

**THE IMPACT OF OWNERS' PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS
ON THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION – A SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO SALT INDUSTRY IN PUTTALAM DISTRICT**

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Abstract

In the current era of highly volatile business environment, entrepreneurial characteristic is the most crucial factor that affects the entrepreneurial orientation. The main objective of this study was to identify the impact of entrepreneurial characteristics on the entrepreneurial orientation. The study has utilized primary data and 143 SME entrepreneurs were selected from Salt Industry in Puttalam District, using a structured questionnaire. With the intention of determining the nature and strength of the relationship between the factors of entrepreneurial characteristics and entrepreneurial orientation, five explanatory variables have been studied as need for achievements, locus of control, leadership, risk taking and innovativeness. Descriptive Statistics Analysis, Correlation Analysis and Multiple Regression Model have utilized as the main analyzing techniques. The survey results revealed that among the five entrepreneurial characteristics only locus of control, leadership, risk taking and innovativeness have shown significant influence for the entrepreneurial orientation and need for achievement is insignificant with the entrepreneurial orientation. Among all the demographic and socio economic factors, innovativeness has emerged as the most important factor for predicting the entrepreneurial orientation and almost all the explanatory variables positively influence for the entrepreneurial orientation. Further, according to the research findings, entrepreneurial orientation of SME holders is at moderate level. Implications of the findings and recommendations are offered.

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