

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES IN SRI LANKA.

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is a key driver of economic growth and innovation, particularly in developing nations, such as Sri Lanka. This study investigates the differences in entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduates from government and private universities in Sri Lanka, addressing a critical gap in the literature that often overlooks the influence of different educational environments on entrepreneurial intentions. The primary purpose of this study is to explore the variations in entrepreneurial intentions across different educational settings. This study employed a quantitative methodology utilizing a stratified sampling technique to ensure the representation of both government and private university undergraduates. A structured questionnaire was administered to 150 management undergraduates from both types of universities, and four hypotheses were formulated to conduct the research. According to the descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, independent sample test, regression analysis, and ANOVA analysis, the findings reveal that while social support and exposure to entrepreneurial education significantly affect entrepreneurial intentions and contribute to differences between private and government universities, academic achievement and personality traits do not have a notable impact on these differences. This can be attributed to factors such as enhanced social support networks, greater exposure to entrepreneurial education, and a more supportive entrepreneurial environment at private universities. The study concludes with recommendations for policymakers and educational institutions to develop strategies to enhance entrepreneurial education and support systems. Such efforts are essential for fostering a stronger entrepreneurial culture among Sri Lankan undergraduates, which in turn can help reduce graduate unemployment and drive economic growth in the country.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, government universities, private universities, entrepreneurial intention, academic achievement, social support, personality traits, exposure to entrepreneurial education