

The Impact of Contextual Factors on the Entrepreneurial Intent of IT Undergraduates: A Sri Lankan Perspective

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Abstract

Despite the fact that a “growing level of per capita income” has been identified as a major driving force of the rate of innovative start-ups (Wennekers, Stel, Carree and Thurik, 2010), the steady rise in per capita income in Sri Lanka and the lucrative opportunities afforded by the **ICT revolution**, have not been reflected in the number of IT start-ups in the country. This research attempts to study student inclination towards entrepreneurship in information technology in the wake of the underlying economic growth in Sri Lanka, post-civil war. The research was predominantly a quantitative study, based on a sample of 300, drawn from eight institutes offering undergraduate courses in IT. The findings led to the conclusion that the entrepreneurial intent level of the said population is significantly influenced by contextual factors comprising university support and role model influence, both directly and indirectly (through the mediating effects of favourable personal attitude and significant self-efficacy). The study suggests efforts to increase the entrepreneurial intent of IT undergraduates, who must strive to enhance the perceptual elements comprising personal attitude and self-efficacy, through those factors known to affect them: university support measures and role model influence.

Key words: Information Technology, Contextual Factors, Sri Lankan Undergraduates, Entrepreneurial Intent.

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