



THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTED FOR RAPID EXPANSION OF IT AND MANAGEMENT DEGREE AWARDING BY THE PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS (ESTABLISHED UNDER THE BUSINESS ACT) IN SRI LANKA

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INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka has opened for the open economy afterward the year of 1977 where the SLPF took over the power and privatization has encouraged. Years after the privatization policies, Sri Lanka remarkably showed the highest growth in the demand for the private university education. The education sector of the Sri Lanka subjected to the major privatization of degrees in various streams and reasons have been elaborate in various factors. The enactment of the acts, “The conversion of the Government owned business undertakings into the public corporation Act No. 22 of 1987” and “The Conversion of Public Corporations or government owned business undertaking into public companies Act no.23 of 1987” (Defence, 2016) The enactment of the act in the 1987 encloses with the privatization under the business act of Act No. 35 of the 1971 has been replaced by the Act No. 58 of 1988. With the privatization acts implemented by the government different institutions have established the educational institutions for secondary and tertiary education within the Sri Lanka. The impact of the privatization polices reflected through the rapid and fast establishment of education offering institutions where currently established under the Section 25A of universities Act No.16, 1978 as 25 degree awarding institutions (Education, 2022). The privatized educational institutions are subjected to approved and recognized or recognized by the UGC to offer the degree in Sri Lanka. Since, the IT and Management degrees are offered under several educational institutions it has been subjected to discuss the quality and the standard of the degree from the particular institution. Furthermore, it showed that unlike the Engineering degree entry requirements, the IT and Management degrees are awarded under less entry requirements to students. (University entry requirements either GCE Advanced level or the direct path via the GCE ordinary level)

Research Problem

Sri Lanka currently offered IT and Management degree for the students under the 17 state universities for limited number of students and therefore the demand for the private institutions has been rapidly growing. Further, private degrees have advantageous and the disadvantageous for the education sector some of can be elaborate as the high quality and standard degrees, the high cost, social conflicts, supervision under the SLQF framework, prolong save of foreign exchanges to country, expanding the employment opportunities such as. The research identify the problem with the privatized degree programs under several aspects and tried to identify the main factors contribute for the IT and Management degree demand in Colombo District.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the research paper is to identify the major factors that contribute for the high demand for the IT and Management degrees offered by the Private institutes recognized and monitored by the UGC of Sri Lanka.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that affect for the rapid expansion of the IT and Management degrees in private institutions in Sri Lanka?
2. What are the consequences of degrees offer in IT and Management in Sri Lanka for the public and private university students?

METHODOLOGY

The populations were taken from the pass out graduates in the year of before 2020 from the two state universities and the two private universities in the Colombo district. The research used the strata technique for the sub grouping the sample under the educational pass out year of the students and the sample was taken from random sampling method; the target sample population was 500. The sample of 360 graduates contains the 178 from the state universities and 182 from the private universities. (The name of the universities has been withdrawing from the paper) The conceptual Framework represent in the figure no. 01 in the below and has been constructed with the reference to the (Gunarathne, 2018). The sample was analyzed using the SPSS 16.0 Version and data has been represent through SPSS and the excel data-graphs and other charts. The sample was taken from the graduates who passed out from the 2018-2021 and close ended questionnaire was distributed among the participants via the Google forms.

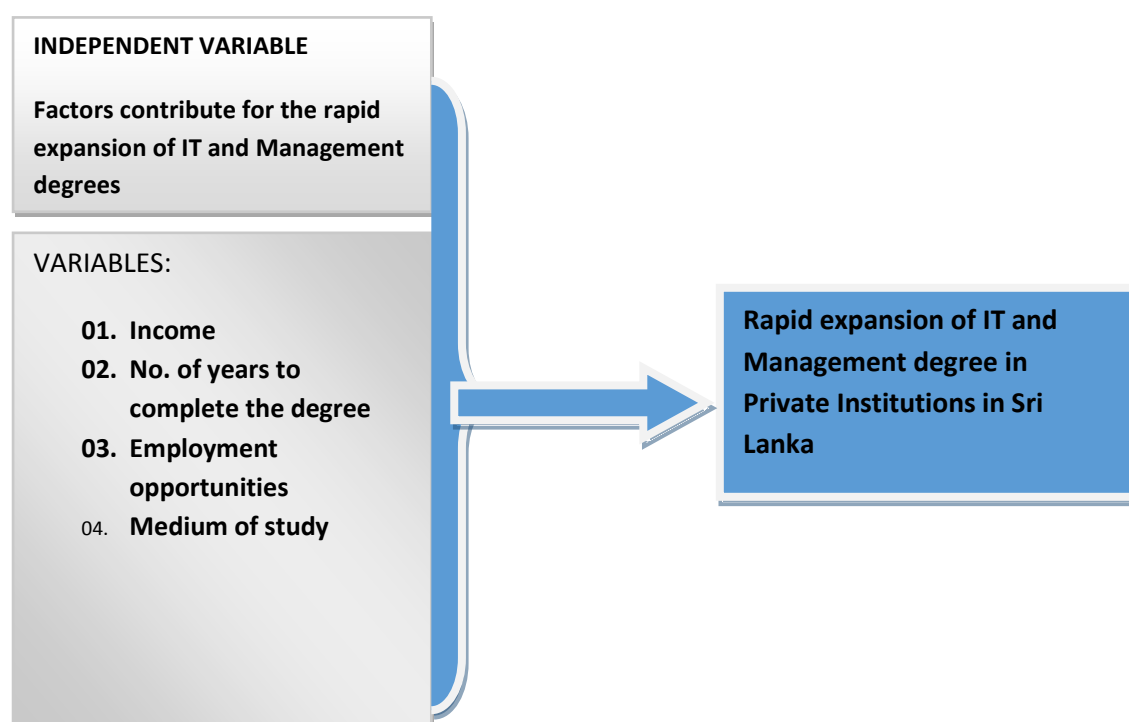


Figure 1: The conceptual Framework

Data Analysis and Representation

The analysis showed the following results according;
 The gender of the respondents was state university 178 and 182 from the private universities. The results of the gender in state universities (male:80, females:88) and the private universities (male: 100, female 82). The subject wise students for each program in the universities as below;

	No. of students in IT	No. of students in Management
State Universities (178)	90	88
Private Universities (182)	182	65

The Job experience level of the graduates and the year of graduation;

IT –State Uni	IT-Private Uni	Mang.- State	Mang.- Private
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Below 1 Year	16	32	26	18
1-2 Years	45	92	31	23
2 to 3 Years	28	41	24	19
More than 3 Yrs	11	17	7	5

The factors income, No. of years to complete the degree and above factors were include to identify the reasons influence for the higher education and what consequences have been arisen for the higher education in two segments.

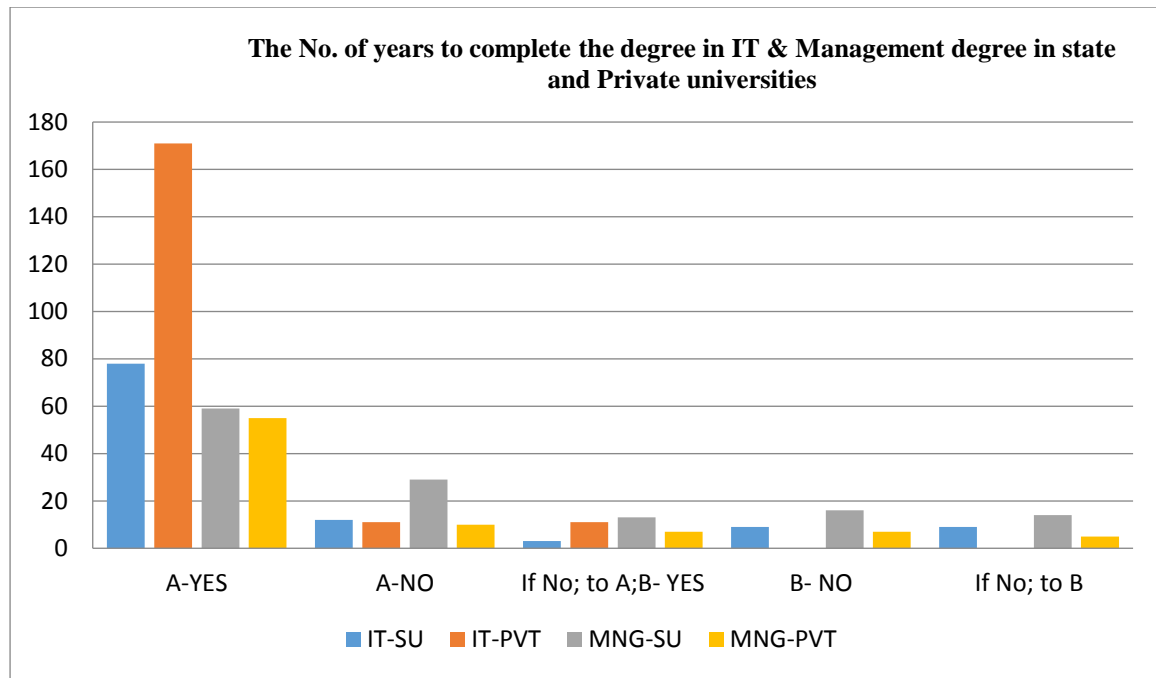
Income of the grandaunts was taken to identify the impact to the universities and what standard the university positioned in the society. This was important to understand how the students selected the university. The Information technology students were compared between the two sectors and higher income for the degree was received by the private sector students. The income of the graduates were taken from two four major companies located in the Colombo District to remains the equity. The graduates from the state universities were represent salary scale between the below 11kh, while the higher number of private university students were hired by the private IT firms expect few cases.

The Management degree high salary was received by the state university students who are in the government bodies, but the sectorial demand was higher for the private sector students who studied in the medium of English. This result was taken from two government bodies and two private sector management oriented firms. The income has been entered to the data sheet to collect the information to understand whether the income has been a factor to enter the private university degree. This has been identified by the trend of selecting degree programs was higher to English medium rather selecting the Sinhala medium of taught targeting the job market requirements.

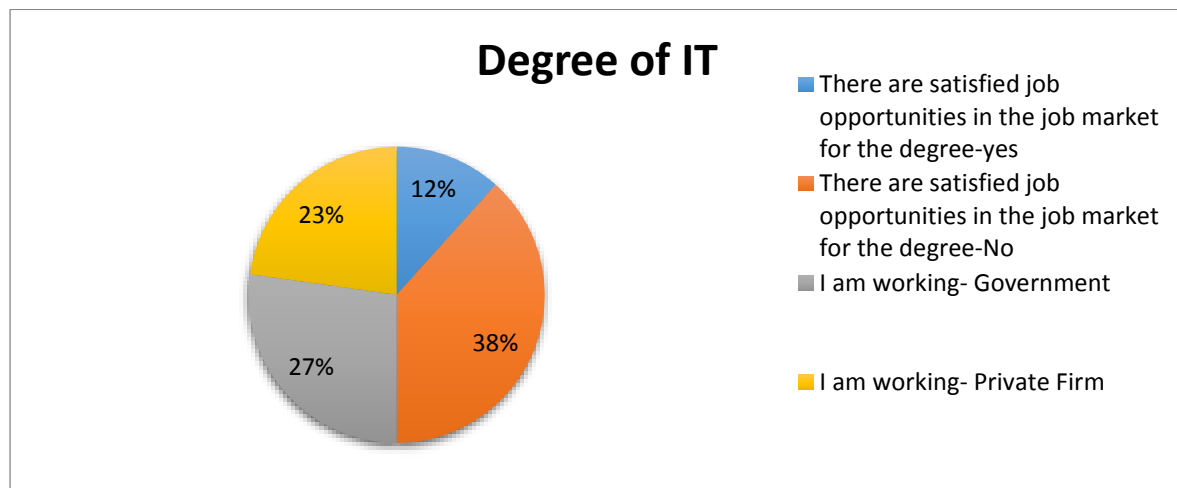
The variable, number of years to complete the degree was identified based on the years to complete whether it has affected the demand for the private universities or state universities. The following questions were formed to get the answers and outcomes were as below; the sector wise results were generated to understand the impact easily and IT was divided between private and State Universities, management as IT and Private Universities. The two questions formed with yes/no questions are, did you complete the degree within the expected years (4 yrs) and did you repeat the subject and had to wait for another year/years.

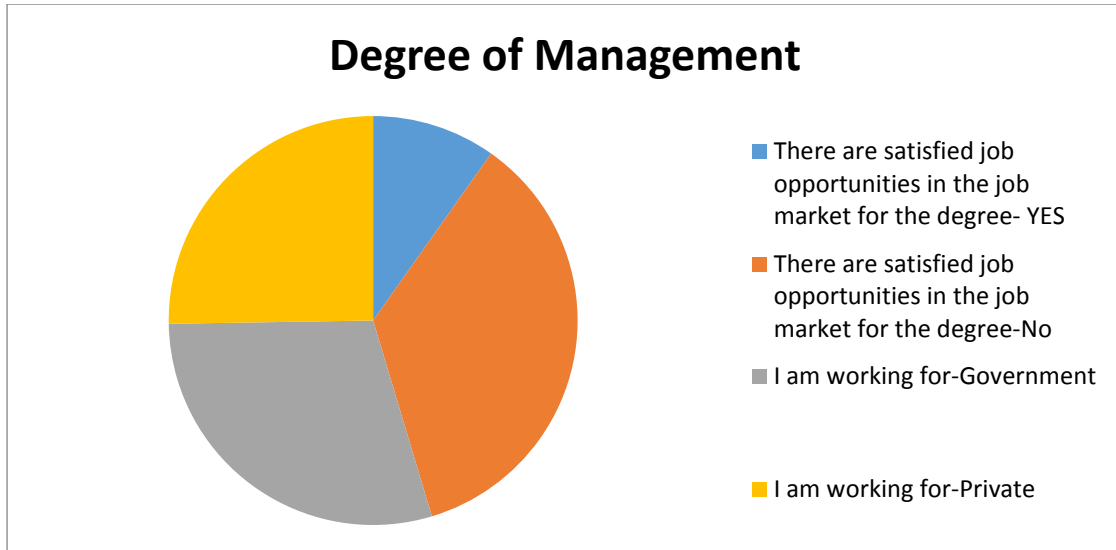
Questions are as below;

1. Did you complete the degree within expected years? (4 years)
 - Yes
 - No
2. If No; did you repeat the subject and had to wait for another year/years?
 - Yes
 - No
3. If No; any other reason which is not personal?



The availability of employment opportunity has been tested to identify the gap between the employment demands and to understand the inequality distribution of employment for graduates in the market as below, The first question with Yes/No question; There are satisfied job opportunities in the job market for the degree. The second question formed to identify the sector graduates are working; I am working for- government or Private firm. The results showed in graphical illustration for the purpose of clarity.





The medium of Taught were asked to understand whether the private degree conducted by the English Medium has any influence to the students rather the sinahala medium degree and state University students who participated for the survey were IT (90) & Management (88) were studied with Sinhala Medium while all the graduates of the Private Universities taught medium were “English”.

The two statements of the following were identified with all the participants regards the selection of Universities:

	IT –State Uni	IT-Private Uni	Mang.- State	Mang.- Private
I would’ve chosen private university rather the state University considering the above factors (Income, year of completion, employment opportunities, medium of study)	62	180	57	61
I would’ve chosen state university rather the private university consider the above factors	28	2	11	1
I would prefer the state university if the medium of taught was English (only for private graduates)	-	113	-	62
I Would prefer the private university because of the facilities, medium of taught and the opportunities available (only for government. Graduates)	72	-	61	-
I prefer the state university because of its recognition in the society	77	14	73	23

CONCLUSION

According the results of the survey it has been identified that the factors medium of taught, the availability of the employment opportunities, No. of years to complete the degree and salary scale in the job market has highly influence to the rapid growth of the private higher educational universities in the Sri Lanka. The recognition of the state university and the Private Universities does not show significance changes or gap with the degree selections. (These results are based for the students who consider taking degree in Colombo District) The higher demand for the private universities was based on the above factors according to the survey results and it has evolved different consequences for the government university students.

The privatization policies under the Business Act has given the eligibility to established the degree offering higher educational institutions with the collaboration of international universities, where the higher proportion of facilities has been given to the private educational institutions where the public spending for the state universities were reduced. Further, the number of years to complete the degree



has been identified as significant factor to enroll students in the private universities. With the results it is been identical that for the same degree, especially in management the graduates income has a wider gap in between. The main reason identified is that the recognition of the degree offered by state universities in Sri Lanka rather the private bodies.

The results showed that students who choose the private universities are basically to complete a degree within given period and job oriented to enter the market. yet, the government students were considered about the recognition it holds in the society and the experiences they would prefer to receive rather than a private sector. The IT and Management degree which offered by two private universities has career path for their students who get graduate from the university secure the employment opportunities. This has also being a reason why the students trend to follow the private degree programs. The next major reason the students who follow a English medium degree to get exposure to the international job market where some companies in the IT field pay the salary scale by USD currencies.

SUGGESTIONS

According to the results the medium of study has highly impact to follow the private degree programs in two selected universities especially based on the foreign job market. Therefore, it is needed to consider by the state universities to change the medium of study where students will be exposure to new opportunities worldwide.

It is suggested to expansion of degree programs, the number of enrollments and the medium of taught with major degrees to reconsider by the UGC to create and output the quality, well suited for the job market and English known graduates for to get the exposure in the international job market. The future research of this paper will be carried out with the regression analysis to see the relationship of each variable with the private education in Sri Lanka. Research findings were taken from the graduates who have passed out before the 2020 and the trend may subject to change due to the Covid-19 pandemic and current economic crisis in Sri Lanka. Yet, the online degree programs can be seen in many of the institutes rather than ever in Sri Lanka with the pandemic disturbances which need to focus the attention on the education standard of the degree.

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APPENDICES

	IT – State Uni	IT-Private Uni	Mang.- State	Mang.- Private
Did you complete the degree within expected years? (4 years)				
Yes	78	171	59	55
No	12	11	29	10
If No; Did you repeat the subject and had to wait for another year/years?				
Yes	3	11	13	7
No	9	-	16	7
If No; any other reason which is not personal?	9	-	14	5

The Chart 1: Response chart regards to degree completion years

	IT –State Uni	IT-Private Uni	Mang.- State	Mang.- Private
There are satisfied job opportunities in the job market for the degree,				
Yes	21	98	19	35
No	69	84	69	30
I am working for;				
Government body	49	27	57	21
Private Firm	41	180	49	44

The Chart 2: Response to identify the satisfaction on the Job market opportunities