

**ENTREPRENEURIAL CHARACTERISTICS AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON
MANAGEMENT UNDERGRADUATES' INCLINATION
TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

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University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
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Degree of Master of Science

Department of Mathematics

Faculty of Engineering

University of Moratuwa

Sri Lanka

June 2012.

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Science

Department of Mathematics

Faculty of Engineering

University of Moratuwa

Sri Lanka

June 2012.

DECLARATION OF THE CANDIDATE

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis/dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any University or other 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 acknowledgement is made in the text.

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I have supervised and accepted this thesis for the submission of the degree.

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DEDICATION

To My Family



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ABSTRACT

Interest in entrepreneurship is intense in many parts of the world. For developed economies, entrepreneurial activity (new venture formation) is a means of revitalizing economy, a way of coping with unemployment problems, a potential catalyst and incubator for technological progress, product and market innovation. For economies of developing countries, entrepreneurship is seen as an engine of economic progress, job creation and social adjustment. The development of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills does not always have to lead to self-employment or business ownership. It also helps to increase the employability of individuals which is essential in the private sector. Therefore it is needed to examine whether the Sri Lankan university students are entrepreneurially inclined. This study investigates the entrepreneurial profile of Sri Lankan undergraduates and degree to which they are inclined towards entrepreneurship. 217 final year management undergraduates from four universities were used to investigate their entrepreneurial inclination. This study further examined the association between certain psychological characteristics with entrepreneurial inclination. Descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing, correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The results show that except for tolerance for ambiguity all entrepreneurial characteristics are found to be higher in all the undergraduates. However, in the entrepreneurially inclined group, students are found to have higher need for achievement, higher risk taking propensity, high tolerance for ambiguity and higher innovativeness than the non entrepreneurially group. In particular, regression analysis results indicate that at a 0.05 level of significance, entrepreneurial inclination is significantly associated with need for achievement, tolerance for ambiguity, risk taking propensity and innovativeness. Entrepreneurial inclination is also significantly associated with demographic and family characteristics such as gender, entrepreneurial education and family orientation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

UN: United Nations

ILO: International Labor Organization

N-Ach: Need for Achievement

LoC: Locus of Control

T_Ambi: Tolerance for Ambiguity

VIF: Variance Inflation Factor



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