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**ASSESSING THE LEGAL COMPLIANCE LITERACY
GAP IN SRI LANKAN IT PROFESSIONALS**

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This Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.
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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work, and this thesis/dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any other University or Institute of higher learning, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgment is made in the text. I retain the right to use this content in whole or part in future works (such as articles or books).

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Date: 24.08.2024

The above candidate has carried out research for the Master's Dissertation under my supervision. I confirm that the declaration made above by the student is true and correct.

Name of Supervisor: Mr. Shalika Siriwardhana

Signature of the Supervisor:

Date: 24.08.2024

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ABSTRACT

In the rapidly changing digital landscape, legal compliance has become an essential skill for Information Technology (IT) professionals, especially in developing economies like Sri Lanka. This thesis explores the legal compliance literacy of IT professionals in Sri Lanka, focusing on their knowledge and application of laws concerning data protection, intellectual property, and cybersecurity. The research uncovers a notable gap between the increasing need for legal adherence in the IT sector and the current level of legal awareness among professionals.

Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the study combines quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from interviews to evaluate the state of legal compliance literacy. The results show that factors such as educational background, work experience, access to legal resources, and participation in specialized training programs play a significant role in shaping legal compliance literacy. The analysis indicates that while awareness of legal standards is growing, the practical implementation of these standards remains a challenge, particularly as technological advancements often outpace the development of corresponding legal frameworks.

This thesis emphasizes the urgent need for strategic actions to improve legal compliance literacy among IT professionals in Sri Lanka. Recommendations include enhancing access to comprehensive legal resources, instituting mandatory and role-specific training programs, and incorporating legal education into IT curricula. These initiatives are vital for developing a more legally informed and ethically responsible IT workforce, which is crucial for minimizing legal risks and promoting the sustainable growth of Sri Lanka's IT industry.

Key Words; Legal compliance, Information Technology (IT) Professionals, Data Protection, Legal Frameworks, Ethically Responsible

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
IV1	EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
IV2	WORKING EXPERIENCE
IV3	TRAINING IN LEGAL COMPLIANCE
IV4	AVAILABILITY OF LRGAL RESOURCES
DV	LEGAL COMPLIANCE LITERACY