

Gender Gap in IT Entrepreneurship: An Experiential Comparison of Silicon Valley and Sri Lanka

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Establishing a robust entrepreneurial environment is an important aspect of national development. When considering opportunities in mobilizing information technology (IT) for national development, this aspect maps to IT entrepreneurship.

Although the rate of new IT startups being created in Sri Lanka is slowly and steadily increasing, many challenges still need to be overcome in order to achieve a sustainable and vibrant IT startup culture. The noticeable underrepresentation of women amongst the IT entrepreneurs is a social dimension challenge that needs to be effectively addressed.

Silicon Valley – the San Francisco Bay Area, in California, USA, is globally regarded as a hub for IT entrepreneurship. Though the number of female entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley is lower than male entrepreneurs, this gender gap metric is rapidly decreasing.

In this presentation, the author explores her experiences as a female IT entrepreneur in both Sri Lanka and Silicon Valley and discusses measures that could be considered in closing the gender gap in IT entrepreneurship.