

**EFFECTIVENESS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP
EDUCATION FOR ENGINEERING STUDENTS
OF SRILANKAN UNIVERSITIES**

BY

Kushan Hirimuthugodage

Supervised by

Prof. Chintha Jayasinghe

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Department of Civil Engineering
University of Moratuwa
Sri Lanka
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DECLARATION

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Kushan Hirimuthugodage

Date: 16 August 2019

The above candidate has carried out research for the Masters dissertation under my supervision.

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Research Supervisor

Prof. Chintha Jayasinghe

Senior Lecturer

Date:

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has been identified as a key factor for economic growth and social transformation. It plays an important role in providing economic development and new technologies as well as decreasing unemployment and eliminating social imbalances. Entrepreneurship skills and knowledge can be transmitted and encouraged through education. Nowadays, entrepreneurship education is one of the most important areas of study in universities all around the world. Universities have a vital role both in supporting research and development and in teaching entrepreneurship to students. Accordingly, most of Sri Lankan universities also have initiated entrepreneurship courses in their curricular. Especially, an awareness of the potential value of entrepreneurship education to engineering students has grown significantly in recent years. Universities are increasingly including entrepreneurship with technology in engineering education to follow the expansion of engineering education. This situation has prompted a significant increase in the delivery of entrepreneurship education to engineering students through new courses, programs, and experiential learning opportunities. Accordingly, this research focuses to investigate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education at the university level for engineering students in Sri Lankan universities. The research problem is identified as what are the influencing factors for the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in upgrading entrepreneurial skills and knowledge among engineering students? The major objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education for engineering students of Sri Lankan universities.

Five Universities with Engineering Faculties such as the University of Moratuwa, University of Peradeniya, University of Ruhuna, University of Sri Jayewardenepura and the University of Colombo were selected as the study area because all Engineering Undergraduate students are offered entrepreneurship education programs in these universities. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. For the purpose of collecting primary data, a questionnaire survey and key informant interviews were used. The questionnaire survey was conducted as an online survey with selected engineering undergraduates and professional engineers. Key informant interviews were conducted with professional engineers who were selected randomly. 106 engineering

undergraduates and 27 professional engineers were selected through simple random sampling for the questionnaire survey and 04 professional engineers were selected through a purposive sampling method for key informant interviews. Mixed analyzing techniques were applied for data analyzing.

The research reveals the various important factors which are contributed to the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. It is highlighted that the importance of introducing new course modules that are related to entrepreneurship education and the importance of enhancing the undergraduates to follow these kinds of course modules. It is obvious that the students who have taken one or more entrepreneurship courses have higher levels of entrepreneurial ability. Thus, entrepreneurship courses through formal or informal engineering education can provide a wide range of career choices for graduate students. It can be noted that the undergraduates expected to gain more practical exposure through entrepreneurship education. They highlighted that the requirement of theoretical, technical and more interactive knowledge along the entrepreneurship education to improve and to develop their skills, knowledge, and talent for ensuring their future career. It seems that the undergraduates were not provided with special skills or knowledge to survive or self-sufficient in entrepreneurship because the majority of professional engineers were working in someone else company.

Finally, the findings can be concluded that the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education is determined by the variety of new course modules with such scenarios in theoretical and practical aspect as well which are introduced to overcome the huge issue of lack of knowledge and lack of awareness about the entrepreneurship education among the youth generation. And also, entrepreneurship education should more focus on the barriers that are influenced by the completion of the implementation of new business.

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