

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

BY

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DECLARATION

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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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CONTENT

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
CONTENT	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
CHAPTER 01: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.2. RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	3
1.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	4
1.4. METHODOLOGY	4
1.4.1. Research Design	4
1.4.2. Study Area	5
1.4.3. Sample of the Study.....	5
1.4.4. Source of Data	5
1.4.5. Data Collection	5
1.5. ARRANGEMENT OF CHAPTERS	6
CHAPTER 02: LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1. INTRODUCTION	7
2.2. ENTREPRENEURSHIP	7
2.2.1. History of Entrepreneurship	8
2.2.1.1. The Beginnings of Entrepreneurship	8
2.2.1.2. The Expansion of Trade Routes from 2000 BCE Onward	9
2.2.1.3. Entrepreneurship and the Invention of Money	10
2.2.1.4. Entrepreneurship and the Beginnings of the Marketplace in the Medieval Period	11
2.2.1.5. Mercantilism, Explorers and the New World from 1550 to 1800	11
2.2.1.6. Entrepreneurship and the Industrial Revolution	12
2.2.1.7. Entrepreneurship and Post World War II.....	12
2.2.2. Factors Affecting Entrepreneurship.....	13
2.2.3. Barriers to Entrepreneurship.....	15
2.2.4. Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneur	16

2.3.	ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION	17
2.4.	ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION	19
2.4.1.	The Effects of Entrepreneurship Education on Students' Entrepreneurial Intention	21
2.4.2.	Entrepreneurship Education for Engineering Students.....	22
2.5.	ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE IN SRI LANKA	25
2.5.1.	Role of Government and Third Parties in Promoting Entrepreneurial Culture 26	
2.5.2.	Suggestions for Promoting Entrepreneurship Culture in Sri Lanka	26
2.6.	ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA	27
CHAPTER 03: METHODS AND TOOLS		29
3.1.	INTRODUCTION	29
3.2.	QUANTITATIVE METHODS.....	29
3.2.1.	Questionnaire Survey.....	29
3.3.	QUALITATIVE METHODS	30
3.3.1.	Key Informant Interviews.....	31
3.4.	SAMPLING	31
CHAPTER 04: DATA ANALYSIS		32
4.1.	INTRODUCTION	32
4.2.	KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.....	32
4.3.	CHAPTER SUMMARY	49
CHAPTER 05: CONCLUSION and recommendations		50
5.1.	INTRODUCTION	50
5.2.	FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	51
5.3.	CONCLUSION	53
5.4.	FUTURE RESEARCH	54
REFERENCE.....		55
6.1.	Questionnaire for Undergraduate Students	63
6.2.	Questionnaire for Practising Engineers	64
6.3.	Questionnaire to Select High Achievers	65
6.4.	Interview Schedule.....	67

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Respondents' Represented Universities	33
Figure 2: Course Modules Followed Relating to Entrepreneurship	34
Figure 3: Improvements Suggested by the Respondents	38
Figure 4: Willingness to be an Entrepreneur in Future	40
Figure 5: Course Modules Followed Related to Entrepreneurship Education.....	43
Figure 6: Level of Satisfaction of Course Modules	44
Figure 7: Do the Course Modules Help in the Industry	45
Figure 8: Recommendations for Newly Passed Out Engineering Students.....	47

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Level of Satisfaction of the Course Modules	36
Table 2: Respondents' Job Role	41
Table 3: Satisfaction Levels with the Opportunities Given for Professional Growth and Career Advancement at Their Work Place	42