

**CRITICAL FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT ACADEMIC
SUCCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES IN
SRI LANKA**



By:

ABERATHNA HERATH MUDIYANSELAGE SASINDU

THARANGA ABERATHNA

Reg. No: EU/IS/2014/MS/84

Index No: MS - 1734



**Project Report
Library - EUSL**

A project report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce and Management, Eastern University, Sri Lanka, as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA).

**DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT
EASTERN UNIVERSITY, SRI LANKA**

2019

ABSTRACT

As Sri Lanka is a growing country academic success has been more essential than developed countries. Some reasons for this are considered to be economic empowerment, produce a knowledgeable and skilled workforce and the possibility for rural human beings to earn their living through becoming academically successful. And also education is a dominant way of attaining these objects.

The term 'academic success' is one of the most widely used constructs in educational research and assessment within higher education. This study attempts to find out the critical factors affecting student academic success in higher education institutes in Sri Lanka. In accordance with literature review and existing findings, there are literature and empirical knowledge gaps regarding the critical factors affecting student academic success in higher education in Sri Lankan context. This study was conducted to fill these gaps with this objective in the higher education institutes in Sri Lanka.

The population of the study is all undergraduates of who are studying in fifteen state universities in Sri Lanka and primary data that has been used for the study were obtained from 400 undergraduates who are studying in selected state universities as Eastern University, Sri Lanka University of Peradeniya, University of Sri Jayawardenepura and the Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka using convenience sampling. The collected data has been analyzed using univariate and exploratory factor analysis. Univariate analysis (descriptive Statistics) has been adopted by using the SPSS 22 package and Microsoft Excel 2013 software versions were used to generate the analyzed outcome. According to the exploratory factor analysis results explored new three factors affecting student academic success in higher education that named as motivation towards academic activity, attitude towards lecturers and habit/ behavior in the classroom. According to the univariate analysis results showed the mean value of factors and their concluded items, based on the decision rule, indicates there are high level of Motivation towards academic activity and attitude towards lecturers and also there is moderate level of habit/ behavior in classroom. The findings of this study are useful in further enlarging and enriching applications of these concepts in practice.

Keywords: Academic success, Critical factors, Higher education institutes, Exploratory Factor Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page No. |
|--|----------|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | i |
| ABSTRACT..... | ii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS..... | iii |
| LIST OF TABLES | vii |
| LIST OF FIGURES | viii |
| ABBREVIATIONS | ix |
| Chapter – 01 | 1 |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Background of Study | 1 |
| 1.2 Preliminary Survey | 3 |
| 1.3 Problem statement..... | 4 |
| 1.4 Research Questions..... | 5 |
| 1.5 Research Objectives..... | 5 |
| 1.6 Significance of the study..... | 5 |
| 1.7 Scope of the study | 6 |
| 1.8 organization of chapters..... | 6 |
| 1.9 Summary | 7 |
| Chapter - 02..... | 8 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW | 8 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 8 |
| 2.2. Academic Success..... | 8 |
| 2.2.1. Definitions of Academic Success | 9 |
| 2.2.2. Theories of Academic Engagement..... | 11 |
| 2.2.3. Empirical Evidence..... | 14 |
| 2.3 Chapter Summary | 17 |
| Chapter – 03 | 18 |

| | |
|--|----|
| CONCEPTUALIZATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION | 18 |
| 3.1 Introduction..... | 18 |
| 3.2 Conceptualization | 18 |
| 3.2.1 Academic success | 18 |
| 3.3 Concept indicator model..... | 21 |
| 3.4 Operationalization..... | 21 |
| 3.5 Chapter Summary | 22 |
| Chapter – 04..... | 23 |
| RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..... | 23 |
| 4.1 Introduction..... | 23 |
| 4.2 Research Philosophy | 23 |
| 4.3 Research Approach | 24 |
| 4.4 Research Strategy..... | 24 |
| 4.5 Methodological Choice..... | 25 |
| 4.6 Time Horizon | 25 |
| 4.7 Research Site/Area selection..... | 26 |
| 4.8 Population of the Study..... | 26 |
| 4.9 Sampling Technique/ Method..... | 26 |
| 4.10 Sampling Framework and Sample Size | 27 |
| 4.10.1 Sample Size | 27 |
| 4.10.2 Sampling Framework | 27 |
| 4.11 Method of Data Collection and Source..... | 28 |
| 4.11.1 Primary Data..... | 28 |
| 4.11.2 Secondary Data..... | 28 |
| 4.12 Research Instruments | 28 |
| 4.12.1 The Rational for question | 28 |
| 4.13 Source of Measurement | 29 |
| 4.13.1 Method of Measured of Demographic Information | 29 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 4.13.2 Method of Measuring Research Information..... | 30 |
| 4.14 The Pilot Study | 30 |
| 4.15 Validity and Reliability of Instruments..... | 31 |
| 4.15.1 Face Validity..... | 31 |
| 4.15.2 Content Validity | 31 |
| 4.15.3 Factor Analysis | 31 |
| 4.15.4 Convergent Validity | 31 |
| 4.15.5 Discriminant validity | 32 |
| 4.15.6 Reliability | 34 |
| 4.16 Unit of Data Analysis..... | 34 |
| 4.17 Method of Data Analysis..... | 34 |
| 4.18 Method of Data Evaluation..... | 35 |
| 4.19 Data Presentation | 35 |
| 4.20 Ethical Consideration..... | 35 |
| 4.21 Chapter Summary | 37 |
| Chapter – 05 | 38 |
| DATA PRASENTATION AND ANALYSIS..... | 38 |
| 5.1 Introduction..... | 38 |
| 5.2 Data Analysis..... | 38 |
| 5.3 Data Presentation | 39 |
| 5.3.1 Data Presentation and Analysis of Personal Information..... | 40 |
| 5.3.1.1 University..... | 40 |
| 5.3.1.2 Faculty..... | 41 |
| 5.3.1.3 Year of Study | 42 |
| 5.3.1.4 Gender..... | 43 |
| 5.3.2 Data Presentation and Analysis of Research Information | 44 |
| 5.3.2.1 Factor Analysis | 44 |
| 5.3.2.2 KMO and Bartlett’s Test..... | 45 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 5.3.2.3 Principle Component Analysis | 45 |
| 5.3.2.4 Mean and Standard Deviation..... | 52 |
| 5.3.2.5 Composite Reliability after Removing of the Problematic Items..... | 55 |
| 5.3.2.6 Convergent Validity | 55 |
| 5.3.2.7 Discriminant validity | 56 |
| 5.4 Chapter Summary | 56 |
| Chapter – 06..... | 57 |
| DISCUSSION | 57 |
| 6.1 Introduction..... | 57 |
| 6.2 Discussion of Personal Information..... | 57 |
| 6.2.1 University | 57 |
| 6.2.2 Faculty | 57 |
| 6.2.3 Year of Study..... | 58 |
| 6.2.4 Gender | 58 |
| 6.3 Discussion for Research Information..... | 58 |
| 6.4 Chapter Summary | 60 |
| Chapter – 07..... | 61 |
| CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 61 |
| 7.1 Introduction..... | 61 |
| 7.2 Conclusion | 61 |
| 7.3 Contributions of the Study..... | 62 |
| 7.4 Recommendations..... | 63 |
| 7.5 Limitations of the Study..... | 67 |
| 7.6 Direction of Future Study | 68 |
| REFERENCES | 70 |
| APPENDIX – 01 | 79 |
| APPENDIX – 02..... | 82 |