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Determinants of Graduate's Self-Efficacy towards Graduate's Employability of University Graduates in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the determinants of sales performance within the context of contemporary business environments, focusing on the synergistic effects of corporate image, product quality, customer relationship management (CRM), innovative marketing strategies, sales team development, and pricing strategies. Using a sample of companies in various industries, the research employs a quantitative approach, incorporating both primary and secondary data sources to explore these key factors. The findings indicate that a favorable corporate image significantly enhances customer trust and loyalty, leading to improved sales performance. High product quality not only satisfies customers but also fosters repeat purchases, contributing positively to sales outcomes. CRM practices, characterized by personalized customer service and responsiveness, are found to be critical in retaining customers and driving sales growth. Moreover, the adoption of innovative marketing strategies, including digital and social media marketing, emerges as a significant contributor to increased sales, highlighting the importance of staying competitive in a rapidly evolving market. The study also underscores the role of continuous training and development of sales teams in achieving superior sales performance. Pricing strategies that align with customer expectations are identified as another crucial factor in driving sales and enhancing market share. Furthermore, the research considers the influence of macroeconomic factors, such as inflation rates and economic growth, on consumer purchasing power and, consequently, on sales performance. This study provides valuable insights for business managers and marketers seeking to optimize their sales strategies in a competitive market. The comprehensive analysis of the various determinants of sales performance offers a roadmap for businesses aiming to enhance their market position and achieve sustainable growth.

Keywords: *Sales Performance, Corporate Image, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Innovative Marketing, Pricing Strategies*

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving and highly competitive global job market, the employability of university graduates has emerged as a central concern for higher education institutions, policymakers, and employers alike. Employability, as defined in the literature, refers to the ability of graduates to secure and maintain employment that is not only suitable but also aligns with their individual skills, knowledge, and career aspirations (Jayasingha & Suraweera, 2020). This concept transcends the mere acquisition of a job post-graduation; it encompasses a broader understanding of how graduates can navigate the complexities of the job market, adapt to changing work environments, and continue developing their professional skills over time. As such, employability is not solely a reflection of the academic qualifications that graduates possess, but rather a multifaceted attribute that includes a combination of personal qualities, technical skills, and social competencies that are highly valued in today's workforce.

Understanding the critical importance of preparing graduates for successful transitions into the workforce, universities worldwide have responded by implementing a wide array of programs and interventions specifically designed to enhance students' employability skills and outcomes. These initiatives range from traditional career development workshops and resume-building sessions to more innovative approaches, such as internships, industry partnerships, and experiential learning opportunities

(Behle, 2020). The underlying objective of these programs is to equip students with a comprehensive set of skills that go beyond academic knowledge, skills that are essential for thriving in professional environments. These include critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and the ability to adapt to new challenges, all of which are increasingly recognized as crucial for career success in the 21st century (Karunarathne & Ariyawansa, 2022).

A key factor influencing graduates' employability is self-efficacy, a concept that has garnered significant attention in educational and psychological research. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform specific tasks or achieve desired outcomes, and it plays a vital role in shaping their career choices, persistence in goal pursuit, and overall job performance (Kalyani & Chathuranga, 2021; Bandura, 1982). According to social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a major determinant of how people think, behave, and feel, especially in the context of their careers. Individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to take on challenging tasks, set ambitious goals, and persist in the face of obstacles, all of which are crucial for long-term career success (Bandura, 1982). This highlights the importance of fostering self-efficacy in university students as a means of enhancing their employability.

The relationship between university programs and graduates' self-efficacy is a critical area of investigation, particularly given the increasing emphasis on employability as a key outcome of higher education. Universities, as primary institutions of learning and skill development, play a crucial role in shaping the self-efficacy beliefs of their students. Through carefully designed programs, such as career development workshops, internships, and experiential learning opportunities, universities can significantly influence how students perceive their capabilities and, consequently, how they approach their careers (Behle, 2020). These programs are not merely supplementary to the academic curriculum but are integral to the holistic development of students, preparing them to face the realities of the job market with confidence and competence.

Moreover, existing research suggests that there is a strong correlation between graduates' self-efficacy beliefs and their career aspirations, job search behaviors, and job performance outcomes (Sachitra, 2024). Graduates with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to set ambitious career goals, actively engage in job search activities, and perform better in their professional roles. They are also better equipped to adapt to new work environments, navigate career transitions, and overcome challenges in the workplace (Saoula, Shamim, Ahmad, & Abid, 2023). This adaptability is particularly important in today's job market, where technological advancements and economic shifts frequently reshape the demand for skills and competencies.

The development of self-efficacy among university students is influenced by a variety of factors, including the quality and relevance of the educational programs they are exposed to, the support and guidance they receive from faculty and mentors, and their own experiences of success and failure during their academic and professional journeys. For instance, internships and industry collaborations provide students with real-world experience and opportunities to apply their academic knowledge in practical settings, which can significantly boost their self-efficacy (Behle, 2020). Similarly, career development workshops that focus on skills such as resume writing, interview techniques, and networking can enhance students' confidence in their ability to secure employment. Experiential learning opportunities, such as project-based learning and participation in industry-sponsored competitions, further contribute to the development of self-efficacy by allowing students to tackle real-world problems and achieve tangible outcomes (Karunarathne & Ariyawansa, 2022).

In light of the above, it is evident that understanding the factors that contribute to the development of self-efficacy among university graduates is crucial for enhancing their employability and overall career success. As higher education institutions continue to refine and expand their programs aimed at improving graduate employability, there is a need for more research that explores the specific ways in which these programs impact students' self-efficacy beliefs and, by extension, their career outcomes. Such research will not only provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers but will also inform the design of more effective employability interventions that can better prepare graduates for the challenges and opportunities of the modern job market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The employability of graduates has garnered increasing attention from educational institutions, policymakers, and employers, particularly in today's competitive job market. This focus is driven by the recognition that employability is not just about securing employment post-graduation but also about graduates' ability to sustain and progress in their careers over time. Consequently, there has been a growing interest in understanding the factors that influence graduates' employability, with particular emphasis on the role of self-efficacy and programmed enrollment in shaping these outcomes.

Programmed enrollment, defined as the degree to which students engage in extracurricular activities, internships, and other practical experiences during their academic tenure, is increasingly recognized as a critical determinant of employability (Woodcock & Tournaki, 2023). This concept highlights the importance of active student participation in non-academic experiences that complement their formal education. These experiences provide students with practical skills, real-world insights, and professional networks that are invaluable when transitioning into the workforce. For instance, internships and industry placements offer students firsthand experience in professional environments, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings and develop competencies that are highly valued by employers (Riedler, 2023). Similarly, extracurricular activities, such as participation in student organizations, leadership roles, and community service, are associated with the development of soft skills like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, which are essential for career success (Lomer & Lim, 2022).

Self-efficacy, on the other hand, pertains to an individual's belief in their ability to accomplish tasks and achieve goals in various contexts (Saoula et al., 2023). Rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a well-established predictor of behavior and performance across different domains, including education and career outcomes (Bandura, 1982). High levels of self-efficacy are associated with greater motivation, persistence in the face of challenges, and higher aspirations, all of which are critical for career development. Research suggests that self-efficacy influences not only the career choices that individuals make but also how they navigate the job search process, their performance in the workplace, and their ability to adapt to new roles and environments (Saoula et al., 2023). Given its significance, understanding the relationship between self-efficacy and employability is essential for developing strategies that enhance graduates' readiness for the workforce.

Despite the growing interest in programs aimed at enhancing graduates' employability and self-efficacy, there is a need for more empirical research to examine the effectiveness of these initiatives and their impact on graduates' transition to the workforce. Existing studies have primarily focused on the individual effects of either programmed enrollment or self-efficacy on employability, but there is a gap in the literature regarding the interaction between these two factors. By investigating the relationship between university programs, graduates' self-efficacy, and employability outcomes, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature and inform the development of evidence-based practices in higher education.

The significance of studying "The Impact of Programmed Enrollment and Self-Efficacy on Graduates' Employability" lies in its potential to inform educational institutions, policymakers, and employers about effective strategies for enhancing graduates' readiness for the workforce. For educational institutions, identifying the types of programmed enrollment activities that have the greatest impact on employability is crucial for curriculum design and the development of extracurricular programs. For example, if research demonstrates that internships significantly enhance employability, institutions may prioritize the expansion of internship opportunities and encourage greater student participation in these programs (Riedler, 2023). Additionally, institutions could integrate employability skills training into the curriculum, ensuring that students are not only academically prepared but also equipped with the practical skills needed in the job market (Karunarathne & Ariyawansa, 2022).

From a policy perspective, the findings from this study could inform the design of policies that support and incentivize programmed enrollment activities conducive to enhancing graduates' employability. Policymakers may allocate funding for initiatives that promote collaboration between academia and industry, such as industry-sponsored internships, job shadowing programs, and career fairs that connect students directly with potential

employers (Aturupane, 2018b). Furthermore, policy interventions could focus on ensuring that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have access to these valuable experiences. This might include providing financial support for unpaid internships or developing partnerships with industries that can offer paid opportunities, thereby reducing barriers to participation (Lomer & Lim, 2022).

Employers also stand to benefit from understanding how graduates' self-efficacy beliefs influence their employability. This knowledge can inform recruitment strategies, training programs, and onboarding processes, enabling employers to better accommodate the diverse needs and abilities of new hires (Saunders, 2021). For example, employers could design training programs that build on the self-efficacy of new employees, providing them with the confidence and skills needed to succeed in their roles. Additionally, by recognizing the importance of self-efficacy in job performance, employers could implement mentorship programs that support new graduates as they transition into the workplace, helping them to navigate challenges and develop a sense of competence in their new roles (Saoula et al., 2023).

Finally, this research holds significant implications for individual students. By understanding the relationship between programmed enrollment, self-efficacy, and employability, students can make more informed decisions about their educational and extracurricular activities. For instance, students who are aware of the benefits of internships and other practical experiences may be more likely to seek out and engage in these opportunities, thereby enhancing their employability upon graduation (Aturupane, 2018b). Additionally, by developing a strong sense of self-efficacy, students can increase their confidence in their abilities, which in turn can positively influence their job search behaviors and career outcomes (Saoula et al., 2023; Abeygunawardena, 2018).

Graduate self-efficacy is a critical psychological construct that plays a significant role in shaping various aspects of an individual's life, including educational attainment, career development, and employability. Rooted in Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1982). In the context of higher education, graduate self-efficacy is understood as the confidence that students have in their ability to successfully perform tasks, achieve academic goals, and transition into the workforce.

Research has consistently shown that self-efficacy influences not only academic performance but also career choices and outcomes. Students with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in behaviors that enhance their employability, such as seeking internships, participating in extracurricular activities, and networking with professionals in their field (Kalyani & Chathuranga, 2021). These behaviors, in turn, increase their chances of securing employment post-graduation. Moreover, self-efficacy impacts how graduates approach job search activities. Those with high self-efficacy are more proactive, persistent, and resilient in the face of challenges, which are crucial traits in the competitive job market (Saoula et al., 2023).

Furthermore, graduate self-efficacy influences job performance and career progression. High self-efficacy is associated with greater motivation and commitment to achieving career goals. Graduates who believe in their ability to succeed are more likely to set ambitious goals, seek out challenging opportunities, and persist in the face of obstacles (Bandura, 1982). This proactive approach not only enhances their employability but also contributes to long-term career success. For example, graduates with high self-efficacy are better equipped to adapt to new roles and environments, continuously learn and develop new skills, and effectively navigate career transitions (Saoula et al., 2023).

The development of self-efficacy among university students is influenced by various factors, including their academic experiences, the support they receive from faculty and peers, and their success in overcoming challenges during their studies. Universities play a crucial role in fostering self-efficacy through programs that provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world settings. For instance, internships, project-based learning, and industry collaborations allow students to gain practical experience and build confidence in their abilities (Karunarathne & Ariyawansa, 2022). Additionally, mentoring programs and career development workshops can further enhance self-efficacy by offering guidance and support as students prepare for the transition to the workforce (Riedler, 2023).

Given its importance, self-efficacy is a key focus of initiatives aimed at improving graduate employability. Educational institutions are increasingly recognizing the need to develop not only the academic skills of their students but also their confidence in applying those skills in professional contexts. By fostering a strong sense of self-efficacy, universities can better prepare their graduates to successfully navigate the complexities of the job market and achieve their career aspirations (Saoula et al., 2023).

In conclusion, graduate self-efficacy is a crucial determinant of employability. It influences students' engagement in activities that enhance their employability, their approach to the job search process, and their performance in the workplace. As such, fostering self-efficacy should be a central objective of higher education programs, with targeted interventions designed to build students' confidence in their abilities and prepare them for successful transitions into the workforce.

Programmed enrollment, defined as the degree to which students actively engage in extracurricular activities, internships, and other practical experiences during their academic tenure, is increasingly recognized as a vital component of employability. It encompasses a wide range of initiatives, from participation in student organizations and leadership roles to internships, industry placements, and experiential learning opportunities (Woodcock & Tournaki, 2023). These activities provide students with the practical skills, professional networks, and real-world experiences that are crucial for their transition into the workforce.

The concept of programmed enrollment is grounded in the understanding that academic learning alone is often insufficient to prepare graduates for the demands of the job market. Employers increasingly seek candidates who possess not only technical skills but also a range of soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, which are often developed through extracurricular activities (Lomer & Lim, 2022). For instance, involvement in student organizations allows students to develop leadership and organizational skills, while internships provide hands-on experience in professional settings, enabling students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges (Riedler, 2023).

Research has shown that programmed enrollment is positively associated with employability outcomes. Students who actively participate in internships and other practical experiences are more likely to secure employment upon graduation and tend to perform better in their jobs (Aturupane, 2018b). This is because these experiences allow students to develop industry-specific skills, gain a better understanding of workplace dynamics, and build professional networks that can facilitate job opportunities. Moreover, internships often serve as a direct pathway to employment, with many students receiving job offers from the organizations where they interned (Karunarathne & Ariyawansa, 2022).

In addition to enhancing technical and soft skills, programmed enrollment activities also contribute to the development of self-efficacy, which is crucial for employability. As students successfully navigate the challenges presented by these activities, they build confidence in their abilities, which in turn influences their approach to the job search process and their performance in the workplace (Saoula et al., 2023). For example, students who complete internships often report higher levels of confidence in their professional skills and a stronger belief in their ability to succeed in their chosen careers (Kalyani & Chathuranga, 2021).

Educational institutions play a vital role in facilitating programmed enrollment by offering a variety of opportunities for students to engage in practical experiences. Universities can support this by integrating experiential learning into the curriculum, establishing partnerships with industry, and providing resources and guidance for students to pursue internships and other extracurricular activities (Riedler, 2023). Additionally, institutions can promote the value of these experiences by encouraging student participation and providing recognition for achievements in programmed enrollment activities, such as through certificates or academic credit (Lomer & Lim, 2022).

From a policy perspective, the promotion of programmed enrollment is essential for enhancing graduate employability. Policymakers can support these initiatives by providing funding for internships, facilitating collaboration between academia and industry, and implementing policies that incentivize student participation in practical experiences (Aturupane, 2018b). By doing so, they can help ensure that graduates are not only academically prepared but also equipped with the

practical skills and experiences needed to thrive in the workforce.

In conclusion, programmed enrollment is a critical factor in enhancing graduates' employability. By actively engaging in extracurricular activities, internships, and other practical experiences, students can develop the skills, confidence, and professional networks needed to succeed in the job market. Educational institutions and policymakers must continue to support and promote these activities to ensure that graduates are well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the modern workforce.

Graduates' employability is a multifaceted construct that encompasses a range of skills, attributes, and experiences that enable individuals to secure and maintain employment, as well as to succeed and progress in their careers. Employability is not merely about obtaining a job after graduation; it also involves the ability to adapt to changing job markets, continuously develop new skills, and effectively manage one's career over time (Jayasingha & Suraweera, 2020). In today's rapidly evolving labor market, employability has become a central concern for higher education institutions, employers, and policymakers.

The concept of employability is increasingly viewed as a set of capabilities that graduates must possess to navigate the complexities of the job market. These capabilities include not only technical and academic skills but also a range of soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability, which are highly valued by employers (Lomer & Lim, 2022). Furthermore, employability is influenced by graduates' self-efficacy, or their belief in their ability to perform tasks and achieve goals, which plays a critical role in shaping their career choices, job search behaviors, and job performance (Bandura, 1982; Saoula et al., 2023).

A significant body of research has focused on identifying the factors that contribute to graduates' employability. One of the key determinants is the quality of education that students receive, including the relevance of the curriculum to industry needs, the opportunities for practical learning, and the support provided by educational institutions in career development (Karunarathne & Ariyawansa, 2022). For example, programs that incorporate internships, industry projects, and experiential learning are associated with higher employability outcomes, as they allow students to apply their academic knowledge in real-world settings and gain valuable work experience (Riedler, 2023).

In addition to educational factors, employability is also shaped by personal attributes, such as self-efficacy, motivation, and career aspirations. Graduates with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in proactive job search behaviors, set ambitious career goals, and persist in the face of challenges, all of which enhance their employability (Bandura, 1982; Saoula et al., 2023). Moreover, employability is influenced by external factors, such as labor market conditions, economic trends, and the availability of job opportunities in specific industries (Lomer & Lim, 2022). As such, employability is a dynamic construct that evolves over time, depending on a combination of individual, educational, and contextual factors.

Given its importance, enhancing graduates' employability has become a primary goal for higher education institutions and policymakers. Universities are increasingly focusing on providing students with the skills, experiences, and support needed to succeed in the job market. This includes not only delivering high-quality education but also offering career services, mentoring programs, and opportunities for networking with industry professionals (Woodcock & Tournaki, 2023). Additionally, policymakers are implementing initiatives aimed at bridging the gap between education and employment, such as funding for internships, partnerships between academia and industry, and policies that support lifelong learning (Aturupane, 2018b).

Employability is also a concern for employers, who are seeking graduates with the skills and attributes needed to thrive in today's competitive and rapidly changing work environments. Employers are increasingly looking beyond academic qualifications to assess candidates' employability, considering factors such as work experience, soft skills, and the ability to adapt to new challenges (Riedler, 2023). As a result, graduates who actively engage in activities that enhance their employability, such as internships, extracurricular involvement, and continuous learning, are more likely to succeed in the job market (Lomer & Lim, 2022).

In conclusion, graduates' employability is a complex and dynamic construct that is influenced by a range of individual, educational, and external factors. Enhancing employability requires a concerted effort

from educational institutions, policymakers, and employers to provide students with the skills, experiences, and support needed to succeed in the job market. By focusing on employability, graduates can better navigate the challenges of the modern workforce and achieve long-term career success.

In conclusion, while significant progress has been made in understanding the factors that contribute to graduates' employability, there remains a need for further research that examines the interaction between programmed enrollment and self-efficacy. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how these two factors influence employability outcomes, with the ultimate goal of informing educational practices, policy decisions, and employer strategies that support successful transitions from education to employment.

This study explores the relationship between graduates' self-efficacy, programmed enrollment, and employability within the context of Sri Lanka's higher education sector. Given the increasing demand for higher education and the limitations of government university intakes in Sri Lanka, many students are turning to private institutions, including those affiliated with foreign universities, to pursue their degrees. This shift in higher education demand necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' choices and their subsequent employability.

The quantitative aspect of this study involved the collection of data through a structured, self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed based on the conceptual framework developed from the literature review. The variables under investigation include graduates' self-efficacy, programmed enrollment, and employability. Each variable was operationalized and measured using validated scales to ensure the reliability and validity of the data.

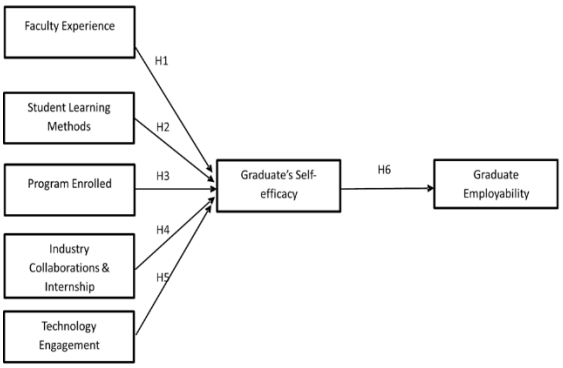
A random sampling technique was employed to select a representative sample of 382 respondents. The respondents were students from various private universities in Sri Lanka, reflecting the diversity of the student population in terms of academic disciplines, socioeconomic backgrounds, and prior educational experiences. The sample size was determined based on statistical power analysis to ensure that the results would be generalizable to the broader population.

Data were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS software packages. SPSS was used for descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, and regression analysis to determine the relationships between the variables. AMOS was utilized for structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the hypothesized relationships within the conceptual framework. SEM is particularly useful in this study as it allows for the examination of complex relationships between multiple variables simultaneously.

Data collection was carried out over a period of three months. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their consent was obtained before administering the questionnaire and conducting the interviews. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, and participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

The ethical considerations also included ensuring that the research design was sensitive to the cultural context of Sri Lanka. The questions were carefully crafted to be culturally appropriate, and the language used was simple and clear to avoid any misunderstandings.

The findings from this study are expected to contribute to the private higher education sector in Sri Lanka by providing insights into the factors that influence students' choices and their subsequent employability. This knowledge can be used by educational institutions to optimize their program offerings and support services, thereby enhancing the employability of their graduates. The study also offers practical implications for policymakers and employers by highlighting the importance of self-efficacy and programmed enrollment in shaping employability outcomes.



Research hypotheses were initially unverified, and the relationships between variables were also

uncertain or unknown. Therefore, researchers tentatively established a relationship among variables, and developed hypothesis, then validated these relationships after the hypothesis testing. As a result, it was able to provide an empirical verification rather validation for the assumptions which were previously made by the researcher about the relationships between the variables of this study. During this process, the researcher has statistically proven assumptions and predictions made for the relationships among variables and made justified conclusions about the relationships of those variables, accordingly the conclusions were more valid (Azam, et al., 2021; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2008). Based on theories, concepts, and empirical evidence, hypotheses for this study were developed to test the relationships of the variables highlighted in the conceptual framework

H1:There is a positive relationship between faculty experience and graduate's self- efficacy.
H2:There is a positive relationship between students' learning methods and graduate's self-efficacy.
H3:There is a positive relationship between program enrollment and graduate's self-efficacy.
H4:There is a positive relationship between industry collaborations and internship and graduate's self-efficacy.
H5: There is a positive relationship between technology engagement and graduate's self-efficacy.
H6:There is a positive relationship between graduate's self-efficacy and graduate employability.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study aimed to explore the relationships between graduates' self-efficacy, program enrollment, and graduates' employability in Sri Lanka's higher education sector. Using a combination of descriptive statistics, regression analysis, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), and hypothesis testing, this section presents the data analysis and findings.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

As of 2023, the population of graduates in Sri Lanka was reported to be 25,890, according to the Ministry of Higher Education Sri Lanka. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for determining sample size, the appropriate sample size for this population was calculated to be 382 respondents. To ensure high generalizability, the study employed a probability sampling technique, specifically a simple random sampling method. This approach was chosen because it gives every element in the population an equal or known chance of being selected as a subject, which is crucial for making inferences about the broader population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017, p. 241).

Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of 64 questions, designed to measure variables related to graduates' self-efficacy, program enrollment, and employability. Respondents rated each item on a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The questionnaire was administered to 380 graduate employees in Sri Lanka, covering various fields and educational backgrounds.

Reliability Measures

To ensure the reliability of the constructs measured, Cronbach's alpha was computed for the key variables. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, indicating how closely related a set of items are as a group. The following table presents the reliability coefficients for each construct:

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The study's data collection utilized a sample of 486 private university graduates in Sri Lanka, distributed across various sectors, including self-employed individuals. A total of 380 responses were received, reflecting an 88% response rate. Convenience sampling was employed due to the lack of an available sample frame, acknowledging limitations in the generalizability of findings.

The gender distribution indicates that 52.9% of respondents are male (201), while 47.1% are female (179). This relatively balanced representation ensures diversity in perspectives, allowing for comprehensive analysis across gender groups. Respondents' work experience after graduation is categorized into five groups. The majority (58.2%) have five or fewer years of experience, followed by 15.5% with 6-10 years, 11.6% with 11-15 years, 5.5% with 16-20 years, and 9.2% with more than 20 years. The concentration of respondents with fewer

years of experience provides insights into the early career stage of the majority.

Respondents are categorized into six job levels. The largest group (38.4%) holds non-managerial roles, while 30% are in middle management, and 13.7% are in top management. Additionally, 10.3% are lecturers, 3.9% are senior lecturers, and 3.7% hold the titles of Professor or Dr. This distribution reflects a range of professional responsibilities and expertise. The highest proportion of respondents (257) have a bachelor's degree, followed by 105 with a master's degree, and 18 with a Ph.D. This distribution suggests that bachelor's degree holders are the most prevalent within the sample.

The responses span all nine provinces of Sri Lanka, with the Western province contributing the most (60.8%), reflecting its prominence as an educational and economic hub. Other provinces, such as the Southern and Northwestern regions, also provide notable representation. Responses were received from 19 out of 25 districts, with the highest concentration from Colombo (36.1%). Other districts, such as Gampaha and Kalutara, also contribute significantly, providing a broad geographic representation of the sample.

Overall, the high response rate and the geographic, gender, and professional diversity of the respondents enhance the study's representativeness. However, the convenience sampling approach necessitates careful consideration of the findings' broader applicability.

Dimensions of the Variables

The researcher critically evaluated literature relevant to the study, referencing secondary data sources like books to identify the most suitable variables for this research. Statistical tools such as SPSS, AMOS, and SmartPLS were employed to assess the relationships between these variables, ensuring a robust evaluation process. The detailed statistical results are elaborated below.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

To examine interrelationships among variables, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted early in the study. The researcher used a sample size of 380, which is larger than necessary, as small samples often lead to unreliable correlation coefficients, and factor structures derived from such datasets do not generalize as well as those from larger samples. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), a minimum of 300 cases is recommended for factor analysis. However, they also note that smaller samples, such as 150 cases, may be sufficient if the variables have high loadings (above 0.80).

In this research, the sample size and the strength of relationships between variables were considered critical determinants of data suitability for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) were applied to assess the strength of the intercorrelations among items. A significant Bartlett's Test ($p < .05$) indicated that factor analysis was appropriate, while a KMO value of .6 or higher (as recommended by Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) suggested that the sample was suitable for factor analysis.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1946) was used to evaluate the interitem consistency reliability, one of the most widely used reliability tests for multipoint-scaled items. A higher Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates better reliability of the instrument. Interitem consistency tests the consistency of responses across all items in a measure, ensuring that the items are independent measures of the same concept. Thus, a higher correlation among items suggests that they reliably measure the same concept.

Reliability testing, through Cronbach's alpha, ensures that the measurement instrument is stable and internally consistent, indicating the homogeneity of the items in the measure. This consistency means that the items "hang together" as a set, measuring the same concept in a way that respondents interpret uniformly. Therefore, a reliable measure is error-free and provides consistent results across time and different items. As noted by Sekaran and Bougie (2016), reliability is an indication of the stability and consistency of an instrument, which is crucial for assessing the "goodness" of a measure.

Assessment of the Measurement Model

In the initial phase of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), evaluating the measurement model is critical to ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the

subsequent analyses (Hair et al., 2022). Depending on the nature of the constructs (reflective or formative), different criteria are applied. In this study, reflective measurements were used for all latent variables, requiring assessments of both reliability and validity.

Validity refers to the extent to which the measures accurately represent the intended constructs, while reliability addresses the consistency and stability of the measurement items (Hair et al., 2019). The PLS path modeling algorithm, as recommended by Hair et al. (2022), was employed to assess indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Indicator reliability evaluates how well individual items represent their respective constructs, while internal consistency reliability checks the correlation among items measuring the same construct. Convergent validity ensures that multiple measures of the same construct are correlated, confirming the construct's consistency across indicators. Discriminant validity, conversely, ensures that constructs are distinct, as demonstrated by the lower correlations between different constructs compared to measures within the same construct. Conducting these tests verifies the robustness of the measurement model, reinforcing the validity and reliability of the research findings.

Indicator Reliability

The first step in assessing the reflective measurement model involved examining the factor loadings, which reflect the strength of relationships between observed variables (items) and latent constructs (factors). Higher factor loadings signify stronger associations and better representation of the underlying constructs (Hair et al., 2022). According to Benitez et al. (2020), factor loadings should ideally exceed 0.707, indicating that over 50% of the variance in the construct is explained by the latent variable.

In this study, the PLS algorithm was used to calculate factor loadings, which were then analyzed within the outer model framework. Items FE4 and SLM4 were excluded from the analysis because their factor loadings fell below the recommended threshold, demonstrating the researcher's commitment to maintaining the model's integrity. Retaining items with low factor loadings could lead to inaccurate interpretations and diminish the reliability of the findings. By excluding such items, the study maintained a high standard of measurement quality, focusing on items that robustly represented their constructs.

This selective retention approach improved the clarity and interpretability of the results, allowing for a more focused and accurate model. Adhering to established guidelines for factor loading thresholds further aligned the study with best practices in measurement model assessment, enhancing the trustworthiness of the results.

The exclusion of items with low factor loadings reflects the methodological rigor of this study, prioritizing reliability and validity. By retaining items that effectively measure the intended constructs, the study ensures a more accurate and focused model, contributing to the advancement of knowledge. This thorough evaluation of the measurement model strengthens the reliability and validity of the findings, ultimately enhancing the credibility of the research outcomes.

Table 1: Items Loadings

Construct	**Item**	**Factor loadings**
Faculty experience	FE1	0.890
	FE2	0.878
	FE3	0.859
	FE4*	0.613
Student learning method	SLM 1	0.894
	SLM 2	0.842
	SLM 3	0.871
	SLM 4*	0.689
Program enrolled	PE1	0.865
	PE2	0.808
	PE3	0.856
	PE4	0.838
Industry collaborations and internship	ICI1	0.899
	ICI2	0.893
	ICI3	0.878
	ICI4	0.892
Technology engagement	TE1	0.862

	TE2	0.872
	TE3	0.841
	TE4	0.863
Graduate's self-efficacy	GSE1	0.928
	GSE2	0.906
	GSE3	0.902
Graduate employability	GE1	0.911
	GE2	0.899
	GE3	0.896
	GE4	0.894

* Item deletion

The above Table 1 offers a comprehensive examination of the measurement model, providing insight into the relationship between various constructs and their respective items through factor loadings. Beginning with Faculty experience (FE), items FE1, FE2, and FE3 exhibit notably high factor loadings of 0.890, 0.878, and 0.859, respectively, indicating a strong and positive association with the FE construct. Although FE4 displays a slightly lower loading of 0.613, it still contributes significantly to the construct, potentially capturing a unique facet of Faculty experience. Similarly, Student learning method (SLM) is well-represented by SLM1, SLM2, and SLM3, each boasting high loadings ranging from 0.842 to 0.894, signaling a robust connection with the SLM construct. Meanwhile, SLM4 presents a somewhat lower loading at 0.689, prompting further exploration into its specific relationship with Student learning method. Program enrolled (PE) is effectively captured by items PE1, PE2, PE3, and PE4, each demonstrating strong factor loadings between 0.808 and 0.865. Likewise, Industry collaborations and internship (ICI) are robustly represented by items ICI1, ICI2, ICI3, and ICI4, with loadings ranging from 0.878 to 0.899. Technology engagement (TE) also exhibits strong loadings across all items (TE1, TE2, TE3, TE4), ranging from 0.841 to 0.872, indicative of a clear and positive relationship with the TE construct. Moreover, Graduate's self-efficacy (GSE) is well-supported by items GSE1, GSE2, and GSE3, boasting very high loadings of 0.928, 0.906, and 0.902, respectively. Finally, Graduate employability (GE) is robustly represented by items GE1, GE2, GE3, and GE4, with loadings ranging from 0.894 to 0.911. Collectively, these factor loadings contribute to the construct validity of the measurement model, affirming the effectiveness of the selected items in measuring their respective latent constructs. Researchers should consider these findings when interpreting the relationships among the studied variables in subsequent analyses, acknowledging the strength of association between items and their underlying constructs.

Table 2: The Reliability Measures of the Study's Constructs

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	Composite reliability
Graduate's self-efficacy	0.899	0.899	0.937
Graduate employability	0.922	0.923	0.945
Student learning method	0.838	0.843	0.903
Program enrolled	0.858	0.86	0.904
Industry collaborations and internship	0.913	0.914	0.939
Faculty experience	0.848	0.850	0.908
Technology engagement	0.882	0.885	0.919

The assessment of composite reliability in the current study reveals values ranging from 0.903 to 0.945, all surpassing the conventional threshold of 0.70, indicative of high reliability. While these results suggest strong reliability, there exists contention within the literature regarding the sufficiency of high composite reliability values as evidence of instrument reliability (Hair et al., 2016). So, reliability coefficients, which range from 0 to 1, with 1 representing perfect reliability and 0 indicating none, are desirable when exceeding 0.9 as they denote nearly perfect reliability.

Conversely, the notable positive effect of Graduate's self-efficacy on graduate employability underscores the transformative potential of analytics capabilities on organizational outcomes. This underscores the strategic importance of investing in Business Analytics (BA) initiatives for universities seeking to enhance employability and maintain competitiveness in today's rapidly evolving educational landscape.

Thus, the findings gleaned from the structural model analysis offer valuable insights into the intricate interplay of technological, organizational, and environmental factors that shape Graduate's self-efficacy and its subsequent impact on graduate employability. These insights carry practical implications for universities aiming to harness analytics capabilities to enhance operational efficiency, refine decision-making processes, and elevate student experiences.

Moreover, Figure 2 visually presents the modeled structural relationships, providing a clear illustration of the interconnections among the study variables and their respective significance levels. This visual representation enhances understanding and facilitates the effective communication of research findings, enabling stakeholders to make well-informed decisions grounded in empirical evidence.

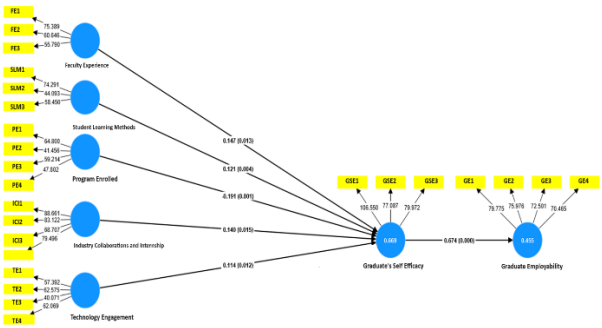


Figure 2: Structural Model Results

Indeed, the findings underscore the substantial influence of several key factors on Graduate's self-efficacy within Sri Lankan private universities. Faculty Experience (FE), Student Learning Method (SLM), Program Enrolled (PE), Industry Collaborations and Internship (ICI), and Technology Engagement (TE) emerge as significant determinants shaping Graduate's Self-efficacy in this context. Faculty Experience (FE) plays an important role in shaping Graduate's Self-efficacy, with higher levels of perceived faculty experience positively influencing Graduate's Self-efficacy levels. The expertise, guidance, and mentorship provided by experienced faculty members are crucial in instilling confidence and competence among graduates, thereby enhancing their self-efficacy beliefs.

Similarly, the choice of Student Learning Method (SLM) significantly impacts Graduate's Self-efficacy. Innovative and effective learning methods that engage students actively and foster critical thinking skills are associated with higher levels of Graduate's self-efficacy. These methods empower students to take ownership of their learning journey and develop the confidence to tackle challenges in their academic and professional pursuits.

Program Enrolled (PE) also exerts a notable influence on Graduate's Self-efficacy, albeit in a negative direction. The choice of program and curriculum structure can significantly impact students' perceptions of their capabilities and readiness for the workforce. Programs that offer relevant, practical learning experiences and align closely with industry needs are more likely to bolster Graduate's Self-efficacy levels. Furthermore, the presence of robust Industry Collaborations and Internship opportunities (ICI) enhances Graduate's Self-efficacy by providing real-world exposure, practical experience, and industry-relevant skills. Collaborations with industry partners and internship opportunities offer students valuable insights into the professional world, enabling them to develop confidence in their abilities and readiness for employment.

Lastly, Technology Engagement (TE) emerges as a significant predictor of Graduate's Self-efficacy, highlighting the importance of leveraging technology in educational settings. Integrating technology effectively into teaching and learning processes enhances students' digital literacy, problem-solving abilities, and self-efficacy beliefs, equipping them with essential skills for success in today's digital era.

Overall, the findings emphasize the multifaceted nature of factors influencing Graduate's self-efficacy in Sri Lankan private universities. By understanding and addressing these factors, educational institutions can foster a conducive environment that nurtures students' self-efficacy beliefs, ultimately enhancing their employability and success in the professional aspect.

Together, Table 3 and Figure 2 synergistically encapsulate the key findings of the PLS-SEM analysis, offering a holistic perspective on the structural dynamics inherent within the research

model. These visual and tabular representations serve as indispensable tools for researchers and stakeholders alike, facilitating a nuanced understanding of the intricate relationships among the latent variables and enhancing the interpretability and applicability of the study's findings.

Table 3: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hx	Hypotheses	Path	β	Mean	STDEV	T-value	P-value	Result
H1	There is a positive relationship between faculty experience and graduate's self-efficacy.	FE -> GSE	0.147	0.149	0.059	2.484	0.013*	Supported
H2	There is a positive relationship between students' learning methods and graduate's self-efficacy.	SLM-> GSE	0.121	0.121	0.042	2.881	0.004**	Supported
H3	There is a positive relationship between program enrollment and graduate's self-efficacy.	PE-> GSE	-0.191	-0.190	0.056	3.404	0.001***	Supported
H4	There is a positive relationship between industry collaborations and internship and graduate's self-efficacy.	ICI -> GSE	0.140	0.138	0.058	2.424	0.015**	Supported
H5	There is a positive relationship between technology engagement and graduate's self-efficacy.	TE -> GSE	0.114	0.115	0.046	2.504	0.012**	Supported
H6	There is a positive relationship between graduate's self-efficacy and graduate employability.	GSE -> GE	0.674	0.676	0.029	23.173	0.000***	Supported

*Note: "Significant at * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$, (ns): not significant"*

This study explored the intricate interplay of technological, organizational, and environmental factors impacting graduate employability in Sri Lankan private universities. By analyzing the structural relationships within these contexts, the research aimed to shed light on the determinants of Graduate's self-efficacy (GSE) and its subsequent influence on employability outcomes. Hypotheses were formulated and rigorously tested to discern the significance of various factors in shaping Graduate's self-efficacy and its effects on employability.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer critical insights into the key factors influencing graduates' employability in Sri Lanka. One of the primary determinants identified was the role of programmed enrollment in specialized training programs. These programs emerged as significant predictors of employment success, indicating that graduates who participated in such training were more likely to secure jobs. This finding underscores the importance of acquiring specific skills and experiences that align with industry demands, reflecting the broader consensus in the literature on the value of vocational training

and continuing education for enhancing workforce readiness (Lasonen, 2018).

The positive correlation between specialized training and employability suggests that structured programs tailored to industry requirements equip graduates with the necessary competencies to meet employer expectations. As industries evolve and technological advancements continue to reshape job roles, the ability to adapt and acquire new skills becomes increasingly important. These findings resonate with global trends where vocational training and industry-specific education are prioritized as essential components of employability strategies.

In addition to the importance of specialized training, the study highlights the vital role of self-efficacy in shaping graduates' employability outcomes. Self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to succeed, was found to significantly influence graduates' motivation, resilience, and adaptability in pursuing job opportunities. Graduates with high self-efficacy were more proactive in seeking employment, demonstrated greater perseverance in the face of challenges, and were better equipped to adapt to the demands of the workplace. This aligns with Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which emphasizes that individuals with strong self-efficacy are more likely to set ambitious goals, persist through difficulties, and ultimately achieve success.

The study's findings underscore the importance of self-efficacy as a psychological resource that can enhance employability. Graduates who possess a strong belief in their capabilities are more likely to engage in job-seeking behaviors, network effectively, and capitalize on opportunities. They are also better positioned to overcome the inevitable setbacks and uncertainties of the job market, demonstrating resilience that is crucial for long-term career success.

One of the most noteworthy findings of this study is the interaction effect between programmed enrollment and self-efficacy on employability. The data revealed that graduates who both participated in specialized training programs and exhibited high levels of self-efficacy displayed the highest employability outcomes. This interaction effect suggests a synergistic relationship between structured training and self-belief. While specialized programs provide the technical skills and knowledge required for employment, self-efficacy enables graduates to leverage these skills effectively in real-world job scenarios.

This finding has significant implications for both educators and policymakers. It suggests that while it is essential to offer specialized training programs that equip graduates with industry-relevant skills, it is equally important to foster self-efficacy among students. Programs designed to build self-confidence, encourage goal-setting, and enhance problem-solving abilities could complement technical training, resulting in graduates who are not only skilled but also confident in their ability to succeed.

Moreover, the study's findings highlight the multifaceted nature of employability, which is influenced by both external factors, such as programmed enrollment, and internal factors, such as self-efficacy. This complexity suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach to employability may be insufficient. Instead, a more holistic strategy that addresses both skill acquisition and psychological empowerment is needed.

For policymakers, this means investing in educational frameworks that integrate vocational training with initiatives designed to boost self-efficacy. Such initiatives could include mentorship programs, workshops on personal development, and opportunities for experiential learning that build confidence through practice and positive reinforcement. By creating an environment that nurtures both the technical skills and the psychological resources necessary for employability, educational institutions can produce graduates who are better prepared to navigate the complexities of the job market.

Employers also have a role to play in this process. By recognizing the importance of self-efficacy in the workplace, companies can design onboarding and training programs that not only teach new employees the necessary job skills but also build their confidence and adaptability. Encouraging a culture of continuous learning and providing opportunities for professional development can further enhance employees' self-efficacy, leading to better job performance and higher retention rates.

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the intricate dynamics between programmed enrollment, self-efficacy, and employability. It demonstrates that both specialized training and a strong sense of self-efficacy are crucial for graduates' success in the job market. The synergistic relationship between these

factors suggests that educational strategies should be comprehensive, integrating skill-building activities with interventions aimed at boosting self-belief. By adopting such an approach, stakeholders in education and employment can empower graduates to navigate the challenges of the job market successfully and achieve sustainable employment outcomes.

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