

6.6 Career Aspiration of Undergraduates in Sri Lanka

S.S. Thrikawala

Department of Commerce and Financial Management, University of Kelaniya

ABSTRACT

As far as fundamental predicament of countries is concerned, even in the Sri Lanka, unemployment remains vital issue in order to ascertain the solution. The expansion of the private sector in a country, can lend a hand to conquer this unemployment, as they are the engines of growth. However the developing countries such as Sri Lanka, private sector mostly engage with Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Moreover the employment opportunities in large-scale organizations and the public sector are not increasing in relation to the labour force due to lack of industrial development. As a consequence, it is necessary to accelerate the SMEs and Entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka in order to achieve a sustainable economic development. So as to promote SMEs and Entrepreneurship, it is important to ascertain whether the people are committed to start their own business or to employee in a SME with the intention gaining the managerial experience and the training rather than waiting for an employment in large organizations and government sector.

The objective of this study is to determine the undergraduates' aspiration on employing for SMEs, Multi National Corporations (MNCs), Government/ Statutory Board or their own business and the factors that are influenced for their own decision. Another objective is to provide a platform to promote entrepreneurship education among undergraduates. This research signifies the outcome of a study that carried out for 300 third year Bachelor of Commerce undergraduates learning in the University of Kelaniya, which is the one of the foremost University in producing commerce graduates in Sri Lanka.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the undergraduates' to see their aspiration of working in a MNC, SME, Government Organization or their own business. The self aspiration of undergraduates was find out by using 5-point scale for each of ten job factors says payment, fringe benefits, working condition, managerial quality and relationships, long-term career prospects, responsibility given, authority, involvement in decision making, marketability and job security.

The findings reveled that the Self-employment and SMEs provide authority, involvement in decision making, working condition and managerial quality and responsibility but not the payment, fringe benefits, long-term career prospects and job security comparing with the MNCs and Government Organizations.

Key words: Career aspiration, Entrepreneur, MNCs, SMEs, Undergraduates, Unemployment.