

Factors influencing success of fashion design entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka

E.G. Jinasena and N. Kusumsiri*

Department of Textile and Clothing Technology, Faculty of Engineering, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
**nisankalk@gmail.com*

Successful fashion entrepreneurs play a significant role in driving the local fashion industry forward. As entrepreneurs are important actors of the fashion business, it is essential to provide systematic guidance in order to achieve business success through incubation and support programmes. Support initiatives depend on knowledge of diverse factors that would influence the fashion business. Fashion entrepreneurship has not being subject to systematic research in Sri Lanka. Therefore, this research focuses on identification and discussion of factors influencing fashion entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka.

The research started with a review of literature, which divides the influential factors into four main categories: (1) Business Characteristics; (2) Personality, Attitudes and Behavioural factors; (3) Environmental factors; and (4) Strategic factors. The information about fashion businesses were solicited through available databases of main fashion events such as Colombo Fashion Week and also through social media. A random sample of 180 successfully established and emerging fashion entrepreneurs participated in the survey, out of which 85 participants responded. The importance of each factor was analysed according to four main categories based on the questionnaire responses provided by fashion design entrepreneurs who have launched their own fashion enterprises in Colombo and suburbs. Statistical techniques available on Microsoft Excel such as tabulation, graphing, mean, and median, and standard deviation were used for the analysis.

The analysis highlights that personality, attitudes and behavioural factors are the most influential factors of fashion design entrepreneurship. The findings revealed that fashion entrepreneurs' personal identity, as expressed through their personality and attitudes, influence entrepreneurial behaviour in fashion designers. The findings also reveal that personal identity is constructed through interaction of social and cultural factors prevailing in Sri Lanka. It facilitates fashion entrepreneurs to recognise their personal identity construction that influence their business decisions so that favourable identity constructions are identified and nourished while non-favourable constructions are redefined. The findings reveal that the external factors can be managed through recognising, developing and redefining their personality, attitudes and behaviour in the process of developing successful fashion enterprises.