

## **State Undergraduates' Intentions to Become Self – Employed Person: Evidence from Sri Lankan Context**

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This study attempted to examine the self-employment intention of state university undergraduates in the Sri Lankan context. The undergraduates' self-employment intention was the problem variable, which surveyed with five independent variables: Attitude Toward Behavior (ATB), Subjective Norms (SN), Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), Perceived Desirability (PD) and Perceived Feasibility (PF) coming under two underpinning theories of: Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Entrepreneurial Event Theory (EET). Accordingly, this study was rationalized and found that self-employment intention is influenced by ATB, SN, PBC, PD, and PF. The study sample consisted of 168 management undergraduates from three leading state universities in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. The data were collected from the selected sample through a standard questionnaire. The cross-sectional study results revealed that undergraduates' ATB, PD, PF, and self-employment intentions were strongly positively correlated. Also, there was a statistically moderate positive correlation between SN, PBC, and self-employment intention. Moreover, the current study was the first to explore the effect of both TPB and EET theories on self-employment intention in the Sri Lankan context. Hence, this study provided valuable theoretical implications grounded on TPB and EET theories. Further, the current study provided managerial implications for the government and policymakers in the educational sector, particularly in tackling and managing graduate unemployment and its associated problems. The government and policymakers can use these research findings to initiate the enlightenment programs that will reorient undergraduate students to avoid having the mentality of securing paid employment jobs after graduation.

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