



Entrepreneurial Intention among Advanced Level Students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka: The Mediation Effect of Role Models

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author DMCS designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author MPSRP managed the analyses of the study, searches and references. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/AJEBA/2018/42762

Editor(s):

(1) Maria Ciurea, Associate Professor, Department of Economics Sciences, Faculty of Sciences, University of Petrosani, Romania.

Reviewers:

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Complete Peer review History: <http://www.sciencedomain.org/review-history/25648>

Original Research Article

Received 2nd May 2018
Accepted 10th July 2018
Published 23rd July 2018

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is not pursued as an attractive career choice by the Sri Lankans as they more attracted to jobs. Entrepreneurial Intention (EI) of younger generation of the country is more crucial in this condition where they are the essence of the active citizen pool of the country. The main objective of this study is to find out the factors that affect EI of Advanced Level (A/L) students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka. The study includes three constructs discuss under the Theory of planned Behaviour (TPB), which affect the EI of individuals. Further, the study efforts to identify the mediation effect of role models (RM) on the above factors when determining EI. A total of 376 students from schools in Colombo District, Sri Lanka participated in this study by responding to the structural questionnaire. Data analysis was done by correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and factor analysis. Findings of the study shown that attitudes towards Entrepreneurship (ATE), subjective norms (SN), perceived behavioural control (PBC) as well as role models are

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positively and significantly related with EI. The study also exposed that role models significantly mediate the relationships between ATE, SN and PBC with EI. Further, the study reflects that there is a positive effect on EI in terms of ATE, SN and PBC. Since Sri Lanka is having a critical issue with rising unemployment rates, self-employment is a respectable solution for the younger generation. This study adds value to the literature in the means of application of TPB in the context of Sri Lanka.

Keywords: EI; theory of planned behaviour; role models; advanced level students; mediation effect.

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of entrepreneurship receiving increased attention and continuous interest in the field would appear to be more than just a trend [1]. Also entrepreneurship has appeared as an essential element in the organization of economies [2]. The level of entrepreneurship has a positive relationship with the level of economic growth of a country [3] and it is a main instrument to accelerate economic growth and development [4]. Many studies in the entrepreneurship literature are supported the entitlement that entrepreneurship has important economic value, for instance, in terms of productivity and growth, employment generation and innovation [5].

The intention means a person's willingness to perform a given behaviour [6]. The EI has been proven to be a primary predictor of future entrepreneurial behaviour [6]. The EI is expected to depend on the nature of entrepreneurial behaviour. However, having identified the entrepreneurship as crucial to economic growth and progress, a little attention has been paid for research on factors which influence the intention of individuals to start new businesses and particularly the EIs of those who are still within the education system in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is substantial to look at the factors influence on EI in the early stage of individuals of the country and understand the possibilities of rebuilding of the education system to create an entrepreneurial culture in the country. Although there are several studies on EI of university students, little focuses has been given for secondary level school students. Since each age group of students relates to different psychological characteristics, it is essential to understand the specific needs of each age group [7] concerning the EI. With the aim of filling this gap the authors investigate the EI of Advanced Level students.

As a developing nation Sri Lanka has to pay attention on entrepreneurship where it considered as the engine of sustainable

economic development. Entrepreneurship has successfully adopted into economic policies by the countries like China, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia etc. However, Sri Lanka still not being able to get the real benefit from entrepreneurship on economic development. Although Sri Lankan SMEs contributes more to the Gross Domestic Production (GDP), the failure rate of SMEs is at a higher rate. Therefore, a limited number of successful entrepreneurs can be seen in the country. Many researchers have argued that the EI holds the foundation for individuals to engage in entrepreneurial activities and start new ventures for the betterment of the nation. It is important to have individuals with a higher EI in the country in order to start new entrepreneurial initiatives which can drive the nation towards the success. Especially, EI of younger generation of the country is more critical to address in this condition. There are very few studies have been conducted in Sri Lankan context on EI of school students. Moreover, it is hard to find out the studies based on Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in this context. Secondary education system plays a major role in propagating EI among students and nurturing future entrepreneurs. Some scholars have precisely incorporated secondary school student samples in order to assess the EI and particularly apply TPB to that context [8] Therefore, this research is important for the school students on deciding their future education and career path and on the other hand, policy makers to prepare national policies on SMEs and entrepreneurship in the country. Although many studies focused on recognizing the entrepreneurial background and EI of university students could be found when reviewing the literature, there is a scarcity of empirical evidence relating to EI at earlier stages of learning. Therefore, this study attempts to address this knowledge gap in Sri Lankan context. The TPB suggests that the intention which will pursue someone's behavior is affected and shaped by factors such as attitudes, subjective norms or perceived behavioral control. Therefore, this study aims to achieve the following main objective;

To find out the factors affecting Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

Sub objectives of the study are set as follows.

- To identify the relationship between Attitude towards Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo district, Sri Lanka.
- To identify the relationship between Social Norms and Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.
- To identify the relationship between Perceived Behavioral Control and Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.
- To identify the most influencing element within each independent variable which affects the Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka?
- To assess the mediating effects of Role Models on Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.
- To foreword the recommendations to improve Entrepreneurial Intention among Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

The research problem of the study is formulated as;

“What are the factors that have influenced the EI of Advanced Level students in Sri Lanka?” and following research questions has derived accordingly.

- Is there a relationship between Attitude towards Entrepreneurship and Advanced Level of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka?
- Is there a relationship between Social Norms and Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka?
- Is there a relationship between Perceived Behavioral Control and Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka?
- What is the most influencing element within each independent variable which

affects the and E Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka?

- Do Role Models have a mediating effect on Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka?
- What are the recommendations that can be suggested to improve Entrepreneurial Intention of Advanced Level students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka?

1.1 Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneur

There are many challenges and issues exist when defining entrepreneurship. A variety of ideas regarding its meaning have arisen and those definitions were focused on using the characteristics of entrepreneur and parts of entrepreneurial process and the results of the process [9]. No any single definition could give a comprehensive picture of entrepreneurship and there is a lack of a common definition of entrepreneurship. Various researchers have defined it in different perspectives. Some scholars define entrepreneurship in terms of an outcome, such as the self-employment rate or the incidence of start-ups. The challenge of defining entrepreneurship can be understand when considering how many factors they consider when define and perceive entrepreneurship [10]. Therefore researchers and educators must define what they mean by entrepreneurship rather than limiting into one part of it [9]. There are many arguments regarding a proper definition for entrepreneurship. Various scholars have defined the same concept by emphasizing different aspects of the concept [11]. Some literature and practice demonstrate much confusion between the term ‘entrepreneurship’, ‘enterprise’, and ‘small business’ [12].

In 1934, Schumpeter identifies entrepreneurs as innovators who use a practice of shattering the status quo of existing products and services. This definition has severely contributed the established literature on entrepreneurship [10]. According to [13] entrepreneur is an individual who manage a business with the intention of growing that business and with the leadership and managerial capacity for attaining their goals, usually in the face of solid competition from other large and small firms. [14] explains entrepreneurs as individuals who exploit market opportunities through innovation processes.

However for the purpose of this study, Entrepreneurship is regarded as the process of creating a creative and innovative product or business venture by taking a risk based on a proper identification of opportunities in the market place which will ultimately contribute to the economic development of a country. An Entrepreneur is the person who undertakes that entrepreneurial process by taking risk and ultimately contributes to the economic development.

1.2 EI

EI has been paid much attention in recent years and most of the studies are based on psychological factors affecting EI [15]. [16] argues that individuals take their decisions towards entrepreneurial undertaking replicates their intentions and behavior. EI is one approach to understand the entrepreneurial process and many studies have been showed that intentions could provide a significant direction towards selecting the type of business when they becoming entrepreneurs. The intention to start a new business depends on the desirability, feasibility of an individual [17]. Knowledge of students regarding the entrepreneurial characteristics is mostly influencing on EIs [7]. It is general that the best stage to hold a positive attitude towards something is the childhood or the age of schooling. EI is clearly making way to explain and predict entrepreneurship [4]. For the purpose of this study, EI refers to the intention to engage in an entrepreneurial activity or start an entrepreneurial business venture as the future career by individuals.

1.3 Theory of Planned Behaviour

This Model considers human behavior as planned activity and therefore, being preceded by intention toward that behavior. The TPB suggests three conceptually independent determinants of intention: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms with respect to the behavior and perceived control behavior.

Explaining human behaviour is a difficult task [6]. Behavioural dispositions such as social attitude and personality traits are playing a crucial role when trying to predict the human behaviour. There are many theoretical frameworks to deal with the psychological process involved in human

behaviour. The TPB [6] can be used to explain the entrepreneurial behaviour which is the result of EI of an individual. TPB considers the human behaviour as a cause of intention [18]. According to [6], intention is directly influenced by three independent determinants called;

- (i) Attitude towards the behaviour
- (ii) Subjective norms and
- (iii) Perceived behavioural control

Above three factors are directly affect a person's intention to execute a particular behaviour and [6] further discussed that this model can be applied in many areas of interest precisely when understanding certain behaviour. Under this study, TPB has been used to describe the entrepreneurial behaviour resulted in EI. TPB has been identified as an effective and influential model for studying and understanding EI ([19]; [20]; [8]). [21] bring out that entrepreneurship is a result of intentional and planned behaviour. Therefore it is viable to investigate EI by using TPB.

In this setting, this study has formed following hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between ATE and EI
- H2: There is a significant relationship between SN and EI
- H3: There is a significant relationship between PBC and EI
- H4: RM significantly mediate the relationship between ATE and EI
- H5: RM significantly mediate the relationship between SN and EI
- H6: RM significantly mediate the relationship between PBC and EI

1.4 TPB and Entrepreneurial Role Models

[21] debates that role models affect EIs largely because it affects attributes and beliefs such as perceived behavioral control. [21] ensure this argument;

"Evidence from entrepreneurial role models supports the potential of intentions models for predicting new venture creation. Intentions explain conflicts in research findings such as the effects of role models and mentors on eliciting subsequent entrepreneurial behaviors" [21].

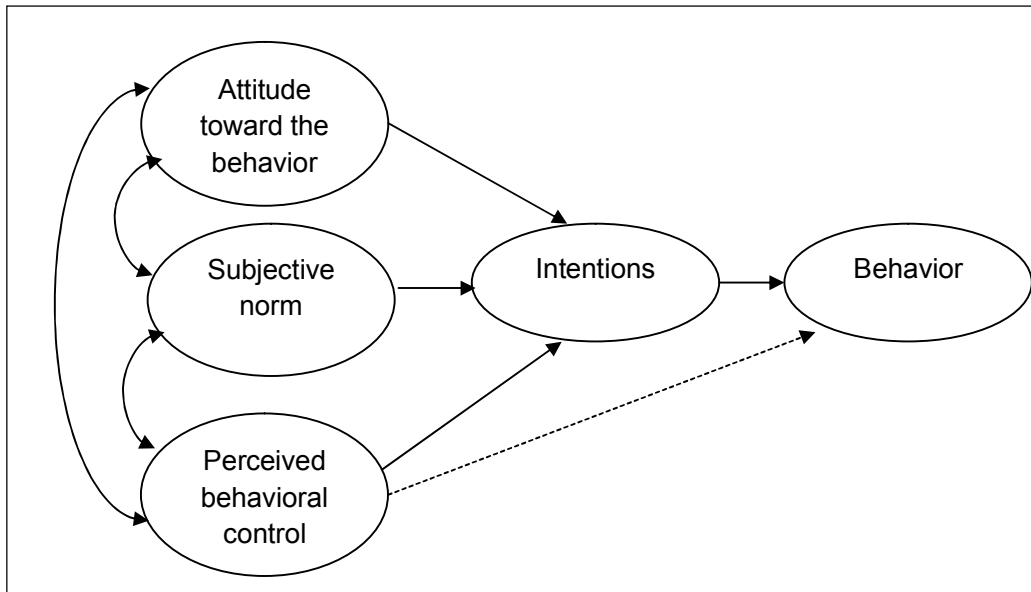


Fig. 1. Theory of planned behavior
Source: [6]

[22] argues that entrepreneurial role models indirectly influenced EI through its backgrounds in the TPB. Further, ATE, SN and PBC usually explain only 30 to 50 percent of total variance in EI and partial amount of the variance remains unexplained [22]. As well as the relationships among the variables are not consistent across different context and conditions. Neglecting the indirect effect of mediating and moderating variables may cause these limited explanatory power and the inconsistencies among various studies [23]. Based on these facts, the study incorporates a situational and sociocultural factor (i.e. RM) into the TPB model [22]. Since RM can be seen as a possible foundation for entrepreneurial learning and inspiring students to become successful entrepreneurs as well as its importance in student's career choice and entrepreneurship education. Accordingly, the aim of adding entrepreneurial role models to the TPB as an exogenous variable [22] is to study whether the extra variable could enrich the predictive ability of the original TPB model.

1.5 Advance Level Students

According to [24] Sri Lankan secondary education consists of two three-year cycles: junior secondary (Grade 6-8) and senior secondary (Grade 9-11). After completing the secondary cycle, students sit the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level (O/L) examination. According to the educational

reforms implemented from 1998/99, the junior secondary cycle lasts four years (Grade 6-9). The last stage in the formal education system is the collegiate level, which comprises two years of schooling (Grade 12-13) leading to the GCE A/L examination. Students' performance in this examination is the basis for selection and admission to universities and other higher education institutes, which offer a wide range of degree-level courses.

1.6 Entrepreneurship in School Curriculum

Under the curriculum reforms implemented in 2007 the government introduced entrepreneurship as a separate and main subject of school curriculum called "Entrepreneurial Studies" for grade 10 and 11 at Senior Secondary level of the school education system in Sri Lanka. This has been introduced to the aim of having a drastic change in attitude of individuals through education, so that country can benefit from those individuals to gain socio-economic benefits in the future [25]. Students who study the entrepreneurship are expected to improve their capabilities in developing an entrepreneurial mindset. The Practical and technical subjects which are included in the junior secondary syllabi from grades 6-9 is the initial stage of Entrepreneurial Studies subject. The students who study these subjects acquire foundation knowledge about entrepreneurship

and they get the opportunity to improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes through the subject of entrepreneurial studies when they are in grades 10 and 11. Furthermore, they are provided with the opportunity of studying further on entrepreneurship when they pursue the subject, Business studies for their A/L. Universities also have led the platform for these students when they reach higher education.

2. METHODOLOGY

Conceptual framework provides the structure for the whole study based on literature. The researcher has adopted the integrative model of TPB based on Ajzen's model as the conceptual framework for this study.

Fig. 2 represents ATE, SN and PBC the independent variables and EI as the dependent variable. The researcher has identified role models as a separate, independent variable

where this model differs from [6] model. The mediation effect of RM is going to be analyzed in relation to the original variables of TPB.

The data were collected at the end of the year 2017. Self-administered questionnaires were used. 376 questionnaires were collected and used in the analysis. Since the data set was distributed normality. Parametric tests were used to analyse the data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From all respondents 53.5 percent are females and 46.5 percent are males. In the population also 51.9 percent are females 48.2 percent are males. Therefore, it can be seen that female representation in the population is higher than males and the same representation can be seen in the sample. The majority of respondents are students who are going to sit for the Advanced level examination in 2017 and they are

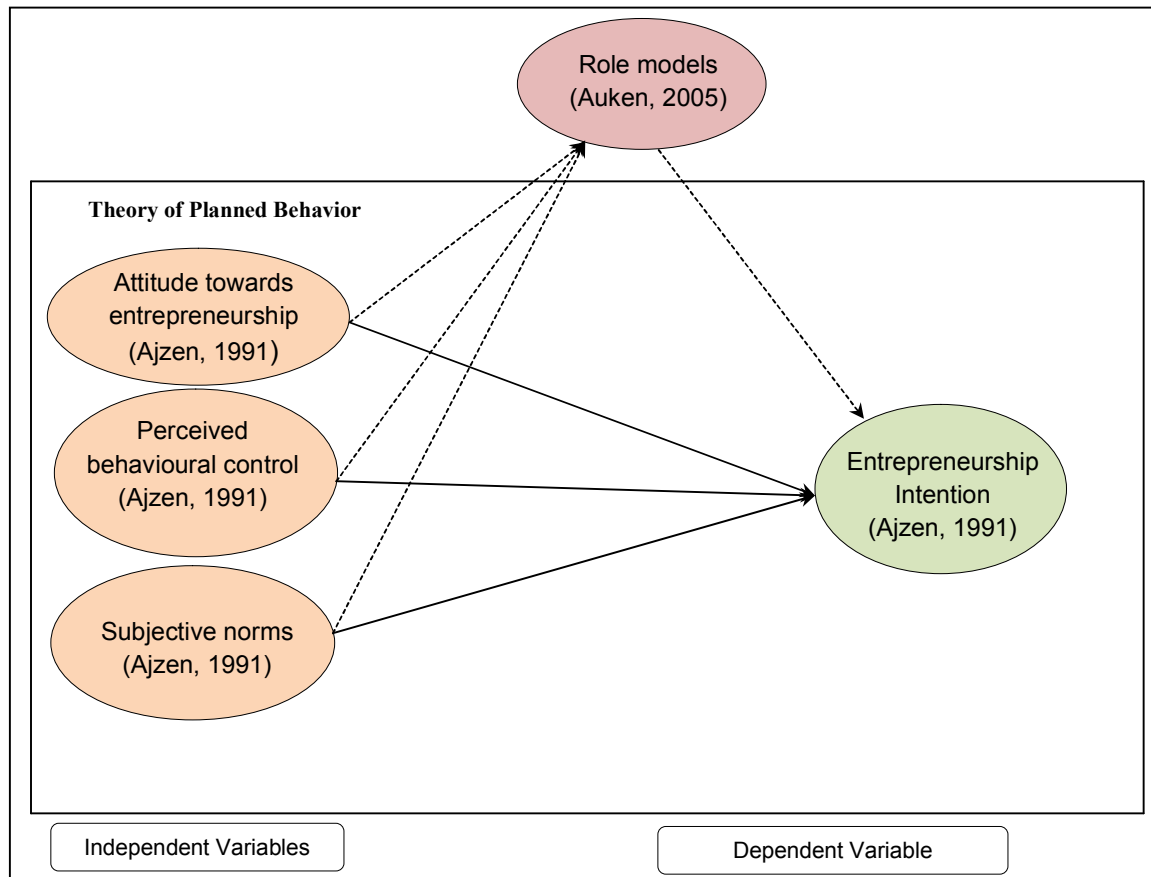


Fig. 2. Conceptual framework
 Source: Adopted from [6] and altered by the authors

account for 94.1 percent in the sample. Rests of the respondents are students who are going to sit for the exam in the year of 2018. Most of the respondents are Sinhalese who account for 85.9 percent 10.1 percent are Muslims and 3.7 percent are Tamils and 0.3 percent are belong to other ethnic groups. When considering the ownership of family businesses only 26.1 percent of people are owning family businesses and 73.9 percent of people are do not owning a family business. Another aspect that consider was whether respondents have follow Entrepreneurship as a subject in their education period. In the sample 212 people who represent 56.4 percent of the sample has followed Entrepreneurship as a subject in their school live. Entrepreneurship has introduced into Ordinary Level students as an optional subject in 2007 on the recommendation of the Secondary Education Modernization Project (SEMP) of National Education commission. However students' responses were declined in following years [25]. The summary of frequencies of respondents by their gender, grade, owning a family business and exposure to entrepreneurship education as a subject in their school life is summarised in the Table 1.

2.1 Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis has done in order to find the relationships between independent variables and dependent variable. Since the residuals of the model distributed normally parametric analysis can be done and Pearson Correlation method used to find the relationships among variables. Table 2 shows the correlation values and their significance at 0.01 levels (2-tailed test). The table shows that all independents variables are positively

correlated with EI. Pearson correlation between EI and ATE shows a significantly strong positive correlation as its value is 0.684. Moreover, it shows that there is significantly moderate positive relationship between SN and EI as the correlation is 0.553. Similarly the relationship between PBC and EI is also a significant moderate positive relationship with a correlation value of 0.549. Accordingly, it indicate that the increase in positive aspects in ATE, SN and PBC tend to increase the EI of respondents under this study.

2.2 Mediation effect of Role Models

Relationships between variables are more complex than simple bivariate relations between an independent and dependent variable since these relations would be modified by, or informed by the addition of a third variable in research model [26]. Mediators are that kind of third variables which indirectly effect the relation between intendant variables (IV) and dependent variables (DV). Fig. 3 illustrates the path diagram for single mediator model.

Although the effect of third variables between relationships is being investigated in literature relating to prevention science [26] statistical methods to conduct these analysis are developing in recent years.

Multiple regression analysis was run separately with mediator and without mediator in order to analyze the mediating effect and examination of differences of coefficients method [27] was used to analyze the indirect effect as shown in Table 3.

Table 1. Personal characteristics of the respondents

| Characteristic | | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Female | 201 | 53.5 |
| | Male | 175 | 46.5 |
| Grade | 12 | 22 | 5.9 |
| | 13 | 354 | 94.1 |
| Learnt entrepreneurship as a subject | Yes | 212 | 56.4 |
| | No | 164 | 43.6 |
| Having a family business | Yes | 98 | 26.1 |
| | No | 278 | 73.9 |
| Ethnic group | Sinhala | 323 | 85.9 |
| | Tamil | 14 | 3.7 |
| | Muslim | 38 | 10.1 |
| | Other | 1 | 0.3 |

Source: Survey Data

Table 2. Correlation between variables

| Construct | | Correlations | | | | |
|------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | EI | ATE | SN | PBC | RM |
| EI | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .684** | .553** | .549** | .329** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| | N | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 |
| ATE | Pearson Correlation | .684** | 1 | .434** | .574** | .209** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| | N | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 |
| SN | Pearson Correlation | .553** | .434** | 1 | .404** | .423** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| | N | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 |
| PBC | Pearson Correlation | .549** | .574** | .404** | 1 | .286** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | | 0.000 |
| | N | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 | 376 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: Survey Data

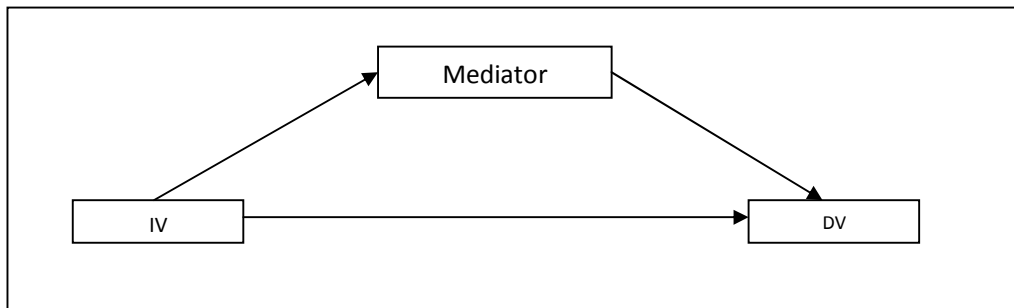


Fig. 3. Path diagram for single mediator model
Source: Compiled by the authors based on literature

Table 3. Judd and Kenny difference of coefficients approach

| Judd and Kenny Difference of Coefficients Approach | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|
| | Analysis | Visual depiction |
| Model 1 | $Y = B_0 + BX + e$ | |
| Model 2 | $Y = B_0 + B_1X + B_2Z + e$ | |

X= Independent Variable, Y=Dependent Variable, Z=Mediator
Source: [27]

The approach indicates subtracting the partial regression coefficient derived through model 2 from the coefficient obtained through model 1.

Accordingly, two regression models used for mediation analysis under this study on a single-mediator model are as follows:

$$EI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ATE + \beta_2 SN + \beta_3 PBC + e_1 \quad (1)$$

$$EI' = \beta_0' + \beta_1' ATE + \beta_2' SN + \beta_3' PBC + \beta_4' RM + e_2 \quad (2)$$

- (1) = Multiple-regression model without mediator (i.e. RM)
- (2) = Multiple-regression model with mediator

The Difference in Coefficients method uses two equations (1) and (2) and takes the difference β

– β' to represent the mediated effect. The difference estimate is divided by the standard error of the difference in order to obtain a test statistic.

$$EI = -0.462 + 0.465 ATE + 0.248 SN + 0.168 PBC + e1 \longrightarrow \text{Model 1}$$

$$EI' = -0.628 + 0.469 ATE + 0.254 SN + 0.155 PBC + 0.079 RM + e2 \longrightarrow \text{Model 2}$$

2.3 Indirect effect of RM

The indirect effect can be calculated by subtracting partial coefficient values of model 2 from partial coefficient values of model 1.

Table 4 represents the coefficient values of the variables with the effect of RM which are significant at 'p values' less than 0.05. Therefore the RM has significantly mediated the relationships between ATE, SN, PBC and EI. As well as the relationship between RM and EI is also significant ($p < 0.05$).

Analysis shows that RM has an indirect effect of minus 0.004 which is significant since the p value is less than 0.05. Further, RM has indirect effect on the relationship between SN and EI as well as the relationship between PBC and EI which are having positive values of 0.03 and 0.13 respectively. Both values are significant since the p values are less than 0.05.

According to the Pearson correlation coefficient 0.684 with 'p value' < 0.01 it denotes that there is statistically significant strong positive correlation between ATE and EI. Therefore the proposed relationship between ATE and EI fully supported with the empirical results of the study. Further, ATE has the most significant impact on EI of A/L students over the other factors since it has the highest correlation with EI among other factors. These results supported the theory that in order to develop EI of individuals, they should have

ATE which is specifically positive. A study done by [28] with a sample of 95 secondary school students conclude that ATE play a role in actively promoting and determining EI. [29] also conducted a study 220 students and found that ATE significantly and positively related with EI. Further, similar studies were carried out by [30]; [31,19,20,32] are also supported and in line with the results of this study. Students should have favorable attitudes for becoming an entrepreneur or to start a business. As per the results obtained through Pearson correlation it shows that there is a significant positive relationship between SN and EI. Correlation coefficient is .553 which is significant at 'p value' $< .01$. Therefore, the proposed relationship between EI and SN was fully supported with the empirical results. SN is the third most influential factor on EI of A/L students in Colombo District, Sri Lanka. The findings of previous research done by [33] with 185 respondents are supporting the findings of this study as SN is a significant predictor of EI. Accordingly, study done by [34] with responses of 100 students has found that there is a significant relationship between SN and EI. Further the findings of studies of [35]; [22]; [29] have obtained similar results. According to the findings of the study a statistically significant relationship is exist between PBC and EI. The Pearson correlation coefficient is .549 ($P < .01$). This is the second most influential variable of EI of A/L students of Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

When considering ATE 'Desire to become an entrepreneur' scores 0.905 factor loading which indicates that the desire towards becoming an entrepreneur is the most influential factor in shaping ATE of a person. When considering SN, 'Thoughts of close relatives on decision of becoming an entrepreneur' has been the most influencing factor which scored 0.810 factor loading. The most influential element under PBC is 'Confident of having skills to own a business within five years of schooling' which has highest factor loadings of 0.861.

Table 4. Indirect effect of RM

| Variable | Standardized coefficients (Beta) | | Indirect effect | Sig |
|----------|----------------------------------|---------|-----------------|-------|
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | | |
| ATE | 0.465 | 0.469 | -0.004 | 0.000 |
| SN | 0.284 | 0.254 | 0.030 | 0.000 |
| PBC | 0.168 | 0.155 | 0.013 | 0.000 |

Source: Survey data

Judd and Kenny Difference of Coefficients Approach [28] was used to analyze the mediation effect of RM on ATE, SN and PBC when predicting EI. The approach indicates that the indirect effect of RM can be calculated by subtracting the partial regression coefficient derived through multiple regression analysis. According to the results RM has mediate the relationship between ATE and EI, SN and EI as well as PBC and EI. The differences in the two regression models that ATE, SN and PBC predict EI with and without the effect of RM have showed that RM has statistically significant mediation effect on relationships between EI with ATE, SN and PBC. RM has positively affected the relationship between SN and PBC with EI whereas RM has negatively affected the relationship between ATE and EI. Previous studies of [36,22] have supported the findings of this study showing that RM has mediate the three antecedents in TPB. However the negative mediation effect of RM on ATE when determining EI under this study is controversial with the results of [22] since in that research all three predictors of TPB will positively mediated by RM.

3. CONCLUSION

Economic development of the country is the most significant and major requirement for every nation all around the globe. The people who are in developed countries enjoy a high level of living standards with increased quality of life. Entrepreneurship is a foremost factor for a sustainable economic development of a country. Entrepreneurship is a trustworthy solution for various economic issues such as unemployment, underdevelopment and poverty. However, the failure rates of SMEs in developing countries are very high and the same condition can be seen in Sri Lankan context too. Entrepreneurship is not pursuing as an attractive career choice by the Sri Lankans as they attracted to jobs. Especially, EI of younger generation of the country is more crucial in this condition where they are the essence of the active citizen pool of the country. It is important to have entrepreneurial exposure from the school education in order to have a better understanding towards the entrepreneurship and intention to become an entrepreneur. The study recommend to create educational programs to increase positive entrepreneurial attitudes of the secondary students, creating positive attitudes about entrepreneurship as a career in school which could enhance the ability of students to select an area links with entrepreneurship, conducting

forums, experience sharing sessions with successful entrepreneurs in school that enhance the positive ATE, introducing entrepreneurship as a compulsory subject which can be more effective than introducing it as an optional subject, incorporate entrepreneurship into other social science subjects such as economics, business studies in secondary level education. Further, creating enterprise policies and investment in enterprise education, increase the awareness by entrepreneurial programs can be conducted by the government in order to support entrepreneurship.

4. CONTRIBUTION

Findings of the study reflect that there is a positive effect on EI among A/L students in Colombo district, Sri Lanka, in terms of ATE, SN and PBC. Since Sri Lanka is having a critical issue with rising unemployment rates, self-employment is a respectable solution for the younger generation of the country. Moreover, educators and policy makers can enhance the attitudes of students regarding entrepreneurship by paying more attention on curriculum designing with incorporating entrepreneurial attributes to them. Teachers of schools have to play an important role in creating entrepreneurial culture within the country. They can educate students about entrepreneurial careers as possible and high earning alternatives for jobs in the future. Further, the government, government organizations, non-government organizations and society at large have a responsibility to perceive entrepreneurship as an engine to economic success. The study has contributed to theoretical and methodological literature by studying mediation effect of RM with the TPB in Sri Lankan context.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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