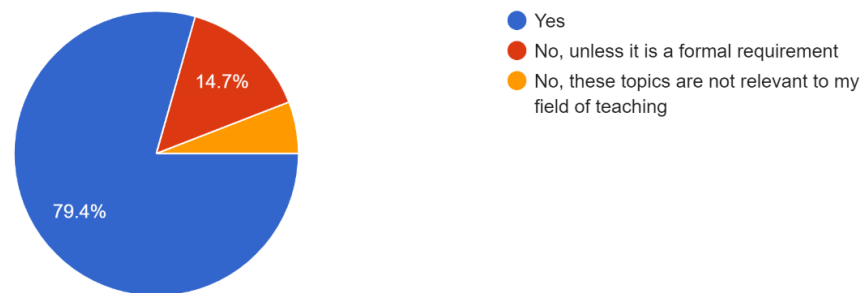


Figure 27: Willingness to design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in future

Entrepreneurship education cultivates innovative talents, which are an important driving force for future development. At present, innovation-driven development strategies place new

demands on entrepreneurship education. It is noteworthy that many staff members (79.4%) are willing to design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in the future (Figure 27).

- **Usefulness of the results of the INNOTAL project on faculty members’ capacity to design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in the future**

Will the results of the INNOTAL project help you design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in the future?

34 responses

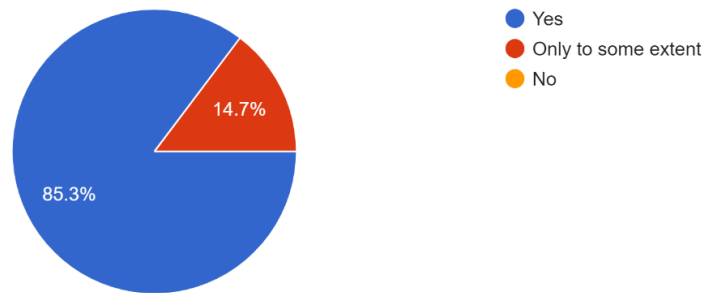


Figure 28: Usefulness of the results of the INNOTAL project on faculty members’ capacity to design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in the future

The results of the INNOTAL project have provided tools and resources for faculty members to design and deliver innovation and entrepreneurship training in the future. 85.3% of faculty members in the sample have said that the INNOTAL project has helped them in this regard, while the other 14.7% declare “to some extent” (Figure 28).

- **Strengthening the student employability and innovation capacity as a result of the INNOTAL project and Talent Co-Creation Lab**

Do you think the results of the INNOTAL project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab, would strengthen student employability and innovation capacity and help students get better exposure to external stakeholders?

34 responses

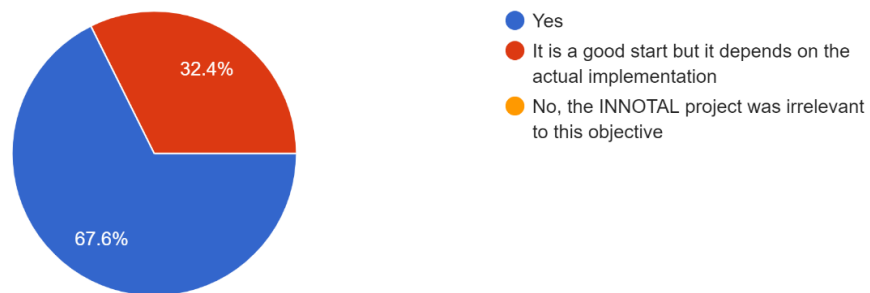


Figure 29: Strengthening the student employability and innovation capacity as a result of the INNOTAL project and Talent Co-Creation Lab

Regarding innovation in higher education, academics have mainly discussed pedagogical innovation and technology-enhanced innovation. As depicted in Figure 29, the majority of the faculty members in the sample (67.6%) believe that the INNOTAL Project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab, contribute to strengthening student employability and innovation

capacity by helping students get better exposure to external stakeholders. However, 32.4% of the faculty members regard the project as a good start but suggest that overall success depends on the actual implementation. Accordingly, this is an important matter which needs further attention. The role of the university goes far beyond the “engine of innovation” perspective.

▪ **Willingness to facilitate students in live innovation projects with external stakeholders**

Would you be willing to organize and facilitate the involvement of your students in live innovation projects and in other forms of collaboration with external stakeholders?

33 responses

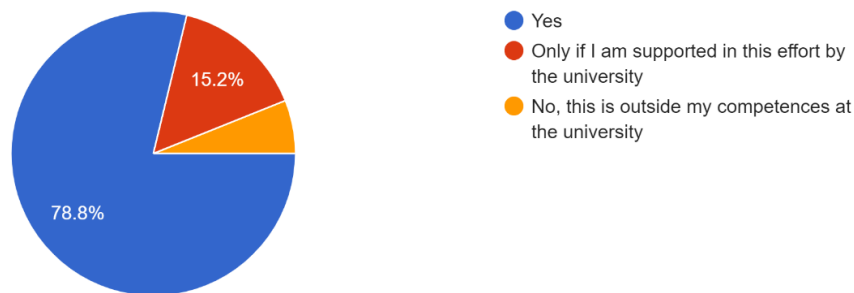


Figure 30: Willingness to facilitate students in live innovation projects with external stakeholders

It is very inspiring to declare that many staff members (78.8%) in the sample are willing to organize and facilitate the involvement of their students in live innovation projects and other forms of collaboration with external stakeholders (Figure 30). Further, 15.2% in the sample declare that they are ready to so if the support is provided by the university.

▪ **Impact of the INNOTAL project activities and the Talent Co-Creation Lab on motivation to facilitate students in live innovation projects with external stakeholders**

Did the INNOTAL project activities and the Talent Co-Creation Lab make you more motivated and prepared to involve students in live innovation pro... forms of collaboration with external stakeholders?

34 responses

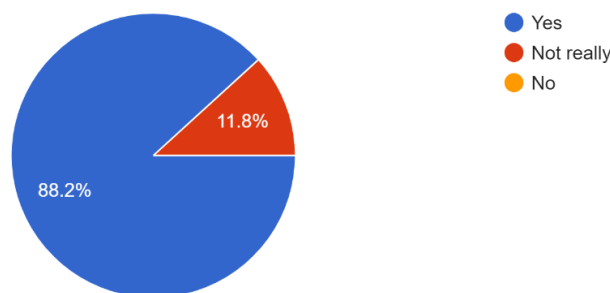


Figure 31: Impact of the INNOTAL project activities and the Talent Co-Creation Lab on motivation to facilitate students in live innovation projects with external stakeholders



Since Technology Transfer Office and Talent Co-Creation Lab have already been set up and have started to facilitate the services, the faculty members can use these services and enhance collaboration with external stakeholders. Accordingly, Figure 31 confirms that the INNOTAL project activities and the Talent Co-Creation Lab have motivated faculty members to be more involved in this regard.

▪ **Introducing more innovative teaching methods as a result of INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab**

Do you think the results of the INNOTAL project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab, would make it possible to introduce more innovative teaching methods in your own teaching?

34 responses

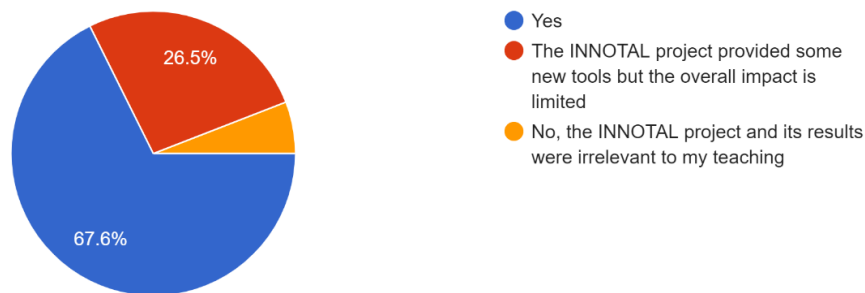


Figure 32: Introducing more innovative teaching methods as a result of INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab

The INNOTAL project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab, have contributed to introducing more innovative teaching methods. 67.6% of faculty members in the sample have expressed greed with this statement (Figure 32). 26.5% have mentioned that the INNOTAL project provided some new tools, but the overall impact is limited. We assume the limited impact concerns especially in some faculties due to the nature of the discipline and academic programmes.

Section III – Students

The students are considered the most important element in his exercise and their responses are summarized under each question to explore the perceptions on the impact of the INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab, opportunities provided by the INNOTAL Project, students’ confidence for participating in innovation and research and students’ view on volunteering and community work.

- **Importance of the INNOTAL project and Talent Co-Creation Lab**

Do you think the INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab have been important and useful initiatives for students at this university?

46 responses

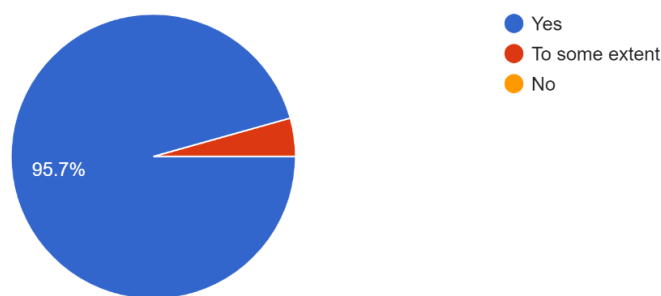


Figure 33: Importance of the INNOTAL project and Talent Co-Creation Lab activities

It is noteworthy that 95.7% students have recognized the importance of the INNOTAL project and Talent Co-Creation Lab activities (Figure 33).

- **Opportunities to improve employability or learning through the INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab**

As Figure 34 shows, 75% of students believe that the INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab have provide opportunities to improve employability or learning for students within the university.

Did the INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab give you an opportunity to improve your employability or learning?

44 responses

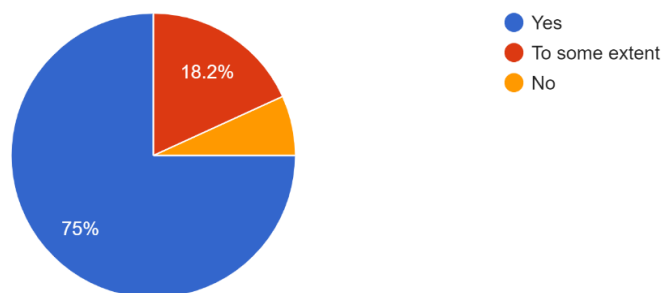


Figure 34: Opportunities to improve employability or learning through the INNOTAL project and Talent Co-Creation Lab

▪ **Participation in extracurricular activities involving industry or the public sector to improve the learning process and employability after graduation**

Do you think that more opportunities for participation in extra-curricular activities involving industry or the public sector would improve your le...University or your employability after graduation?
45 responses

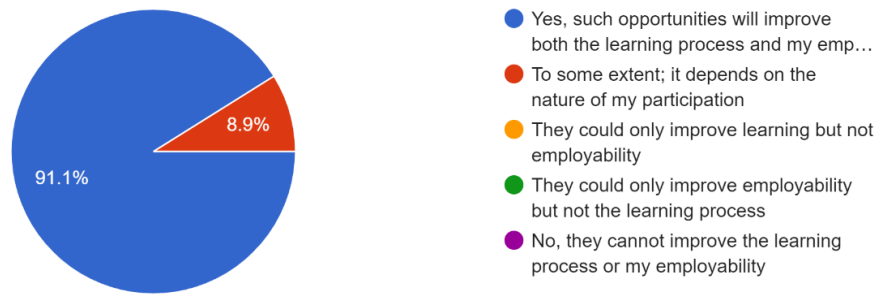


Figure 35: Participation in extracurricular activities involving industry or the public sector to improve the learning process and employability after graduation

Almost all students believe that more opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities involving industry or the public sector would improve the learning process and employability after graduation. 91.1% of those who responded accept this as an important element, and another 8.9% declare that it depends on the nature of their participation (Figure 35). This idea provides a good indicator of what could be done to implement effective strategies in order to enhance student participation.

▪ **Importance of the INNOTAL Talent Co-Creation Lab**

Do you think that the INNOTAL Talent Co-creation Lab can be useful for you?
46 responses

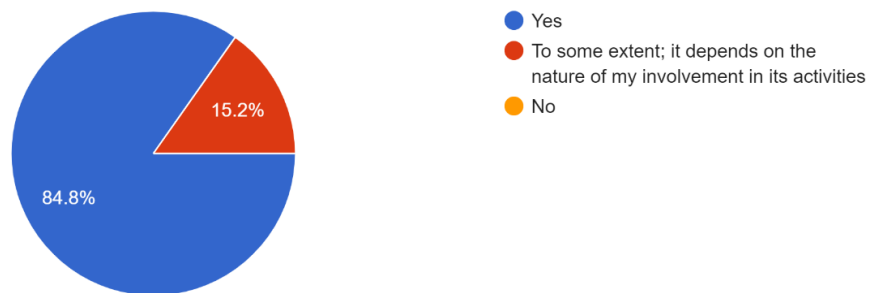


Figure 36: Usefulness of the Talent Co-Creation Lab

The majority of the students (84.8%) firmly believe that the INNOTAL Talent Co-Creation Lab will be useful for them (Figure 36). Meanwhile, 15.2% of the students who responded declare that it depends on the nature of their involvement of the activities of the Talent Co-Creation Lab. Therefore, effective strategies to enhance the involvement of students are needed.

▪ **Confidence of students to get involved in research projects**

Do you feel confident and prepared to become involved in an innovation or research project?

45 responses

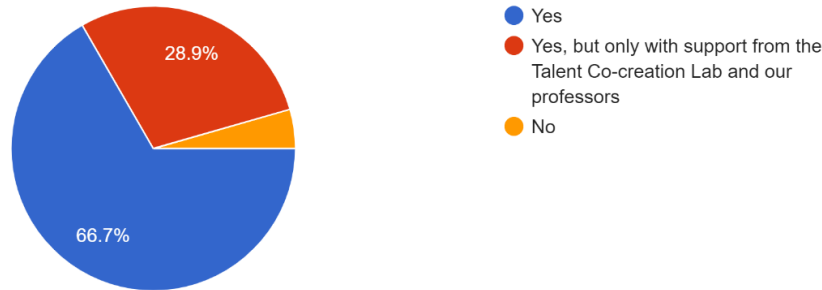


Figure 37: Confidence of students to get involved in research projects

Many students (66.7%) have confidence and feel prepared to be involved in innovation or research projects (Figure 37). Further 28.9% expect support from the Talent Co-Creation Lab and guidance from professors or supervisors. This condition can be considered a great opportunity to promote the Talent Co-Creation Lab among students and promote their participation for research and innovation projects and activities.

▪ **Confidence of students to accept challenges in research and innovation projects**

Do you feel confident and prepared to accept challenging tasks related to research and innovation projects proposed by employer organizations?

45 responses

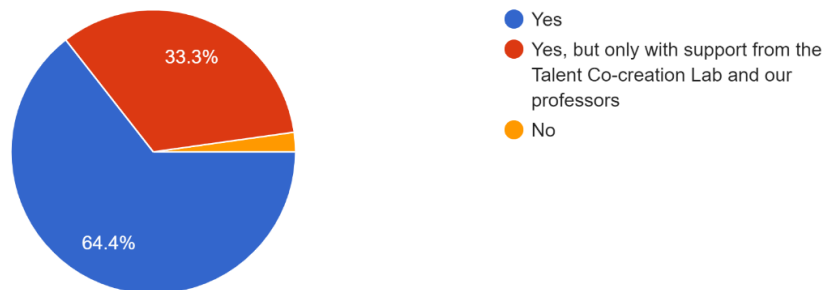


Figure 38: Confidence of students to accept challenges in research and innovation projects

It is noteworthy that most students (64.4%) have confidence and they are prepared to accept the challenging tasks related to research and innovation projects, while another 33.3% expect support from the Talent Co-Creation Lab and professors (Figure 38). These projects are a good way to build awareness of real-world problems, and to get an insight into how to build confidence while developing skills (time management, report writing, critical thinking, problem solving, market research, presentation, commercial awareness, etc.). Enthusiasm in students is a critical factor for the success of the intended projects and activities conducted by the Talent Co-Creation Lab.

▪ **Impact of INNOTAL on student confidence of students to cooperate with employers and accept challenging tasks in research and innovations projects**



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Did INNOTAL project activities make you more confident and prepared to cooperate with employers and to accept challenging tasks related to research and innovation projects?
44 responses

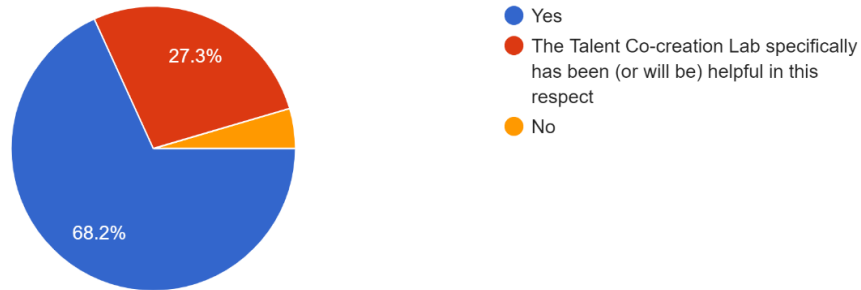


Figure 39: Impact of INNOTAL on student confidence of students to cooperate with employers and accept challenging tasks in research and innovations projects

As shown in Figure 39, students have clearly declared that the INNOTAL project activities have made them more confident to cooperate with external stakeholders and accept challenging tasks related to research and innovation projects. Many have specifically mentioned the Talent Co-Creation Lab as contributing to their confidence.

- **Contribution of volunteering and community work to improving skills and employability**

Do you think that volunteering and community work could improve your skills and employability?
45 responses

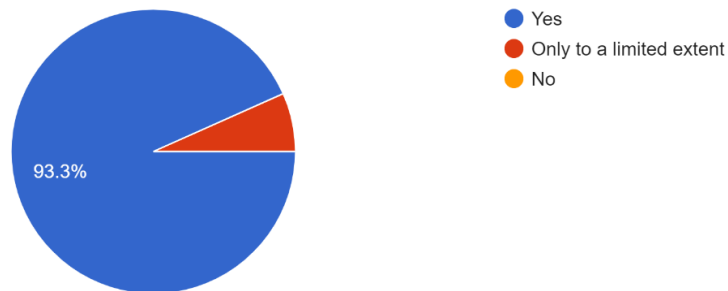


Figure 40: Contribution of volunteering and community work to improving skills and employability

Volunteering and community work have received a greater attention lately. Industry is really interested in recruiting graduates who have been involved in volunteering and community work. Students have also understood that those who have engaged in volunteering and community work have a higher level of employability. University of Ruhuna encourages students to get more involved in volunteering and community work to improve their skills. The Career Guidance Unit and different Clubs and Societies established at the university organize various types of such volunteering and community work with the participation of students. Indeed, 93.3% of students in the sample have stated that volunteering and community work can improve their skills and employability (Figure 40).

- **Students’ engagement in volunteering activities**

Would you get engaged in volunteering activities?

43 responses

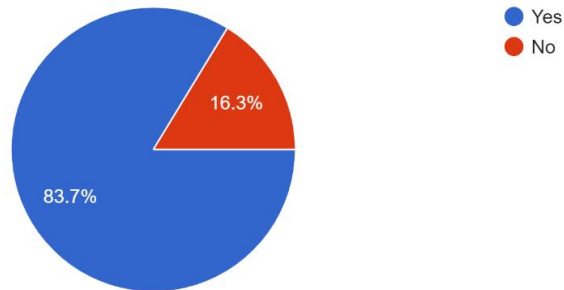


Figure 41: Students' engagement in volunteering activities

Students' engagement of volunteering and community work is further confirmed by Figure 41, which shows that the majority of students (83.7%) would engage in volunteering activities. Moreover, many students have expressed their interest to engage in community work and volunteering activities in the open comments section and they expect guidance from the University.

Conclusions

The survey was conducted to evaluate the contribution of the INNOTAL project, and its key elements, particularly the Talent Co-Creation Lab, Volunteering Centre, Learning Modules to building innovation capacity and entrepreneurial culture at the University of Ruhuna, and to ultimately increasing the employability of graduates. It is noteworthy that all three target groups for the survey have confirmed the importance and validity of the INNOTAL project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab.

Importantly, most of the Management and Administration Personnel believe that the INNOTAL project has contributed to applying and implementing global trends and best practices. They believe that the INNOTAL project has created an impetus for change and improvement within the university. The contribution made by the INNOTAL project to promoting stronger involvement of external stakeholders is also recognized. The Management and Administrative Personnel who responded to the survey accept that effectiveness of the INNOTAL project's proposed strategy for embedding employability across all university activities. They appear willing to facilitate and support future activities of the INNOTAL project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab.

The faculty members appreciate the INNOTAL initiatives as contributing to strengthening entrepreneurial culture within the university, developing strong industry network and enhancing the employability of graduates. The involvement of external stakeholders in the design, delivery and evaluation of study programmes as proposed by the INNOTAL project, is highly appreciated by the faculty members. The events and results of the INNOTAL project have increased the motivation of faculty members to contribute to the university's employability strategy. Most faculty members are willing to support efforts to embed employability across all institutional activities including curriculum, teaching, research & innovation, as proposed by the INNOTAL project. Most of the faculty members believe that the INNOTAL project, and in particular the Talent Co-Creation Lab, can contribute to strengthening student employability and innovation capacity by allowing students to get exposure to external stakeholders. They affirm their motivation to introduce more student-centred approach in their teaching as proposed by the INNOTAL project, and expect to introduce more innovative teaching methods because of the project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab.

Students – the third and most important category and the main target group of the project – have perceived this initiative as very important and useful for their future careers. They believe that the INNOTAL project and the Talent Co-Creation Lab provide opportunities to improve their employability and the learning process. Students have expressed their great enthusiasm for participation in extracurricular activities involving industry and the public sector. The attitudes of students in engaging in volunteering and community work are very positive. Finally, students have expressed their eagerness to use the facilities provided by the Talent Co-Creation Lab and get involved in innovation or research projects with the support of the university and faculty members.

