

## FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ADOPTION OF FREELANCING BY STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SRI LANKA

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### ABSTRACT

The freelance career model has become increasingly popular among the younger generation, as it offers flexible and independent work arrangements. This study investigates the factors influencing state university students' adoption to freelancing in Sri Lanka, given the high unemployment rates and potential of freelancing to contribute to economic growth. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected from a sample of 385 State university students selected through simple random sampling. The quantitative approach facilitated the analysis of key factors, such as personal restraints, freelance market characteristics, technical knowledge, payment restraints, and social restraints. The findings revealed that these factors significantly impact students' decisions to engage in freelancing. Personal and payment restraints, along with technical knowledge, play pivotal roles, and social and market characteristics also contribute to the overall adoption process. The results provide valuable insights for educational institutions, policymakers, and students, highlighting the need for targeted strategies to promote freelancing as a viable career option by addressing identified barriers and enhancing support systems for student freelancers. This study contributes to the academic discourse on freelancing and offers practical implications for integrating freelancing into the academic and economic frameworks of Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, freelancing, Sri Lanka, unemployment, university students