

Factors Affecting Adoption of Cryptocurrency among State University Students in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This study investigates the factors influencing the adoption of cryptocurrency among students in Sri Lanka's state universities. Although cryptocurrency adoption is growing worldwide, Sri Lanka has shown a slower response, particularly among the youth. University students, often considered early adopters of technology, are an ideal group for exploring behavioural intentions toward cryptocurrency use. The research applies three theoretical frameworks the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) to identify and analyse four key factors: perceived benefits, social influence, financial literacy, and technological self-efficacy. These factors were examined in relation to students' behavioural intention to adopt cryptocurrency. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 384 students across 17 state universities in Sri Lanka through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire's reliability and validity were tested prior to data collection. The responses were analysed using SPSS to conduct descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis. The findings reveal that perceived benefits, financial literacy, and technological self-efficacy significantly and positively influence students' intention to adopt cryptocurrency, while social influence was found to have only a minor effect. These results suggest that personal understanding and confidence in using digital financial tools are stronger predictors of cryptocurrency adoption than peer influence or external opinions. This study makes a valuable contribution to the limited local research on digital finance in Sri Lanka and provides insights for policymakers, educators, and technology developers seeking to improve cryptocurrency awareness and adoption in the higher education sector.

Keywords: cryptocurrency adoption, financial literacy, perceived benefits, technological self-efficacy, social influence