

14th International Conference on Business and Information

"Advancing Digital Transformation, Well-being, and Sustainability in Business"



ICBI 2023

ABSTRACTS

Organized by

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

University of Kelaniya



**14th International Conference
on
Business and Information
[ICBI – 2023]**

*‘Advancing Digital Transformation, Well-being, and
Sustainability in Business’*

Abstracts

**Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies
University of Kelaniya
Sri Lanka**

10th November 2023

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14th International Conference on Business and Information

‘Advancing Digital Transformation, Well-being, and Sustainability in Business’

Abstracts

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ISSN 2465-6399

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Editor in Chief: Dr. Subhashini Weerakkody

Production Credits: Mr. Tharindu Dananjaya Weerasinghe

Cover Design: Mr. Dinuka Kannangara

EDITORIAL NOTE



On behalf of the editorial board of the 14th International Conference on Business and Information, which is being hosted by the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, I am delighted to present the conference proceedings with the theme of Advancing digital Transformation, Well-being, and Sustainability. Abstracts of accepted papers for the ICBI 2023 and Doctoral Colloquium are included in this version. This year, an extensive number of papers from academia, students, government institutions and several nations were submitted to the conference.

Papers for the Doctoral colloquium was submitted by students pursuing doctoral degrees. Every paper was put through a rigorous review process that included similarity checks and double-blind review to ensure quality. Following a double-blind peer review procedure, only 79% of the submitted papers were approved for the conference. The articles cover a broad spectrum of research areas, such as technology, organizational behavior and human resource management, marketing, international business and strategy, accounting, finance and economics, education and learning, tourism and hospitality management, entrepreneurship, innovation, and small business management, climate change and sustainability development, logistics and supply chain management, and multidisciplinary fields. The accepted articles will be eligible for publication in Elsevier's hosted SSRN and journals published by the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kelaniya. Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the reviewers and authors of the articles whose theoretical and empirical contributions are featured in these proceedings. The research conducted during these sessions will provide new insights into concepts, practices, and methods. ICBI 2023 is looking forward to seeing you all.

Dr. Subhashini Weerakkody

Editor in Chief – ICBI 2023

Senior Lecturer

Department of Human Resource Management

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE SECRETARY



It is with immense pleasure I write this message for the 14th International Conference on Business and Information (ICBI) – 2023 organized by the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kelaniya. As the Secretary of this prestigious event, I am deeply honored to contribute these opening remarks, commemorating the wealth of knowledge and innovation we have gathered to share.

ICBI 2023 includes five diverse events, including the main research conference, SDG youth summit, doctoral colloquium, technical forum, and the 3MT competition. This conference serves as a beacon of academic excellence, fostering an environment where ideas and discoveries flourish. This year's conference, themed *“Advancing Digital Transformation, Well-Being, and Sustainability in Business”* has brought together brilliant minds from diverse backgrounds, united by a common passion for research and a commitment to expanding the boundaries of human knowledge.

The importance of conferences such as this one cannot be overstated. They offer a platform for the exchange of ideas, the presentation of groundbreaking research, and the forging of new collaborations. It is within these pages that we encapsulate the essence of our collective efforts, documenting the intellectual progress and innovation that have emerged from this gathering. It is my hope that these proceedings will serve as a valuable resource, inspiring further exploration, debate, and discovery in your respective fields.

Thank you all for your participation and your dedication to the pursuit of knowledge. I am confident that the impact of our collective endeavors will resonate far beyond the pages of this document, shaping the future of our fields and benefiting society at large.

Dr. Chathuni Jayasinghe

Secretary – ICBI 2023

Senior Lecturer

Department of Human Resource Management

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CO-CHAIR



Welcome to the 14th International Conference on Business and Information Technology. We are delighted to have you all gather here to share your valuable insights, innovative research, and collaborative efforts in “*Advancing Digital Transformation, well-being, and Sustainability in Business*”. Digital transformation is no longer a buzzword; it is the very fabric of our existence.

The relentless pace of technological innovation has disrupted traditional business models, challenging us to adapt or risk obsolescence. Embracing digital transformation is not merely an option but a necessity. However, in this journey, it is essential that we keep two fundamental aspects at the forefront of our minds: well-being and sustainability in Business. Firstly, well-being. We cannot underestimate the importance of nurturing the well-being of different stakeholders, including employees, customers, and society at large. Secondly, sustainability. The well-being of our planet is inextricably linked to our own well-being. As researchers, we have a significant role to play in addressing environmental challenges. Thus, research under the theme of “*Advancing Digital Transformation, Well-being, and Sustainability in Business*” is not just an aspiration; it's a mandate for our era. It requires us to navigate the digital landscape with a deep sense of responsibility and purpose. Together, as forward-thinking researchers, we can voice this issue through our research findings for a more sustainable future.

We extend our gratitude to all the authors, reviewers, organizing committee and especially the editor of the proceeding, for their dedication and hard work, which have made this conference proceeding possible. We hope that this conference proceeding serves as a valuable resource for you and inspires new avenues of exploration and collaboration. Thank you for your participation, and we wish you a stimulating and enriching experience at the ICBI 2023.

Dr. Ruwani Fernando

Co-chair – ICBI 2023

Department of Human Resource Management

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR



The Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies (FCMS), University of Kelaniya will organize the 14 International Conference on Business and Information (ICBI)-2023 as the annual flagship event. Along with the main research conference, it will organize the Youth Summit, Technical Forum, Doctoral Colloquium and 3 Minute These Competition (3MT) over two days. The conference includes several outstanding keynote speeches, poster presentations, paper development sessions, and research presentations.

The conference theme will be “*Advancing Digital Transformation, Wellbeing and Sustainability in Business*”. In the past decade, we have witnessed significant advances in technology, with continuous changes in the world. Along with this, organizations have been able to increase their productivity and efficiency at a rapid pace. However, have we fully achieved goals on sustainability in business and human wellbeing? This should be further investigated. Therefore, this conference will provide an opportunity for the interested parties to discuss the above-mentioned matters on one platform.

Several parties will be actively participating in this conference in different ways, fulfilling their duties and responsibilities. Academics, youth, professionals, and the community will come together to support the achievement of the goals of business sustainability, organizational well-being, and the digital transformation of the world by addressing several key issues.

Dr. Saroja Wanigasekara

Chair – ICBI 2023

Department of Human Resource Management

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY



I am delighted to send this message to the International Conference on Business and Information (ICBI) 2023, which is hosted by the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies at the University of Kelaniya. It is widely acknowledged that societal and industrial progress is fueled by research. However, it is crucial for researchers to have suitable platforms to share and discuss their discoveries for mutual benefit. Therefore, the continuous organization of this research conference for the fourteenth year in a row, starting in 2010, is truly commendable and serves as a valuable avenue for scholars, academics, and practitioners.

This conference will not only bring recognition to the faculty but also to the University as a whole. Additionally, I firmly believe that the future of our nation depends on the work of young researchers. Consequently, the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies remains committed to nurturing the capabilities of these emerging scholars through various means. Research in applied fields directly influences economic development. Hence, the theme, "Advancing Digital Transformation, well-being, and sustainability in Business" is not only sensible but also highly relevant to the Sri Lankan economy. This initiative will undoubtedly assist both academics and professionals in reshaping their perspectives towards achieving sustainable development in the country.

As the Dean, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Dr. Saroja Wanigasekara, the Chair of ICBI 2023, Dr. Chathuni Jayasinghe, the conference secretary, and all others who have made significant contributions to the success of this event. I would also like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to both local and international researchers who have submitted their research articles to this conference. I wish this conference every success.

Professor Bandara Wanninayake

Dean

Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE RESEARCH COUNCIL



It gives me immense pleasure to send my best wishes to the 14th International Conference on Business and Information, ICBI 2023 organized by the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies of the University of Kelaniya. The ICBI has become a major research event of the University of Kelaniya that supports and nurtures the research culture of the university. The conference presentations are communications based on comprehensive studies that have the potential to be published as full research articles in both local and international journals.

The prime goals of the Research Council of the university are to enrich research culture in the university and promote multidisciplinary research. The Research Council provides incentives and necessary support to the researchers who publish in high quality journals. The research Council also expects that a considerable percentage of the studies presented in the form of abstracts in the conferences organized by the university to end up as full research articles soon.

It is well understood that modern day research needs a multidisciplinary approach to produce high quality results of importance to academics and other communities. As reflected by the theme “*advancing digital transformation, well-being and sustainability in business*”, the multidisciplinary approach is highlighted in the present conference.

I congratulate the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies for organizing this conference annually and making it an excellent platform for researchers to present their novel findings.

My best wishes for a very fruitful and rewarding conference!

Professor Kapila Seneviratne

Chairman of the Research Council
University of Kelaniya
Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR



As the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies at the University of Kelaniya prepares to host its 14th consecutive annual International Conference on Business & Information in 2023, and I am pleased to convey a brief message to the conference participants.

The University of Kelaniya regards its primary mission as the dissemination of newly generated knowledge to support the sustainable development of our nation.

Each generation of researchers builds upon the strong foundation laid by scholars from various disciplines in the past, propelling the University on an enduring path toward excellence. Each Faculty bears a share of responsibility in this mission, and organizing international conferences to share fresh knowledge with interested parties in specific fields stands as a vital means to fulfill this duty.

This conference offers a unique opportunity for participants from around the world to come together and engage in fruitful discussions, share cutting-edge research, and collaborate on solutions to some of the most pressing challenges in our field.

I hold deep appreciation for the remarkable efforts put forth by the academics of the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies to organize this conference. I seize this opportunity to extend my best wishes to the Chair, Co-Chair, Organizing Committee, and all those involved in the 14th International Conference on Business & Information, for productive and fruitful deliberations.

Senior Professor Nilanthi de Silva

The Vice Chancellor
University of Kelaniya
Sri Lanka

KEYNOTE ABSTRACT



Professor Ying Zhou

Professor of Human Resource Management
Director - Future of Work Research Centre
University of Surrey, United Kingdom

Drawing on decades of national labor market surveys that cover employees in hundreds of occupations in the UK, this study challenges conventional notions of ‘good work’ and considers them afresh through the lens of workers themselves. With examples from many professions, it examines why some occupations feel more rewarding than others, regardless of factors like pay and job security. Exploring fresh policies to promote the agenda for fulfilling work, it builds an important case for genuine and sustained satisfaction in working lives. The study uncovers a few key insights:

- **Intrinsic Value of Work:** The research introduces the Good Work Index (GWI), a job quality metric that prioritizes what workers themselves identify as significant for job satisfaction. According to the data, the nature of the work itself, including skill utilization, task variety, and job control, greatly enhances wellbeing at work. Interestingly, pay ranks rather low as a determinant of job satisfaction.
- **Occupation-based Stratification:** Job quality isn't uniform across all occupations. Managerial and professional jobs generally offer the best working conditions. Conversely, routine, and manual jobs such as cashiers and cleaners are substantially lower. However, the story isn't so straightforward. Some low-paying jobs like hairdressers and beauticians report exceptionally high levels of well-being, while some high-paying roles like aircraft pilots show the opposite pattern.
- **Long-term Trends:** the last three decades saw an upgrading of the occupational structure in the UK, with high quality jobs expanding and low-quality jobs shrinking. These trends are likely to continue as job quality is inversely related to the probability of automation. Despite general improvements in occupational structures, however, the quality of work within occupation has deteriorated in certain key aspects. Jobs are becoming more routine, more controlled, and more intense across all occupations. The overall picture is one of ‘nuanced upgrading’.

This study serves as a comprehensive guide for policymakers, organizational leaders, and workers in understanding the multi-faceted nature of 'Good Work.' The findings emphasize the need for a balanced approach that considers both intrinsic and extrinsic job factors for a more satisfying and sustainable work environment. Overall, the research advocates for policies that not only create jobs but also ensure their quality, making it pertinent in the ongoing debates on labor markets, automation, and the future of work.

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Senior Lecturer, Department of Commerce and Financial Management
University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
Contestant: Mr. Chandana Aluthgama

Mr. Wenura Jayasighe

Founding Director - Axda International and C-Needs (Private) Limited
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Dr. Chathuri Senarath

Senior Lecturer, Department of Commerce and Financial Management
University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
Contestant: Mr. Sandrasekaran Chandramohan

ICBI JOURNEY

Since 2010

ICBI - 2010

Theme: *Researching Realities of Management Phenomenon*

Date: 4th June 2010

Conference Chair: Dr. (Mrs) R. P. C. Ranjani

Conference Coordinator: Mr. Ajith Medis

Keynote Speaker: Prof. Dinesh Kumar Gupta

ICBI - 2011

Theme: *Steering Excellence of Business Knowledge*

Date: 20th October 2011

Conference Chair: Dr. (Mrs.) R. P. C. Ranjani

Conference Coordinator: Dr. D. M. Semasinghe

Keynote Speaker: Prof. Per Davidsson

ICBI - 2012

Theme: *Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century*

Date: 30th November 2012

Conference Chair: Dr. (Mrs.) R. P. C. Ranjani

Conference Co-chairs: Dr. C. N. Wikramasinghe and Dr. M. W. Madurapperuma

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Koshy Mathai

ICBI - 2013

Theme: *Developing Business for sustainable Growth: Research Innovation and Practice*

Date: 2nd December 2013

Conference Chair: Dr. D. M. Semasinghe

Conference Co-chair: Dr. D. U. Mohan

Conference Secretary: Ms. J. M. R. Fernando

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Peter Walter Cunningham

ICBI - 2014

Theme: *Discovering New Knowledge to Co-operate with Competition towards Business Success: Prizing the Present and shaping the Future*

Date: 22nd November 2014

Conference Chair: Dr. D. M. Semasinghe

Conference Co-chair: Dr. P. N. D. Fernando

Conference Secretary: Ms. K. G. M. Nanayakkara

Keynote Speaker: Prof. Anona Armstrong

ICBI - 2015

Theme: *Transcendence in Business – Knowledge Immersed in Practice*

Date: 22nd November 2015

Conference Chair: Dr. D. M. Semasinghe

Conference Co-chairs: Dr. R. A. S. Weerasiri

Conference Secretary: Dr. H. M. R. P. Herath

Keynote Speaker: Prof. (Dr.) Markus Blut

ICBI - 2016

Theme: *Triumphing Business Excellence through Knowledge Exploration*

Date: 19th November 2016

Conference Chair: Dr. D. M. Semasinghe

Conference Co-chair: Dr. W. V. A. D. Karunarathne

Conference Secretary: Dr. D. K. Y. Abeywardena

Keynote Speaker: Prof. (Dr.) David Dickinson

ICBI - 2017

Theme: *Exploring Disruptive Opportunities for Exponential Business Growth*

Date: 17th November 2017

Conference Chair: Dr. P. N. D. Fernando

Conference Co-chair: Dr. S. M. A. K. Samarakoon

Conference Secretary: Dr. H. A. K. N. S. Surangi

Keynote Speaker: Prof. David Rae

ICBI - 2018

Theme: *Enriching Multidisciplinary Research Potential of International Collaboration towards Sustainable Development*

Date: 23rd November 2018

Conference Chair: Dr. P. N. D. Fernando

Conference Co-chairs: Prof. A. C. De Alwis | Prof. Hareesh N. Ramanathan

Conference Secretaries: Mr. Tharindu D. Weerasinghe | Dr. George C. Mathew

Keynote Speaker: Prof. (Dr.). Sanjeev Prashar

ICBI - 2019

Theme: *Business Transformation in Emerging Technology Landscape*

Date: 17th October 2019

Conference Chair: Prof. (Dr.) R. P. C. Ranjani

Conference Co-chair: Dr. L. A. P. Medis

Conference Secretary: Prof. (Dr.) S. S. Weligamage

Editor-in-chief: Dr. M. M. M. Shamil

Coordinator - Doctoral Colloquium: Dr. J. M. R. Fernando

Keynote Speaker: Prof. (Dr.) Prashanta Kumar Banerjee

ICBI - 2020

Theme: *Transforming Business Strategies for Economic Resilience*

Date: 19th November 2020

Conference Chair: Prof. (Dr.) W. M. C. B. Wanninayake

Conference Co-chair: Dr. D. M. R. Dissanayake

Conference Secretary: Mrs. C. B. Wijesundara

Editor-in-chief: Dr. S. C. Thushara

Coordinator - Doctoral Colloquium: Dr. K. G. M. Nanayakkara

Keynote Speaker: Prof. (Dr.) Noel Scott

ICBI - 2021

Theme: *Reinventing Business Strategies in the Next Normal*

Date: 11th November 2021

Conference Chair: Prof. (Dr.) P. M. C. Thilakerathne

Conference Co-chair: Dr. M. A. T. K. Munasinghe

Conference Secretary: Dr. Nisansala Wijekoon

Editor-in-chief: Dr. K. G. M. Nanayakkara

Coordinator - Doctoral Colloquium: Dr. Prabhashini Wijewantha

Keynote Speaker: His Excellency David Holly

ICBI - 2022

Theme: *Building Business Resilience to Climate Change in Frontier Markets*

Date: 18th November 2022

Conference Chair: Dr. M. M. M. Shamil

Conference Co-chairs: Dr. Saroja Wanigasekara | Dr. Suborna Barua

Conference Secretary: Dr. Tishani Herath

Editor-in-chief: Dr. Kaushalya Yatigammana

Coordinator - Doctoral Colloquium: Dr. Chathura Liyanage

Keynote Speaker: Prof. Sean Kidney

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Abstracts

Determinants of Risk-taking Behavior of Licensed Commercial Banks: A Case of Licensed Commercial Banks in Sri Lanka

Damayanthi, N. M. M.¹ and Gunawardhana, C. S.²

Although being a widely researched area elsewhere in the world, the determinants of risk-taking behavior of Sri Lankan banks remain unexplored and important area considering the systemic importance of banks in the financial sector. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between risk-taking factors and its various determinants of banks. The study employs a panel data analysis using quarterly financial data of selected licensed commercial Banks (LCBs) in Sri Lanka for a period of 10 years, i.e., 2013Q1 to 2022Q4. The test results revealed that the size and corporate age of the banks have a negative relationship with the standard deviation of the net interest margin. NPL ratio, cost to income ratio and the diversification indicator reflected weak positive relationships with risk-taking behavior of LCBs. The outcome of the study may utilize for preparation of a risk-based supervision framework that can be used by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL). Further, the study stress CBSL to analyze the possibility of introducing stringent control mechanisms for newly licensed banks to be followed during the initial years of banking operations, considering the accumulation of excessive risks by such entities.

Keywords: *Assets Quality, Cost to Income, Liquid Assets, Non-performing Loan, Risk-taking Behavior*

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Impact of Board Structure on Financial Performance with Reference to Listed Manufacturing Companies in Sri Lanka

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The boardroom plays a crucial role within a company intending to bolster the performance of the company. Given its significance, many researchers have conducted several studies to investigate the impact of board structure on financial performance. Despite the extensive exploration of this relationship, there is no conclusive idea and there are incongruous findings relating to the topic of board structure and financial performance not only in the global context but also in the Sri Lankan context, especially for manufacturing companies. This study mainly focuses on the impact of board structure on financial performance in listed manufacturing companies in Sri Lanka with the intention of filling the research gap regarding the field of board structure on financial performance. The study relies on secondary data that was gathered from the period from 2016 to 2021. Thirty (30) listed manufacturing companies in the Colombo Stock Exchange were selected as the sample of the study using simple random sampling. In addition, regression analysis was used to analyze the data while employing board size, CEO duality, and independent non-executive directors as independent variables and financial performance as the dependent variable which was measured using Return on assets and return on equity. The findings reveal that board size had a significant negative impact on financial performance in connection with the theory of agency. However, CEO duality and the number of independent non-executive directors reacted perfectly with the financial performance as confirmed by the resource dependency theory. Therefore, this study assists companies in customizing their board structure which suits their requirements and offers valuable insight for enhancing corporate governance practices in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Board Structure, Financial Performance, Return on Assets, Return on Equity*

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Impact of Non-Performing Assets on Profitability of Licensed Financial Institutions in Sri Lanka

Hamsagini, K.¹

In the current trend of economic recession since 2018, the financial sector in Sri Lanka is an essential contributor to the economy. Banks and financial institutions need to be financially strong for this purpose. As financial intermediaries, the licensed financial institutions largely depend on the performance of their lending as a critical source of earning. Due to increasing loan failures, the share of non-performing assets has increased substantially in recent years, thereby adversely impacting their profitability. The financial institutions have become more cautious and careful when lending money to borrowers because of the rising number of non-performing assets. This study tries to comprehend the reasons for an asset to become a non-performing asset (NPA) and various corrective steps that can be taken to reduce the amount of NPA in financial institutions. The objective of the present study is to highpoint the level of Non- performing Assets, and how it influences the profitability of the banks. For this purpose, the study considered sixty-three licensed financial institutions in Sri Lanka from the period of 2015 to 2022. Results of this study showed that there is a negative impact between non-performing assets and profitability.

Keywords: *Financial Institutions, Gross Non- Performing Assets, Net Non- Performing Assets, Return on Assets, Return on Equity*

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Impact of Employee Motivation on Organizational Performance (Empirical Study of Executive Employees in General Insurance Sector of Sri Lanka)

Fernando, J. A. H. P.¹ and Buddhika, R.²

Employee motivation is a critical factor in determining the overall performance of an organization. This study provides an overview of the relationship between employee motivation and organizational performance, highlighting key concepts and implications. Motivation and organizational performance are essential tools for the success of any organization in the long run. On the other hand, there is a positive relationship between employee motivation and organizational performance reflected in numerous studies. Identifying research gaps between employee motivation and organizational performance in a specific context like Sri Lanka requires a thorough review of existing literature and an understanding of the country's unique socio-economic and cultural factors. This research aims to analyze the executive employees' motivations related to the general insurance industry. The study was based on the following three objectives; to determine the factors that increase the motivation of employees; to examine the requirements of a good motivational system and to examine the relationship between employee motivation and organizational performance. This study sought to find the impact between the independent variables (Financial benefits, non-financial benefits, Management and Leadership factors, and Organizational factors), mediation variables, and dependent variable (Organizational Performance) through thirteen different hypotheses. This Primary data was collected from 369 executive employees of eight leading general insurance companies. Data were collected with a structured questionnaire and SPSS software was selected as key software for data analysis. According to the research results Organizational factors and financial factors are statistically positive on Employee Motivation and Organizational Performance. Subsequently, the study highlights the relationship between the mediating variable and each independent variable. In conclusion, employee motivation is highly responsible for overall performance, and organizations that prioritize and nurture employee motivation are more likely to experience sustained success and financial growth.

Keywords: General Insurance, Motivation, Organizational Performance

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Impact of Corporate Governance on Financial Distress: Evidence from Listed Financial Institutions in Sri Lanka

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This study focuses on the role of corporate governance in predicting financial distress of companies in the finance sector in Sri Lanka. Over the past two decades, a few finance sector companies collapsed in Sri Lanka affecting numerous victims with no proper compensation payments. The study aims to unveil the impact of corporate governance on financial distress of companies in the financial sector. Several key variables included to measure the corporate governance such as board size, board gender diversification, frequency of board meetings, audit quality, board member remuneration, CEO duality, education level of the board members, and board independence. As control variables firm size, profitability, and financial leverage are considered. Financial distress is operationalized through the measures of institutions negative profit, cash flow, or worth for three consecutive years. Data from 54 listed financial institutions in Sri Lanka were collected from 2017 to 2022. Descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, corporate governance comparison model, and regression analysis were employed for data analysis. The findings indicate that board size, board gender diversification, frequency of board meetings, higher audit quality, education level of the board, board independence, and return on equity have a significant negative impact on financial distress. These findings can help identify at-risk financial institutions, support decision-making for investors and stakeholders, guide the implementation of corporate governance policies, and inform policymakers in developing new governance policies.

Keywords: *Corporate Governance, Code of Best Practice, Financial Distress*

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Do Exchange Rate and Inflation Impact Foreign Portfolio Inflows of Colombo Stock Exchange? An Analysis under Covid-19 Pandemic

Dissanayake, D. A. S. D.¹ and Gunasekara, A. L.²

The purpose of this research is to examine whether the foreign exchange rate, inflation, and COVID-19 impact Foreign Portfolio Inflows to the Colombo Stock Exchange Sri Lanka. This Study uses secondary monthly time series data from 2015 to 2022. The independent variables of this study are changes in exchange rate, change in inflation and the COVID-19 dummy variable. The dependent variable is the change in Foreign Portfolio Inflows (FPI). The VAR model and Granger-Causality test are applied to test the relationship between inflation, exchange rate, COVID-19 and FPI. The VAR model shows that COVID-19, exchange rate and inflation have a no significant impact on current change in FPI. Granger Causality Test show that there is a one-way relationship between Inflation and the current change in FPI. This study concludes that the exchange rate does not impact current change in FPI and the impact stems from inflation on FPI is weak. This study is one of the first attempts to investigate whether the exchange rate, Inflation rate, and covid-19 impact Foreign Portfolio Inflows in Sri Lanka under Covid-19. Future research is needed to examine the relationship using other variables like oil price, domestic institutional investment, GDP, etc.

Keywords: *Covid-19, Exchange Rate, Foreign Portfolio Investment, Inflation Rate*

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Effect of Micro Finance Services on Growth of Micro Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) in Service Sector Operating in Colombo District

Liyanage, G. S. D.¹ and Liyanage, C. J.²

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have been highlighted as a key strategic sector in Sri Lanka because MSMEs play a major role in economic development. The objective of the study is to investigate whether Microfinance services impact the growth of micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs) in the Service Sector operating in the Colombo district. Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the service sector operating in the Colombo district are the population. A sample of 250 MSMEs were selected using the convenient sampling method and the data were collected through structured questionnaires. Independent variable of the study is Micro-finance Services which is determined by Micro-credit, Micro-saving, and Micro-insurance. The dependent variable is Growth of MSME's.

The results found that there is a positive relationship between Micro-credit, Micro-savings, and Micro-insurance services with the growth of MSMEs in the Service Sector Colombo District. Further, Micro-savings have been the most contributory factor and Micro-insurance services were the least contributory factor for the firm's growth. Based on the survey data, the author has developed a multiple regression model. The study recommended that the government should further promote micro-financial services to develop the MSMEs in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Growth of MSMEs, Sri Lanka, Micro credit, Micro Insurance Services, Micro savings*

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Enterprise Risk Management Practices and Financial Performance of Apparel Industry in Sri Lanka

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The apparel industry plays an important role in the Sri Lankan economy. However, based on the previous literature apparel factories continuously face many internal and external risks and business recessions that affect their performance. Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to identify the impact between enterprises' risk management practices and a firm's financial performance. To achieve the said objective, researchers conducted a questionnaire-based survey of 167 managers involved in enterprise risk management in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka applying a simple random sampling method. This study is quantitative research that adopts ontological and positivist research philosophy. The Statistical analysis has been done through correlation coefficient analysis with the SPSS software. Results found that small apparel factories' risk management systems turned out to be relatively weak and informal. Further, firm size and management attitude toward risk have been shown to significantly impact enterprises' risk management practices and company financial performance. The findings confirmed a strong positive correlation between risk management practices and financial performance in the Sri Lankan apparel sector.

Keywords: *Apparel Industry, Enterprise Risk Management, Financial Performance, Firm Size, Management Attitude*

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Impact of Green Investment on Firm Performance: Evidence from Listed Manufacturing Firms in Sri Lanka

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of green investment on the performance of manufacturing companies in Sri Lanka. This research is motivated by the recognition of the substantial environmental impact stemming from contemporary human activities, with manufacturing companies being significant contributors to environmental pollution through their production operations. Three facets of green investment have been identified within the context, encompassing investments in renewable technologies, targeted adoption of energy-efficient technologies, and investments directed towards recyclable and sustainable materials. The manufacturing companies in Sri Lanka are the population of the study. Manufacturing firms that are listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange have been taken as the sample of the study. The annual reports of selected manufacturing companies were referred to collect data on green investments and the performance of the companies. The data collected was subjected to analysis using the STATA software to ascertain the impact of the selected variables on firm performance. The study findings indicate that selected energy-efficient technologies and investments in renewable technologies have a discernible impact on firm performance. However, it was observed that investments in recyclable and sustainable materials do not exert a statistically significant influence on firm performance. Therefore, the results of this study imply to the practitioners that more investment in renewable technology and energy-efficient technologies enhances the performance of the firm.

Keywords: *Green Investments, Firm Performance, Energy- Efficient Technologies, Recyclable & Sustainable, Renewable Technologies*

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Sustainable Development in Sri Lankan Banks: A Non-Financial Disclosure Analysis

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Many scholars in other countries have studied the bank's contribution toward sustainable development Goals (SDGs) but not much yet in Sri Lankan Context. This study aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion about Sri Lankan bank contribution toward SDGs. A score is derived from four variables using the literature such as business model, ownership, integrated reporting, and stock market listing to identify the Sri Lankan banks' contribution to the SDGs and the extent of reporting about SDGs. The information mentioned by the banks about sustainable development in the non-financial reports has been considered through manual content analysis using the 16 banks over the period of three years. The results of the study revealed that banks are paying more attention to SDGs that more benefit the business. Different approaches of banks to SDGs can be seen. The study's findings confirm that there are differences in the attitudes of the banks toward the SDGs. Integrated reporting affects changes in the contribution of banks and business models, ownership, and stock market listing have less impact. This study is useful for bank managers and decision-makers to develop policies to support organizations in contributing to the SDGs and for taking strategic advantage to implementing the SDGs.

Keywords: *Non-financial Disclosure, SDG Reporting, Sustainable Development Goals, Sri Lankan Banks, 2030 Agenda*

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Audit Quality and Earnings Management: Evidence from Food & Beverage and Hotel Sectors of Sri Lanka

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The company's earnings are crucial for investors' decision-making since they provide emblems about value-creating ability. However, with the possibility of manipulating earnings, the whole purpose of financial reporting becomes valueless. External auditing can be identified as one of the control mechanisms that minimizes earnings management. This study examines the impact of audit quality on earnings management in the food and beverage sector and hotel companies in the Colombo Stock Exchange from 2013 to 2019. The real earnings management approach and total accruals are used to measure the earnings quality, while audit firm size, presence of the audit committee, frequency of the audit committee meetings and audit timeliness are the audit quality proxies. The study used regression analysis as the main analysis tool, and the findings reveal the existence of earnings management in the food and beverage and hotel sectors. Interestingly, audit quality does not significantly impact earnings management in the food and beverage sector, while it can be identified as impacting earnings management in the hotel sector. Moreover, the size of a company and its leverage also significantly impact earnings management in both sectors. These findings suggest that effective regulation and monitoring are necessary to improve audit quality for both sectors, especially in the hotel sector companies in Sri Lanka. Hence, enhancing audit quality would minimize earnings management and improve earnings quality, which is instrumental to the decision-makers, especially investors and creditors. Henceforth, we suggest improving the audit quality in the food and beverage and hotel sectors and enhancing disclosure requirements such as research and development expenses, audit time, and non-audit service.

Keywords: *Audit Size, Real Earnings Management, Total Accruals*

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Enhancing Paddy Crop Quality through Object Detection Techniques

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Rice is a crucial staple crop globally, providing over half of humanity's caloric intake. It supports the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and landless laborers worldwide. With the growing population, there is a high demand for rice production. Sri Lanka is renowned for its high-quality rice and has a long history of paddy cultivation. However, not all the country's 708,000 hectares of land dedicated to paddy cultivation are utilized due to water scarcity and unstable terrain. The objective of this project is to enhance the quality of the paddy crop during its vegetative phase by early identification of diseases through the utilization of emerging technologies. The vegetative phase constitutes a critical stage in the growth of paddy, exerting significant influence on the overall yield, resistance to pests and diseases, nutrient assimilation, and the environmental implications of agricultural practices. The primary emphasis of this project is to identify diseases to which paddy crops are susceptible during the vegetative phase and subsequently present a visual representation of their locations on a map, serving as the output for end-users. Early identification of paddy diseases is crucial for effective crop management and high yields. These diseases, caused by different pathogens, can significantly hinder plant growth and productivity if not detected and treated promptly. Identifying them early allows farmers and experts to take timely and targeted actions, like applying suitable fungicides or implementing cultural practices, to control their spread and minimize crop damage.

Keywords: *Machine Learning, Object Detection, Web Development, YOLO v8, Diseases, Paddy Cultivation*

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Impact of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) Factors and Trust on User Satisfaction of m-health Application Users in Colombo District

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m-health, a technical progression of e-health, evolved with the rapid growth of digital healthcare platforms, healthcare-related mobile advancements, and the internet to serve its consumers in many ways. In developing countries, most consumers use m-health apps simply to channel doctors, order medicine, and perform other basic tasks. So, this study aims to discover the factors that influence the user satisfaction of Sri Lankan m-health application users to provide a clear rationale to m-health service providers m-health users. While this research follows a deductive, cross-sectional survey strategy-based research methodology, primary data sources are used in this study. First, this study will identify three possible factors (Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, and Trust) that influence the User Satisfaction of m-health application users. Then the researcher collected responses from 316 respondents by sending an online questionnaire to a sample size of 384 potential respondents. The analyzed data of this study indicated that all measures employed to measure the independent and dependent variables (PEoU, PU, Trust, and User Satisfaction) are reliable and that there are significant positive relationships between all independent and dependent variables. This research will help m-health service providers understand client expectations by providing clear conclusions. It will help them maintain and attract more users. This also gives current m-health app users a rationale to negotiate with their service providers, allowing them to demand more. Instead, future researchers can use this study's knowledge base and limitations to conduct more research.

Keywords: *Mobile health (m-health), Perceived Ease of Use (PEoU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), Trust, User Satisfaction*

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Usability and Responsiveness of Chatbots on User Satisfaction and Continuance Intention of Generation Z in Sri Lanka

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Artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots have gained a lot of attention over the past years. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of chatbot adoption, user experience, and user satisfaction on the use of chatbots. Based on a comprehensive review of literature, a conceptual model was developed to answer the research questions of the study and it was tested using 125 responses collected from an online questionnaire. The quantitative approach was used in this study. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4. Findings revealed a significant positive effect of user satisfaction on continuance intention. Further, it revealed that perceived intrinsic values have a significant positive impact on user satisfaction compared to perceived extrinsic values. Usability had a more significant impact on perceived intrinsic values than responsiveness. But when it comes to perceived extrinsic values, responsiveness had a significant impact. The findings of this study provided important implications for business managers in planning appropriate strategies to get the maximum out of chatbots. Finally, the findings of this study highlighted the directions for future research. Future research could utilize the model developed in this study to deepen the knowledge in this context.

Keywords: *AI Chatbots, Continuance Intention, User Satisfaction*

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Managerial Mindfulness and Business Model Innovation as Antidotes to SMEs' Survive and Growth: Conceptual Model and Scale Development

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In the dynamic business environment, the notions of business model (BM) and business model innovation (BMI) have received considerable attention in industry and academia. Coupled with reduced consumer demand and supply restraints due to the rapid spread of the coronavirus, it is no surprise that many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are experiencing challenging times. Under challenging and stressful conditions, mindfulness plays a prominent role. However, mindfulness is primarily observed as an individual's psychological state, thus scholars have begun to study collective mindfulness, particularly focusing on managerial mindfulness. It is worthwhile to argue that BMI processes of SMEs can be supplementary facilitated by owners'/managers' mindful behaviors. On these notes, backed by previous works, this study provides a first attempt to develop a hypothesized model connecting managerial mindfulness, BMI and SMEs survive and growth. Subsequently, in scale development process, an initial item pool was established, and face validity of the modified measures have been tested using expert judging method. A logical next step would be to collect data and test the scales for overall construct validity as well as provide a statistical view on how managerial mindful behaviors can drive to adopt BM tools to support SMEs survive and sustain continued growth.

Keywords: *Attention-Based View, Business Model Innovation, Face Validity
Managerial Mindfulness, Measurement Scale*

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Important Factors of Influencer Marketing and Brand Awareness for Female Start Up in Sri Lanka

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Influencer marketing has recently grown popular. Influencers have devoted fan audiences that rely on their product judgment and back them through their recommendations. This study was carried out to determine whether influencer marketing effects customer purchasing behavior and brand awareness of female start-up enterprises considering the growing number of new businesses in Sri Lanka. The study uses five influencer marketing factors: influencer identification, skill, content attractiveness, online presence, and influencer marketing on various platforms. The study, which employed a quantitative research methodology, found that each of the five characteristics has a modest to moderately positive link with the others and that all five are crucial to customers. Only three, nevertheless, have a substantial effect on raising the visibility and reputation of start-up companies: Influencer identification, influencer expertise, and influencer online presence. Future researchers can extend the area of study by including both male and female startup businesses.

Keywords: Brand Awareness, Female Startup Business, Influencer Marketing

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**Impact of Women Entrepreneurs on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Strategies for Economic Resilience:
A Case Study of Welimada, Sri Lanka**

Nissanka, N. M. S. U.¹

This study explores the experiences and perspectives of women entrepreneurs in Welimada, Sri Lanka, with a particular focus on the impact of economic crises on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and survival strategies. It delves into the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, their journey to entrepreneurship, and their recommendations for empowerment and resilience. Through qualitative research methods, including interviews with women entrepreneurs affiliated with the Small and Enterprise Development (SED) division in Welimada, the study unveils valuable insights. These insights emphasize the critical role of early exposure, education, and support programs in shaping women's entrepreneurial endeavors. Furthermore, they shed light on the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs during economic crises and the strategies employed to overcome these challenges. The study's recommendations encompass a spectrum of interventions, including crisis preparedness workshops, access to financial resources, collaborative networks, diversification, access to market information, and government support programs. Drawing from existing literature and best practices, these recommendations aim to empower women entrepreneurs, enhance their financial literacy, and fortify their businesses against economic uncertainties. Ultimately, this research underscores the pivotal role of women entrepreneurs in SME growth and economic resilience within the Welimada region. It advocates for gender-inclusive entrepreneurship to drive economic development, improve income distribution, and advance gender equality. The study's findings and recommendations serve as a roadmap for stakeholders, policymakers, and support organizations to empower women entrepreneurs and foster economic growth in Welimada, Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Economic Crises, Resilience, SMEs, Women Entrepreneurs*

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An Analysis of the Obstructive Factors that Impact the Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka

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The sector of small and medium enterprises is considered an encouraging platform for the economic empowerment of women through participating in economic development as entrepreneurs. The lower productivity exhibited by these SMEs in Sri Lanka was identified because of the high participation rate of female entrepreneurs in the informal economy. An unfavorable environment has been created obstructing the transition of women entrepreneurs towards the upper echelon of the business world through diverse impediments. Thus, the research focused on exploring the barriers that hinder the business growth of women entrepreneurs in small and medium-scale enterprises. Accordingly, the research was conducted as secondary research. Since this research encompasses the areas of gender, entrepreneurship and international trade, feminist theories, entrepreneurship theories and internationalization theories were applied in developing the analysis. Based on these theories, the factors which directly and indirectly influence the growth of women-owned small and medium-scale enterprises were explored and discussed. In Sri Lanka, a minor percentage of female participation in small and medium enterprises occurs due to limited access to financial resources, lack of financial literacy, social prejudices, social and cultural restrictions, and limited opportunities for networking and communicating with external resources. Thus, closing the gender gap in education, giving access to capital through a concerted policy action and providing women entrepreneurs with opportunities to improve their financial literacy and educational level were highlighted as the major recommendations in the study to empower women entrepreneurs to climb the value chain. Women entrepreneurs in small and medium-scale enterprises need to be facilitated with greater access to the domestic, regional, and international markets to enable them to expand their businesses with productivity and innovation. Thus, vital policy measures should be taken to mitigate the barriers involved in formalizing the business mechanisms while focusing on increasing the benefits that women entrepreneurs can gain through that standardizing process.

Keywords: *Empowerment, Obstacles, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Women Entrepreneur*

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Entrepreneurial Orientation and Innovation: New Conceptual Framework for Resilience of Small and Medium Enterprises

Dilroshan, T. L. C.¹, Herath, H. M. T. S.² and Madurapperuma, W.³

SMEs make a significant contribution to the economy of any country. However, they are not able to maintain their resilience due to adverse conditions in the environment. Although several theoretical approaches have been utilized to understand how to achieve organizational resilience, they have not been able to provide adequate and comprehensive explanations. Empirical evidence answering this problem is also rare. Thus, the main purpose of this paper is to propose a new conceptual framework to look at the puzzle from the lenses of resource-based view theory and dynamic capabilities theory. It is proposed to look at how entrepreneurial orientation as a strategic resource enhances organizational resilience in SMEs directly and indirectly through innovation which is identified as a dynamic capability. Theoretical background justifies the identification of concepts for the framework. Ten propositions are formulated based on the empirical evidence of past studies. As implications, this study will provide a starting point to develop a more applicable model to enhance resilience of SMEs. The execution of this framework will add new theoretical and empirical knowledge and offer practical implications for SME managers, practitioners, and society. Lack of empirical evidence is pointed out as a main reason for limitations.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Orientation, Innovation, Organizational Resilience, Small and Medium Enterprises*

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Undergraduates' Perception of Entrepreneurship Education: A Study Based on the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Ranwala, R.¹, Nimeshi, G. K. S.² and Sarathchandra, K. S. H.³

Entrepreneurship education plays a pivotal role in fostering aspiring entrepreneurs and driving economic growth. Entrepreneurs significantly contribute to wealth creation and job opportunities, making entrepreneurship knowledge and skills essential for sustainable economic development. This study examines the perception of undergraduates towards entrepreneurship education and explores the reasons behind their decision not to pursue a specialized degree in entrepreneurship. Employing an exploratory design model and a qualitative research approach, the study utilizes in-person interviews conducted in an unstructured format to collect data. The research was conducted at the University of Kelaniya, employing purposive-homogeneous sampling for participant selection. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the gathered data. The study reveals that undergraduates perceive entrepreneurship education as a '*promising subject stream*', a '*social inclination*', and a '*theoretical discipline*'. Moreover, reasons for not choosing entrepreneurship education include concerns related to '*future career goals*' and '*limited awareness*'. The study's findings are expected to contribute to further research in entrepreneurship education and offer valuable insights for Sri Lankan universities and higher learning institutions to enhance their entrepreneurship education curricula and practices.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship Education, Qualitative, Sri Lanka, Undergraduates, University of Kelaniya*

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Impact of Virtual Supplier Auditing on Mitigating Sourcing Risk: Case of Fonterra Brands Lanka

Warnakulasuriya, J. K. S.¹ and Herath, R. P.²

The worldwide pandemic scenario has changed how operations are carried out and restricted travel, which has brought focus to virtual supplier auditing. At the same time, Fonterra Brands Lanka came up with the innovative idea of conducting their supplier audits on virtual platforms. The new process had been tested in 2021, but there was resistance to change based on the risk of sourcing that has been audited virtually as opposed to physically. Accordingly, this research is conducted to identify the impact that virtual supplier auditing has on sourcing risk. The research is carried out in quantitative methodology to gather data on the overall view of the majority staff members on the means of mitigating sourcing risk when suppliers are been audited virtually. The results of the study reveal that the effective preparation, encompassing factors such as the careful assembly of the audit team, the development of well-structured audit schedules, utilization of checklists, and seeking guidance from experts, can serve to alleviate the sourcing risk. Further, the virtual supplier audit is a more effective method in both monetary and time-saving aspects if it is practiced while maintaining standards.

Keywords: *Supply Chain Efficiency, Sourcing Risk, Virtual supplier Audits*

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Impact of Value Chain Development on Customer Satisfaction in Fast-moving Consumer Goods Industry: Evidence from Sri Lanka

Ruwanpathirana, S. H.¹ and Bandara, S.²

The objective of this study is to identify the current situation, relationship, and the impact of value chain development on customer satisfaction in the fast-moving consumer goods industry in the Colombo District, Sri Lanka. Some studies have examined the impact of value chain development on various products and production processes, but not specifically on FMCG industry of Sri Lanka and in relation to customer satisfaction. This study attempts to fill the research gap by bringing together four main components of value chain development; channel management, production capacity, competitive pricing, financial benefit which affects customer satisfaction in FMCG products. A deductive research approach is carried out in the study using both primary and secondary data. The primary data has been collected through an online questionnaire which was distributed among 100 FMCG customers in the Colombo district. The data has been statistically analyzed using the SPSS statistical analysis tool to find the reliability, correlation, and linear regression as the output. The results of the study show that there is a significant positive relationship between the value chain and customer satisfaction. Value chain comprises of four sub independent variables such as channel management, production capacity, competitive pricing and financial benefit which have a positive relationship with the customer satisfaction on FMCG products which was derived through the correlation analysis.

Keywords: *Channel Management, Competitive Pricing, Fast-moving Consumer Goods, Financial Benefit, Production Capacity*

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Influence of Performance-prove Goal Orientation on Knowledge Hiding among Undergraduates in Sri Lankan Universities

Sabnam, R.¹ and Mayuran, L.²

Knowledge hiding is ubiquitous among graduate students, which impedes knowledge sharing and transfer, and influences knowledge learning and scientific research. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, Sri Lanka is also not the exception to the worldwide phenomenon of knowledge hiding which is yet to be explored in more detail. This study, which draws from 200 Sri Lankan undergraduates, emphasizes that performance prove goal orientation directly influences knowledge hiding. Furthermore, the findings of this study imply that undergraduates who focus on group feedback will also have a high level of knowledge hiding when a high level of performance proves goal orientation. Accordingly, it is also concluded that undergraduates who focus on individual feedback will not have a high level of knowledge hiding when a high level of performance proves goal orientation. The study also highlights the insights that motivate the student in such a way as to enhance the knowledge-sharing behavior and practice among the students.

Keywords: *Group Focus Feedback, Individual Focus Feedback, Knowledge Hiding, Performance-prove Goal Orientation*

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Pushed or Pulled? Motivation of Sri Lankans to Become Gig Workers

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The gig economy is expanding with more workers joining digital labor platforms globally. Gig work has become popular in Sri Lanka as well, especially during the recent past. Since the gig economy is still a relatively new concept in Sri Lanka, the area is understudied. Hence, the objective of this research is to examine what motivates Sri Lankans to become gig workers. We use push-pull theory as the theoretical lens of the study. Based on qualitative research methodology under the interpretive research paradigm, 22 gig workers from various backgrounds were interviewed in person to identify their motives and experiences with web-based digital labor platforms. This study found four important reasons for Sri Lankans to choose gig work, 1) pursuit of passion 2) pursuit of money (earning in foreign currency, gaining financial independence and an additional source of income), 3) pursuit of agency and 4) pursuit of developmental opportunities. While the motivation for participants to join gig work was mainly identified as pull motivation, in some instances it was identified that the participants were also pushed to join gig work.

Keywords: *Digital Labor Platforms, Gig Work, Pull Factors, Push Factors*

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Flexible Working Arrangement and Job Performance: Mediating Role of Supervisor Support

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The IT industry is important in the Sri Lankan economy and has become Sri Lanka's large industry. With the current situation in the country, Organizations have not been able to achieve the expected performance from the employees. Therefore, the organization has yet to be able to achieve the expected target. Due to this, they are thinking about the good of the employees and organization and tending towards flexible working arrangements. But using flexible working arrangements has sometimes not achieved the expected employee performance. This has become a significant problem in organizations. Therefore, the main objective of this study was to assess the Flexible Working Arrangement and Job Performance in the Mediating Role of Supervisor Support. Further, this study emphasized finding solutions to improve flexible working arrangements to get expected employee job performance with supervisor support. Job Performance was the dependent variable, Flexible Working Arrangements was the independent variable, and Supervisor Support was the mediator variable in the study. This was conducted as a cross-sectional, quantitative field study among a sample of 152 executives & above career selected from two (03) main IT Companies in the Colombo district. The study was conducted using a simple random sampling method, and the unit of analysis was individual level. A standard measurement scale was used to collect primary data, which was developed by using five points Likert scale and seven points Likert scale. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient, and simple regression were applied to analyze data using SPSS. The findings revealed a moderately positive relationship between flexible working arrangements and job performance. Furthermore, flexible working arrangements have a significant impact on job performance, and accordingly, supervisor support has not depicted a significant mediation impact.

Keywords: *Flexible Working Arrangements, Job Performance, Supervisor Support*

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Impact of Employee Qualification on Career Development of Employees with Mediating Role of Employee Job Performance at ABC Banking (Pvt) Limited

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The purpose of this research is to identify the impact of Employee qualification on the career development of Employees with mediating role of employee job performance at ABC Banking (Pvt) Ltd. Enhancing an employee's career allows organizations to develop employees' career development that is compatible with their interests, needs, and goals. Previous research has devoted little attention to the study on employee career development, which has created a performance gap. In addition, this study intends to fill the knowledge gap by looking into the relationship between employee qualification, career development, and employee qualification. This study was conducted with 200 randomly selected ABC Banking (Pvt) Ltd employees, primarily using a deductive approach. An online questionnaire was used to collect primary data by adapting a standard measurement scale. SPSS was used to analyze the data, and reliability and validity statistics were used to analyze the scale's internal consistency and reliability. Advanced hypotheses were also tested using correlation and regression analysis, as well as the Sobel test used for the mediating effects. According to the study's findings, employee qualification significantly impacts career development, with employee job performance as a mediator. As a result, it is recommended that ABC Banking (Pvt) Ltd employees seek to improve their qualifications, which leads to improved performance and, as a result, career development has been achieved

Keywords: *Career Development, Employee Qualification, Employee Job Performance*

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Work Culture and Employee Well-Being: Mediating Effect of Work-life Balance

Peiris, D. P. M. S. M.¹ and Wanigasekara, W. M. S. K.²

Globally, firms' top priorities now include improving workplace cultures and putting a strong emphasis on employee well-being. Previous research suggests that improving workplace cultures can impact employee well-being. However, less studies have been conducted on whether work-life balance (WLB) mediates the relationship between workplace culture (temporal flexibility, operational flexibility, and supervisor support) and employee well-being. Drawing on the importance, the study's main objective was to investigate the mediating effects of WLB on the relationship between workplace culture and employee well-being. The study is a quantitative and survey method was used to collect data from middle-level employees at private banks, and the sample includes 130 employees of private banks in the Puttalam District. Linear regression was used to measure the direct effects of the hypothesized relationships. The Sobel test and Baron & Kenny mediation analysis were used to measure the indirect effects of the hypothesized relationship. The results show that WLB partially mediates the relationship between temporal flexibility, operational flexibility, and employees' well-being. While WLB fully mediates the relationship between supervisor support and employees' well-being. So, it is recommended for managers to build a culture in line with the WLB of employees, mainly by providing WLB policies that will ultimately enhance the general welfare.

Keywords: *Employee Well-Being, Temporal Flexibility, Work Culture, Work-Life Balance*

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Impact of Employees' Perceptions of Organizational Downsizing Practices on Employee Commitment

Erandika, M. D. K.¹ and Ranasinghe, V. R.²

Sri Lanka is currently experiencing its worst financial crisis in decades. The building construction industry can be cited as one of the leading industries affected by this situation in Sri Lanka. This study examined whether employees' perceptions of organizational downsizing practices impact their commitment. This was carried out as a cross-sectional field study among a sample of 204 employees in three already downsized construction firms in the Colombo District, Sri Lanka. Simple random sampling technique was applied to select the sample. Data were collected via distributing an online standard questionnaire. SPSS version 23.0 was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and simple regression were performed to analyze data. When analyzing data, the researcher identified those employees' perceptions of their organizations' downsizing practices have a significant positive effect on their level of commitment. Moreover, the researcher found a significant positive impact of employees' perceptions of downsizing on employees' affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Maintaining effective communication before, during, and after the downsizing process is recommended.

Keywords: *Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Employee Commitment, Normative Commitment, Organizational Downsizing*

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Impact of Organizational Cynicism on Organizational Commitment and Mediating Role of Job Embeddedness: Evidence from ABC Military Organization

De Silva, A. M. D. A.¹ and Buddhika, H. J. R.²

The concept of organizational cynicism in the workplace is characterized by frustration and disillusionment as well as negative feelings toward and distrust of a person, group, social convention, or institution. The effects of organizational cynicism were reported as a lack of organizational commitment and citizenship. Also, previous research has shown that cynicism reduces organizational commitment. The basic objective of this study is to assess the mediating impact of job embeddedness on the relationship between organizational cynicism and organizational commitment of officers in ABC Military organization and the specific objectives were derived to support the basic objective. The underpinning theory of social exchange theory was able to validate the relationship between organizational cynicism, organizational commitment, and job embeddedness. The study is cross-sectional, and the sample selection is based on stratified random sampling. Data collection is based on a self-administered structured questionnaire. The study findings revealed that there is a negative impact of organizational cynicism on organizational commitment, the negative impact of organizational cynicism on job embeddedness, and the positive impact of job embeddedness on organizational commitment. As the implication of the study, focused on the ABC Military organization observing how organizational cynicism changes the negative behavior of their officers towards commitment.

Keywords: *Organizational Commitment, Organizational Cynicism, Job Embeddedness*

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Impact of High-Performance Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Engagement on Role Performance: With Reference to Non-Academic Staff of State Universities in Sri Lanka

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A well-established administrative system such as a High-Performance Human Resource Management Practice (HPHRMP) is needed to achieve the expected performance in handling human resources and administrative tasks. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of HPHRMP on employee role performance through employee engagement among non-academic staff in state Universities, in Sri Lanka. To achieve this purpose, data were collected using a structured questionnaire from a sample of 334 non-academic staff from the state universities in Sri Lanka. The sample was selected using the stratified random sampling method, and data collection was limited to one point in time. To test the hypotheses, the hierarchical linear regression and Sobel test were used to analyze the mediation hypothesis. Supporting our hypotheses, the results of this study showed that HPHRMP has a direct impact on role performance. In addition, the results of the mediation analysis showed that HPHRMP influences employee role performance through employee engagement. These findings are comparable with previous research, and the findings contribute to enhancing the resourced-based theory including psychological resources such as expertise, promotion and opportunities for human resources, healthy working climate, and leadership skills causing more engagement among the employees. The practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: *Employee Engagement, High Performing Human Resource Management Practices, Non-academic Staff, Resource-based Theory*

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Effectiveness of Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Students' Perspective

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The Covid-19 pandemic brought a significant shift in higher education, leading to the rapid adoption of exclusively online learning methods in Sri Lanka's state universities. Prior to the pandemic, E-learning was not extensively utilized in these institutions, with most bachelor's degree programs relying on traditional face-to-face lecturing and physical interactions. However, with the emergence of quarantine measures and lockdowns to curb the virus's spread, universities had to prioritize E-learning to continue academic activities. This research aims to explore students' perspectives on the online learning experience in Sri Lankan state universities during the pandemic. This study seeks to understand students' perceptions of the management of knowledge delivery, the effectiveness of learning and assimilating information, and the use of E-learning platforms in the context of exclusively online education. This study is based on the quantitative research method and data were collected using an online survey method. Further, we collected data from 386 undergraduates in seven state universities, Sri Lanka and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. By examining students' viewpoints, this research endeavors to provide valuable insights that can guide educational institutions in enhancing their online learning strategies and meeting the evolving needs of students.

Keywords: *E-learning Platform, Knowledge Delivery, Learning and Assimilating Information, Online Teaching and Learning*

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Impact of Implementing Talent Management Practices on Sustainable Employee Performance

(With Special Reference to Executive-Level Employees in Selected Apparel Companies in Wathupitiwala Export Processing Zone – Sri Lanka)

Peiris, J. M. P. M.¹ and Senadheera, S. P. D. M.²

In today's dynamic business environment, creating a pool of talented employees has been considered a source of competitive advantage, whereas talent management is the backbone of the human resource management (HRM) field. The present study aims to fill the existing research gap by examining the impact of implementing talent management practices on sustainable employee performance with special reference to executive-level employees in selected apparel companies in the Wathupitiwala export processing zone – Sri Lanka. There were very few studies conducted on this area theoretically and empirically. Thus, the researcher focused on filling this void by conducting this study to add knowledge in the areas of implementing talent management practices and sustainable employee performance. However, in the current context, there was a substantial influence of learning, development, and career management on sustainable employee performance. This study employed a cross-sectional design and quantitative approach, and the study was conducted on a sample of 132 executive employees. The data was mainly analyzed using the analytical software SPSS version 26, which provided more meaning and validated results. The findings reveal that implementing talent management practices has a significant positive impact on sustainable employee performance. According to the study's findings, HR experts in the Sri Lankan apparel sector place a high value on talent retention to improve sustainable employee performance. This study might reflect the evolution of apparel companies and human resource strategists attempting to establish a talent management philosophy. Thus, the study's conclusion supported the idea that implementing talent management is beneficial as it fosters sustainable employee performance.

Keywords: *Apparel Industry, Sustainable Employee Performance, Talent Management*

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Impact of Work-life Balance on Happiness with Mediating Effect of Work Stress: Evidence from Hotline Maintenance Employees Related to Power Sector Organizations in Sri Lanka

Kankanamge, D. R. H.¹ and Wanigasekara, W. M. S. K.²

Maintaining hotlines is crucial to employees who work in power sector organizations. This research study therefore aimed to investigate the empirical gap related to work-life balance and happiness of hotline maintenance workers with mediating effect of their work stress. Based on survey research design, we collected data from 235 employees using a questionnaire and analyzed. Study results indicate that work-life balance positively impacts on employee happiness and negatively impact on work stress. Further, work stress has a negative impact on employee happiness. Finally, the results revealed that work stress negatively mediates the relationship between work-life balance and happiness of hotline maintenance workers. The findings provide employees of power sector organizations with valuable recommendations and directions on managing employee work-life balance, happiness, and work stress.

Keywords: *Happiness, Hotline Maintenance Employees, Work-Life Balance, Work Stress*

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Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction: Evidence from Executive Level Employees in Apparel Industry in Kandy, Sri Lanka

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Emotional Intelligence (EI) and job satisfaction play pivotal roles in shaping both the personal and professional lives of employees. However, empirical research on the impact EI and job satisfaction, particularly within the Sri Lankan context, remains limited. This study aims to investigate how emotional intelligence impact on job satisfaction of executive level employees in listed apparel firms located in the Kandy area of Sri Lanka. Employing a quantitative research approach, data were collected through self-administered questionnaires distributed to 100 executive level employees using a convenient sampling technique. The data was analyzed utilizing descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis. The findings reveal a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Specifically, two variables defining emotional intelligence namely self-emotion appraisal and others' emotion appraisal, demonstrate significant impacts on job satisfaction within the selected apparel companies. Based on these findings, the researcher suggests that companies take necessary steps to enhance emotional intelligence among their employees to foster a more satisfying work environment.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Apparel Industry*

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Impact of Employee Behavior on Energy Conservation: Evidence from a Leading Tire Manufacturing Company in Sri Lanka

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This study investigates the significant role of energy consumption within the Sri Lankan manufacturing sector and its implications for the country's overall energy landscape. Specifically, the research aims to assess the influence of employee behavior on energy conservation in the tire manufacturing industry. To achieve this, the current quantitative & explanatory study incorporates four key independent variables: attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and performance shaping factors, all embedded within a well-defined conceptual framework. These variables were thoughtfully selected to comprehend their collective impact on how workers perceive and engage in energy conservation practices at their workplace. The sample consists of 300 employees randomly selected from a leading tire manufacturing company, ensuring a thorough examination of the factors that shape energy-saving behaviors within the industry. To gauge the measurement accuracy of the chosen variables concerning perceived energy conservation, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed. The primary objective of employing multiple linear regression analysis was to establish a model that captures the linear relationship between the explanatory (independent) variables and the response (dependent) variables. The study's findings underscore that all the independent variables under investigation significantly influence how employees within the tire manufacturing industry perceive the importance of energy conservation. Remarkably, attitude was identified as the most influential variable in this context. This outcome underscores the critical importance of cultivating a sustainable workplace energy-saving culture by fostering positive attitudes toward energy conservation among employees.

Keywords: *Employee Behavior, Energy Conservation, Performance Shaping Factors, Tire Manufacturing Industry*

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Impact of Personal Loans on Well-being of the Officers of Sri Lanka Air Force

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Personal loans are a well-known borrowing option for short-term or emergency financial requirements. This research addresses a significant research gap by examining the impact of personal loans on military personnel's well-being with reference to Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) officers. Further, the study has explored the moderate impact of perceived financial knowledge and the spouse's employment on the relationship between independent and dependent variables. This study was conducted as a cross-sectional, quantitative field study. The primary data was collected from a sample of 317 officers using a standard questionnaire via online and printed forms. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Findings revealed a positive impact of personal loans on officers' well-being. Further, perceived financial knowledge did not significantly moderate the impact of personal loans on well-being, but spouses' employment significantly moderated. These findings highlight the significance of personal loans on officers' well-being, the degree of intervention of perceived financial knowledge, and the employment of spouses as moderators. Hence, the findings will help SLAF Management to continue positive things, mitigate drawbacks in existing personal loan management and introduce new implications for further benefits for their officers and organization.

Keywords: *Perceived Financial Knowledge, Personal Loans, Well-being*

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Coping Responses for Workplace Stress by the Sri Lankan LGBTQ+ Community

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Lesbian, gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and other sexual minority (LGBTQ+) employees in Sri Lanka face workplace discrimination, as organizations lack adequate policies and practices to protect them from marginalization and vulnerability. Thus LGBTQ+ employees must work under pressure, and it affects their job satisfaction and performance. Sri Lankan LGBTQ+ studies are lacking due to challenges in finding respondents, overcoming social and cultural barriers, and gaining societal support. This study investigates the workplace stress of LGBTQ+ employees in Sri Lanka, focusing on their feelings and perceptions. It also examines coping strategies for overcoming workplace stress and the most common coping mechanisms for these employees. The research explored LGBTQ+ employees' experiences in Sri Lanka and potential solutions to workplace stress through a qualitative approach, interviewing eight respondents who experienced discrimination. The study findings revealed that LGBTQ+ employees are discriminated at the workplace through social exclusion, sexual harassment, and hostile work settings. The research identified nine coping strategies practiced by the Sri Lankan LGBTQ+ employees and highlighted the four most common strategies that were successful in the Sri Lankan context. The studies' findings provide significant insights for the organization's policymakers related to human resource management and scholars.

Keywords: *Coping Responses, Discrimination, LGBTQ+ Employees, Workplace Stress*

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Impact of Job Burnout on Psychological Ownership: Moderating Effect of Perceived Organizational Support

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Scholars and practitioners have emphasized the importance of ‘feelings of ownership’ for the organization. This study explores the impact of Job burnout on Psychological Ownership within employees in the ABC Department machine section and simultaneously examines the moderating effect of Perceived Organizational Support. This research sample consisted of 176 employees. The chosen sample was given printed copies of a self-administered (Sinhala-translated) survey. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were tested, consisting of 02 parts and 72 questions. Only data from the 121 employees (03 Outliers) who gave completed responses have been used for this research. The researcher applies Social Identity Theory to develop a new research framework with the sample of employees in the ABC Department machine section. This study found the positive effect of Job Burnout on Psychological Ownership. In addition, this study found there is no effect of Perceived Organizational Support on the relationship between Psychological Ownership and Job Burnout. These analytic results fill the research gap within the literature about the impact of Job Burnout on Psychological Ownership and the moderating effect of Perceived Organizational Support.

Keywords: *Job Burnout, Perceived Organizational Support, Psychological Ownership, Social Identity Theory*

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Determinants of Consumer Purchasing Intention for Residential Real Estate: Potential Middle-Income Buyers' Point of View in Colombo and Suburbs

Weerakkody, W. T. N.¹ and Bandara Wanninayake, W. M. C.²

The residential Real Estate Market within the Market Economy plays a significant role and has been taken into consideration for the purpose of this study. Consumer behavior and intention lead to demand, which the study has explored to derive enormous benefits. The study of the housing market has become vital since the decision to buy a house is complex and unique beyond goods and services. The data was analyzed using the quantitative technique and utilized 384 respondents as the sample size within the study area chosen, which is Colombo and suburbs. This paper focused on the behavior of middle-income potential buyers within the Real Property market under the selected attributes, for instance, Price, Legal Attributes and Amenities. The main objective of the research was to analyze the impact of these determinants. Data was analyzed using regression. According to the study, attributes including location, legal aspects, and services have a favorable influence on a consumer's purchasing intention whereas price increases have an unfavorable impact. However, the study indicates that affordability, a moderating variable, has a significant impact on consumer purchasing intention.

Keywords: *Consumer Purchasing Intention, Middle Income Buyers, Residential Real Property, Colombo Sri Lanka*

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Influence of Television Advertisement on Youth Buying Behavior: A Case Study of 'SMAK' Fruit Juice in Sri Lanka

Priyanthini, G.¹ and Abeyasekara, N.²

This study was undertaken to investigate the influence of television advertisement on youth buying behavior: A case study of 'SMAK' fruit juice in Sri Lanka. This study was focused on "How far TV advertisements impact on Youth buying behavior of SMAK fruit juice market in Sri Lanka?". The literature provided discusses the concept of advertising, television advertising and youth buying behavior. Information content, Celebrity, Music, and Eye Candy were identified as the independent variables and youth buying behavior as the dependent variable through the literature review. Data and methods: The researcher used a descriptive and explanatory research approach which describes and explains quantitatively the impact of television advertisements on youth buying behavior. Information was gathered from a sample of 384 young consumers based on non- probability sampling approach particularly convenient sampling technique and purposive sampling technique. Correlation analysis showed that there is a strong and positive relationship between information content, music and eye candy and youth buying behavior. Multiple regressions were also applied. The results were according to the expectation after theory examination, but information content and celebrity have an insignificant contribution to youth buying behavior. Music has the most significant impact on shaping the purchasing behavior of young people. Based on the result of this research it is recommended that effective television advertisement campaign which includes the predictors should be practiced attracting more young consumers and to gain competitive advantage against rivals. This research therefore adds a new dimension to the body of literature. They are demographic specificity, cognitive and emotional responses, and media engagement. These dimensions contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between television advertising and youth buying behavior, aiding researchers in their efforts to dissect this multifaceted phenomenon.

Keywords: *Advertising, Effective Television Advertisement, Youth Buying Behavior, Young Consumer*

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Impact of Consumer Perceived Value on Consumer Buying Intention for Value-for-Money Fashion Brands: Moderating Role of Age in Cambodian Market

Manarangi, K. T. A.¹, Dharmawardane, M. N. S. H.² and Dissanayake, D. M. R.³

Consumer behavior of different products and services is featured by market-based factors apart from the individual factors. The notion of customer perceived value and its influence on purchase behaviors has been examined by different authors with reference to diversified product scopes. However, research gaps have been found in terms of fashion sector buying behavior as it connects to contextual factors. Accordingly, this study addresses the purchasing intention related issues found in Cambodian market for value for money fashion brands depending on empirical and practice related issues. This study was based on a deductive method and quantitative research techniques were used to investigate the purchasing intention for value for money fashion brands in Cambodian market. This study employed convenient sampling techniques and distributed 450 questionnaires for the data collection process, but finally limited to 435 completed questionnaires for the analysis. It has analyzed the moderating effect of age for the same variable connections based on the research gaps claimed. Data was analyzed by using inferential statistical tools supported by SPSS-23 software. Results proved that different components of perceived value do have a significant effect on purchase intention towards value for money fashion brands in Cambodian market. The moderating role of age was also proved statistically. This paper highlights some managerial implications addressing market-related issues and practices.

Keywords: *Customer Perceived Values, Fashion Brands, Purchase Intention, Value for Money*

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Consumer Ethnocentrism in The Contemporary World: Literature Review

Mallikarachchi, M. C. K.¹ and Ambepitiya, K.²

This paper aims to provide an overview of the literature on consumer ethnocentrism. Along with demographic, social, cultural, and psychological factors, product features and other facilities also impact consumer behavior. The impact of many factors and problems on ethnocentrism is examined, and issues with the research's consistency in terms of definition and measurement are found. Investigating consumer ethnocentrism behavior locally and globally is essential in considering the literature. Future, study directions and a description of consumer ethnocentrism are suggested.

Keywords: *Consumerism, Consumer Characteristics, Demographical Antecedents, Social & Physiological Antecedents*

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Impact of Switching Barriers on Consumer Intention to Purchase Ecofriendly Products within Sri Lanka

Hewage, K. G. I.¹ and Ranaweera, H. R. A. T.²

The modern consumer is keener on eco lifestyle. Using the theoretical lens of the theory of planned behavior, this current research seeks to examine the impact of switching barriers on consumers' intention to purchase eco-friendly products. The research adopts an explanatory quantitative approach followed by a survey conducted by a structured questionnaire with 200 consumers. Accordingly, we identified a positive relationship between the high price, poor quality, high cost of purchase, lack of green advertising, low quality of information, and negative social norms on consumers' purchase intention of eco-friendly products. However, no significant relationship was identified between negative attitudes and purchase intentions. Further consumers' environmental knowledge was found to be affected as moderators with poor quality, high cost of purchase, low quality of information, negative social norms but not with the high price, and lack of green advertising. The findings of the study will support future businesses, governments, and individuals to take action to identify the strategies by examining the purchase intention. As this current research was limited to a quantitative study with a limited number of variables, future research, particularly with a large sample size can provide further insights.

Keywords: *Ecofriendly, Purchase Intention, Quantitative Research, Sri Lankan Consumers, Switching Barriers*

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Effect of Product Evaluation on Purchase Intention toward White Goods: Mediating Role of Country of Origin

Chacko, P. S.¹ and Hycinth, F.²

Country of Origin has become a significant factor in the era of globalization in the areas pertaining to consumer behavior studies. Country-of-origin (COO) is regarded as an intangible indication that might affect consumers' decision to buy and assess a product. With the rise of global trade and rivalry, COO is regarded as a potent image variable that has been applied to impact competitive positioning and business success of brands. Considering this information, the goal of this study is to determine how the COO affects the purchasing habits of young Indian consumers in purchase of white goods. The present study also investigates the interrelationships between COO, product evaluation and product purchase intention among the consumers of home appliances industry in India. Mediation analysis was used to establish the relationship between the three variables and the study found that product evaluation had a significant effect on consumer purchase intention of white goods via the mediating effect of country of origin.

Keywords: *Country of Origin, Globalization, Mediation Analysis, Product Evaluation, Purchase Intention, White Goods*

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Unlocking the Potential of Biodiversity for Promotion of Sustainable Tourism: Case of Indian Tourist Arrival to Knuckles Wildlife Conservations Region

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Gardiner, S.⁵ and Siriwardane, A.⁶

Biodiversity plays a crucial role in attracting tourists and fostering an understanding of the value of natural resources. However, the rapid expansion of development activities has compromised biodiversity conservation and strained natural resources. Sustainable tourism seeks to operate without harming nature, the environment, biodiversity, and society. India and Sri Lanka, both emerging tourism destinations with rich biodiversity, have indigenous communities residing near natural reserves and relying on natural resources for their livelihoods. These communities hold a strong cultural connection to nature, shaping their identities. Some regions remain untapped due to inaccessibility, missing out on the benefits of tourism development. Leveraging communities and biodiversity presents significant potential for both countries. Given their proximity and shared cultural heritage, they are major tourism markets for each other, further increasing tourism activities. This paper proposes sustainable tourism management practices that integrate environmental, social, and cultural dimensions of biodiversity and tourism. The research aims to unlock the potential of biodiversity for promoting sustainable tourism in the region. By prioritizing indigenous livelihoods and biodiversity conservation through community-based management and cultural heritage promotion, a sustainable tourism model can be established. Primary data from stakeholders and secondary research from government and academic publications will inform the study.

Keywords: *Biodiversity, India and Sri Lanka, Sustainable Tourism*

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Google Classroom as a Pedagogical Tool for Research Supervision: Case Study of Undergraduate Students' Perceptions and Experiences

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This study explores the perceptions and experiences of students in a blended research supervision context facilitated through Google Classroom. The Constructive Learning Theory is incorporated as a theoretical lens in this study. This empirical study takes the subjective stance often amalgamated into qualitative inquiry. Data collection was done through a structured questionnaire which includes open-ended questions urging to write descriptive answers. Those written responses were collected from seventeen respondents. Thematic analysis was incorporated as the method of data analysis. The study exposes that Google Classroom and face-to-face sessions for research supervision support the research students' active learning role. While the student is at the heart of the learning process, the research supervisor supports constructivism by acting as a facilitator and advisor. Further, collaborative, and cooperative learning is improved in a blended environment, which is acknowledged as a crucial component of constructive learning. In the end, the students see Google Classroom as a practical, helpful, and efficient way to learn. Consequently, blended supervision is identified as a constructive mode of research supervision. Overall, this study will highlight how crucial it is to use e-platforms to create a constructive blended learning environment to improve student satisfaction and quality of learning.

Keywords: *Active Learning, Blended Supervision, Constructive Learning, Face-to-face Discussion; Google Classroom*

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Application of Life Cycle Perspective Costing (LCC) Use in European Union (EU) as a Green Procurement Tool for Cost-effective Public Procurement in the Health sector, Sri Lanka: A Survey-based Study

Dinesh, K. L. S.¹, Liyanage, U. P.² and Wijeyaratne, W. M. D. N.³

In Sri Lanka public procurement guidelines should be followed by all government agencies, when they are required to procure goods, works, and services. The Objective of such guidelines is to ensure the value for money of the process. The Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka has issued a national policy on sustainable consumption and production for Sri Lanka. Two sections of this policy document are reserved for public procurement and Health sectors. According to the policy document, the Ministry of Health should ensure sustainable practices at all levels in the health sector to be transformed into green work set up by 2030. The policy suggests applying sustainable public procurement (SPP) practices in all sectors and for each product or service that has a significant cost-saving impact.

This paper mainly discusses Life Cycle Perspective Cost (LCC) and other Green and Sustainable evaluation practices regulated in health sector institutes in the European Union (EU) and reviews the possible adoption of those green and sustainable concepts to public procurement processes in Sri Lanka for cost-effective Public Procurement. The Adoption of green would maximize the value of public money while minimizing damage to the environment and maximizing economic, and social benefits to the public health sector in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Green Public Procurement, Health Sector Sri Lanka, Life Cycle Perspective Cost (LCC), Local Economy Building, LCC on Public Procurement in EU*

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Impact of Awareness and Usage of E-Learning Platforms on Academic Satisfaction: A Study of Final Year Management Undergraduates of University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Shalika, I. M. D.¹, Mahalekamge, W. G. S.² and Shalini, B. H.³

With the development of Information Communication Technology, e-learning has become more popular than classroom-based learning worldwide. When the Covid-19 pandemic came, it directly affected the education system in every country in the world. Higher education, institutions and schools in Sri Lanka started to use 100% e-learning-based systems during this pandemic. Hence, it is more significant to investigate the factors that impact the student's academic satisfaction. This study will shed light on the impact of awareness and usage of e-learning platforms on academic satisfaction among final-year management undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. This study was carried out as a cross-sectional study among a sample of 251 final-year undergraduates from the University of Kelaniya. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample and primary data were collected using a standard questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, regression, and correlation analysis were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings will provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers in enhancing the effectiveness and accessibility of e-learning platforms for students. Conducting subsequent studies is recommended in different universities with different categories among a larger sample to add more insights into the substance of the present study.

Keywords: *Academic Satisfaction, Awareness of E-learning Platforms, E-learning, E-learning Platforms, Usage of E-learning Platforms*

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Impact of Rabindranath Tagore's Philosophy on the Education of Sri Lanka

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Tagore's philosophy of education, rooted in humanism, creativity, and a deep appreciation for nature, continues to resonate in Sri Lanka's educational landscape and has had a significant impact on shaping its educational system. As Sri Lankan educators and policymakers encountered Tagore's ideas, they saw an opportunity to revolutionize their educational practices and adapt them to their unique socio-cultural context. This research paper explores the impact of Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy of education in Sri Lanka. Research Objectives were to examine the philosophy of education of Rabindranath Tagore and the impact of Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy of education in Sri Lanka. Data for the research was collected from secondary sources and analyzed qualitatively. Secondary data directly address the impact of Rabindranath Tagore's philosophy on education in Sri Lanka. This data included scholarly articles, books, reports, and historical documents that discuss this specific subject. Content analysis is the primary research method used in this study. It systematically analyzes textual and documentary data to uncover themes, patterns, and trends related to Tagore's impact on Sri Lankan education. Historical methodology, analytical methodology, and descriptive methodology were used as research methodologies. Sri Lankans were drawn to Tagore's emphasis on holistic learning, freedom of thought, and the integration of arts and literature in education. Tagore's principles were integrated into the arts, literature, and music programs, enriching the cultural fabric of Sri Lankan education, and nurturing a sense of identity and pride in the nation's heritage. In conclusion, while Tagore's philosophy of education may not have had an immediate impact on the education system in Sri Lanka, his ideas have contributed to the development of a more holistic and creative approach to learning in the country.

Keywords: *Creativity, Holistic Approach, Philosophy of Education, Sri Lankan Education System*

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Key Determinants of a Successful Hybrid Work Model: An Experiment on AIB e-learning HEI in Colombo, Sri Lanka

Janathanan, C.¹

The purpose of the study was to understand the right ingredients of a successful hybrid working model. The management of AIB (www.aibedu.org) were tasked with setting up a suitable system of hybrid working models that could keep the motivation levels, engagement, and results for the organization. Post-Covid19, post fuel crisis economy in Sri Lanka, required further hands-on participation by the board. Existing, available literature has highlighted the importance of remote working, results, better work-life balance, but has failed to identify the correct equation of determinants for successful Hybrid work model. Research methodology involves the adaptation of experiment-oriented research methods. Observation and measurement of results around one organization. The total headcount in the organization in July 2023 is at 18. A positive research philosophy is adopted. An analysis of existing theories was carried out, and the results highlighted key learnings.

The experiment was carried out over 30 days in July. It was identifiable (1) Hawthorne effect was valid, when a CCTV camera was placed productivity was higher (2) Three [3] day work weeks were more productive than five days of work (3) Attendance management systems instill punctuality (4) However, things to do and KPI oriented performance management is much more favorable than a 9-5 orientation. (5) Organizational politics is reduced and mitigated. The implications of these findings are the ability to provide new literature that can pinpoint the value of hybrid working with empirical evidence. Experiment validated information that is practically applied by the management. Management best practices could be further developed with larger sample sizes. Further, the role of leaders involved, organizational culture suitable for hybrid workplaces could be set out.

Keywords: *E-learning, Hybrid Work, Organizational Culture, Organizational HRM Practices*

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Digital Divide & the Impact on Merit-Based University Admission: A Case of Sri Lanka

Ranasinghe, R. S. L. B.¹

As the world has seen an unprecedented growth of technology resulting in the information age, the long-experienced issues of resource distribution inequalities, especially in developing nations have taken a drastic turn causing digital divide. Sri Lanka, with constant issues of disparity in a conventional outset, is yet to establish a proper association of digital disparity, in the case of education of country's youth. The purpose of the study is to test whether a linear relationship exists in between the defined two variables and to establish directional impact from the predictor variable towards the outcome denoted. Quantitative data of continuous nature for a longitude of five years which are readily available in the public domain in secondary sources were used. Preliminary Pearson's coefficient test was conducted to determine association while a detailed impact was tested using the simple regression analysis. Results indicated a strong positive linear relationship between the predictor and outcome variables. Regression analysis resulted in the establishment of a strong positive impact of computer literacy (lack of digital divide) towards university admission. As a linear association was established, and a potential causality proposed, it is concluded that the computer literacy or the lack of digital divide reflected by it, has a positive impact on university admission. Further studies in survey format or qualitative exploration would be instrumental in implementing curative steps for the matter.

Keywords: *Computer Literacy, Digital Divide, Higher Education, Resource Distribution Disparity, University Admission*

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Effect of Student Engagement, Student Satisfaction, and Perceived Learning in Online Learning Environment: Perspective of Management Students

Pramod, J. A. T.¹ and Weligamage, S. S.²

Online education can be identified as a flexible education delivery system that can be applied to distance educational purposes, and this system creates an opportunity for teachers and students to reach each other when they cannot participate in traditional classrooms. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of student engagement, student satisfaction, and perceived learning in an online learning environment. A deductive approach and quantitative designs were used, 306 samples were included, and data was collected via a self-administered questionnaire using convenience sampling. Course structure, learner interaction and instructor presence were used as independent variables, student engagement as mediating variables and improved student learning and student satisfaction as dependent variables in the study. Descriptive and demographic data analysis, reliability analysis, correlation and regression were used to analyze survey data. Findings revealed that course structure, learner interaction and instructor presence have a statistically significant impact on improved student learning and student satisfaction. The finding of the study has also shown that student engagement is a significant mediator between course structure, learner interaction, instructor presence, perceived learning, and student satisfaction. To ensure the effectiveness of the online learning system and student satisfaction, teachers should give much attention to course structure design, which enhances learner interaction and learning.

Keywords: *Online Learning, Student Satisfaction, Learner Interaction, Instructor Presence, Engagement*

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Doctoral Colloquium

Abstracts

How do Ethnicities Perception of Risk Relate to the Purchasing Behavior of Life Insurance?

Paranavitana, S.¹

The objective of this concept paper is to identify the perception and behavior towards the exposed risk between different ethnic minority communities' and to highlight whether there are similarities or differences among ethnic minorities in their assessment of risk and whether the acceptance of life insurance as a risk mitigating mechanism. Ethnic groups in western province of Sri Lanka are Sinhalese, Sri Lanka Moors, Sri Lanka Tamils, Indian Tamils, and others. Perception of risk is defined as people's judgments and assessment of hazards that pose immediate or long-term threats to their health, education, and financial well-being. This research will facilitate understanding how each ethnic minority would perceive the risk associated within each community and relate this in identifying a pattern in their behavior towards risk and risk mitigating options. This study will in addition look at the possibility of offering life insurance as a risk mitigator to these minority ethnicities. This would provide insurers with an awareness of the risk appetite within each ethnic community.

Keywords: *Ethnic Minorities, Perception of Life Insurance, Risk Profiles of Different Ethnicities, Sale of Life Insurance, Understanding of Risk*

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Agility for Competitive Performance, Driven by Digital Technologies: A Systematic Literature Review with Special Reference to the Apparel Supply Chain

Emmanuel, S.¹, Jayarathne, A.² and Herath R. P.³

One emerging theme in the practitioner literature argues that the future supply chain will be agile and produce significant supply chain competitive performance advantages despite the world becoming more complex and uncertain. Achieving supply chain competitive performance is made possible in large part by developments in digital technologies. This systematic review paper aims to determine how agility and digitalization affect supply chain performance. A comprehensive literature review was done, covering the years 2005 through 2022, and it included the analysis of 149 articles. The results highlight the connection between supply chain competitive performance and digital technology, information, and agility. The evaluation also highlights the significance of addressing opportunities and challenges in the supply chain with such technology and abilities. A fresh model of supply chain performance and agility is presented for study. The authors of this ground-breaking study systematically reviewed the literature that links agility and digitalization to competitive performance. This research will aid apparel industry professionals in planning for the future of the supply chain and provide researchers with a framework for foreseeing the role that digital technologies will play in that chain.

Keywords: *Supply Chain Competitive Performance, Supply Chain Agility, Digital Technology Capabilities*

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Antecedents of Mobile Marketing Technology Adoption on SME's Business Performance in Tourism Industry in Sri Lanka with Mediator Effect of Digitalization and Moderator Effect of Environmental Factors

Silva, J. S.¹

This study aims to examine the impact of mobile marketing technology adoption on the business performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism industry in Sri Lanka, considering the mediator effect of mobile marketing digitalization and moderator effect of environmental factors. Sri Lanka has experienced a significant growth in mobile technology adoption, providing SMEs with new opportunities to reach and engage with the customers. However, the effective utilization of mobile marketing technology by SMEs requires proper technology adoption, as well as support from reliable mobile telephonic service providers. SMEs can acquire a unique opportunity for marketing campaigns using mobile marketing technology rather than traditional marketing practices. Enhancing customer reach, cost efficiency, data-driven decision making, personalization, competitive advantage, customer engagement and loyalty, geolocating targets, measurable ROI are the benefits of mobile marketing to overcome the traditional challenges. This research also employs a quantitative approach, collecting survey data from SME owners and senior managers. The findings of this study will contribute to the literature on mobile marketing technology in the context of Sri Lankan SMEs, offering valuable insights for SMEs seeking to enhance their business performance through effective mobile marketing strategies.

Keywords: *Digitalization, Mobile Marketing, SME, Technology Adoption, Tourism*

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Relationship of Employer Brand Experience and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Towards the Development of Employee Ownership at Work

Junkeer, R.¹

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) refers to the voluntary behavior/s exhibited by the employees while in the organization, as good citizens of the organization to foster employee ownership at work. In the dynamic landscape of contemporary workplaces, the connection between Employer Brand Experience (EBE) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) emerges as a pivotal factor in the development of Employee Ownership at Work (EOW). This study delves into how a positive EBE not only influences employee engagement and commitment but also serves as a catalyst for employees to go above and beyond their prescribed roles, ultimately fostering a culture of shared responsibility and EOW. Leadership style and effective communication play essential roles in mediating this relationship, while employee engagement acts as a critical factor in promoting OCB. By recognizing the profound implications of these connections, organizations can strategically position themselves to create work environments where employees are not just participants but active co-owners in their roles and the organization's success. This paper proposes that a positive employer brand experience, encompassing perceptions, beliefs, and emotions associated with the employer, influences employees' sense of ownership and commitment to the organization by examining the influence of employer brand attributes, such as reputation, organizational culture, leadership style, and employee value proposition, on employees' perceptions and behaviors. The theoretical framework presented in this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between employer brand experience, OCB, and employee ownership. The findings have practical implications for organizations aiming to enhance their employer brand, foster employee engagement, and promote behaviors that contribute to organizational success. Future empirical research is encouraged to validate the proposed relationships and investigate additional factors that may influence the employer brand experience-OCB linkage.

Keywords: *Employer Brand Experience, Employee Ownership, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Organizational Commitment*

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Assessment of Local (Domestic) Preference Adaptability in the Public Procurement Process for the Health Sector in Sri Lanka to Promote Local Economic Growth: A Survey-based Study

Dinesh, K. L. S.¹, Liyanage, P.² and Wijeyaratne, W. M. D.³

In Sri Lanka (SL), public procurement guidelines should be followed by all public institutes, when procuring goods, works, or services. There are multiple guidelines relevant to be followed for this purpose to ensure the value for money of the public procurement process. The Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka has passed a national policy on sustainable consumption and production for Sri Lanka and two sections are allocated for public procurement and Health. According to the policy document, the Ministry of Health should ensure sustainable consumption practices in the health sector to be transformed into green work settings by 2030. Adoption of those green and SPP public procurement would maximize the value of public money while minimizing damage to the environment and maximizing economic, and social benefits to the public health sector in Sri Lanka. The Local preference is applicable for public procurement in Sri Lanka, where applicable. The Domestic preference supports the capacity development of local businesses of the home country, while able retain the public money within the country as it allows preference for local bidders when evaluating bids. The level of adaptability of this concept in the health sector, in Sri Lanka is accessed in this paper based on the survey conducted.

Keywords: *Public Procurement, Health Sector of Sri Lanka, Green Procurement (GPP) EU, Local Economy Growth, Domestic Preference*

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Exploring Gender Bias in the Sri Lankan Maritime Industry

Karunatileke, A. W.¹, Herath, R. P.² and Gunasekara, U. L. T. P.³

A seafarer is someone who works on any type of marine vessel. The number of female seafarers is significantly lower than the number of male seafarers in the same ranks. To find the basis for the research, a pilot study has been conducted and it is discovered that there is a dilemma in men's perspectives on female participation in the field, further study is proposed to examine this dilemma and determine the reason why this exists among women's representation in the field. This study on Sri Lankan seafarers introduces for the first time an inquiry into the perceptions on the role of Sri Lankan women seafarers, this is a qualitative study with both male and female participants to determine perceptions of gender bias. The thematic analysis was utilized to analyse the data, which would be gathered after several interviews. The index is structured around two basic dimensions of bias, which are open bias and hidden bias. This concept paper would be the first index to capture the men's perceptions of women in the context of the Sri Lankan maritime sector and offer a suitable approach and implications for future research would be discussed.

Keywords: *Discrimination, Female Seafarers, Gender Bias, Maritime, Shipping*

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Developing a Business Simulation Game to Enhance Innovation Readiness of Organizations: A Design Based Research

De Silva, T. R.¹ and Yatigammana, M. R. K. N.²

This concept paper narrates a study aimed at investigating the process of developing a set of design principles and a scientifically validated business simulation game to enhance the level of innovation readiness within organizations, based on contemporary best and emerging practices. The study will employ an empirical approach using the Design-Based Research (DBR) method, which integrates theory and design elements. The uniqueness of this study lies in its integration of various concepts of innovation readiness and business simulation design, providing a holistic framework for enhancing organizations' ability to innovate. Additionally, the study incorporates theories such as Cognitive Flexibility Theory, change efficacy, change valence, and experiential learning to create a business simulation game. The anticipated outcomes are twofold. Firstly, the establishment of a set of design principles will guide future research endeavors and aid in the development of similar simulations. Secondly, the creation of a robust simulation game will enable organizations to enhance their level of innovation readiness, leading to better and faster innovations.

Keywords: *Business Simulation Game, Change Management, Cognitive Flexibility Theory, Design-based Research, Design Principles, Innovation Management, Innovation Readiness*

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Stimulants of the Perceived Customer Value of Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic Panels and its Impact on Intention to become a Prosumers through the Moderation of Innovative Energy Consumption in Sri Lanka

Ratnasingam, G.¹

The global recognition of unsustainable energy sources has propelled the need for a shift toward sustainable energy sources at the household level, necessitating a social change. This study seeks to explore the motivating factors that drive Sri Lankan households to become prosumers by generating electricity through photovoltaic solar panels. Key stimulants include the need for power, economic factors, and an interest in solar power. The research will employ a questionnaire prepared as a Google Form and shared with the public via an online platform. This study holds significance in guiding marketers and policymakers to develop strategies for attracting potential consumers and alleviating the strain on the national grid. Additionally, the findings may provide valuable insights into consumer behavior and the adoption of renewable energy sources in Sri Lanka and other developing nations. While this study won't directly assess the impact of prosumers on energy consumption patterns and grid stability, it may pave the way for future research in this direction. The study is grounded in the Ecological Modernization theory and the Optimal Stimulation theory along with the concept of innovative consumption.

Keywords: *Innovative Consumption, Perceived Customer Value, Photovoltaic Panels, Prosumers, Solar Renewable Energy*

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Impact of Psychological Capital on Altruistic Behavior of First Line Managers in the Business Process Management Industry: Mediating Effect of Work Engagement

Wickremasinghe, D. S.¹

The aim of this study is to examine the mediating role of work engagement (WE) between psychological capital (PsyCap) and Altruism - a dimension of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), in a sample of employees who are first line managers (FLMs) of the Business Process Management (BPM) sector in Sri Lanka. Both quantitative and qualitative methods to be employed to derive at the outcome. The study expands on current literature, based predominantly on the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory and the Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) Theory

Keywords: *Altruistic Behavior, Business Process Management (BPM), Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), Psychological Capital (PsyCap), Work Engagement (WE)*

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A Conceptual Paper on an Extended Model of Goal Directed Behavior to Understand Entrepreneurial Intention of University Students

Jayasinghe, M. R.¹, Shamil, M. M.² and Fernando, W. R. P. K.³

Despite empirical evidence regarding the capability of entrepreneurship in improving economies, there is a gap in utilizing the potential of graduate entrepreneurship for such purposes in financially hit Sri Lanka. Understanding the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates in the career decision making stage and having a higher likelihood of entering and retaining in self-employment given their higher educational attainments, is important for future measures to promote graduate entrepreneurship. As behavior is driven by goals, according to the Model of Goal Directed Behavior (MGB), the aim is to test the applicability of an Extended MGB to examine the entrepreneurial intention (EI) of Sri Lankan state undergraduates. Research Gaps indicated the need to explore the impact of the MGB components, and the perceptions of supportive university environment, recessionary economic context, and entrepreneurial culture, on EI. A positivist philosophy, deductive research approach, survey research strategy, mono method quantitative research choice, cross sectional time horizon and a structured questionnaire technique will be used to collect data from a stratified cluster sample of 581 undergraduates from a sampled population of 7328. Findings will help enhance the understanding regarding the antecedents of entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates and offer recommendations for educators and policy makers for promoting graduate entrepreneurship.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Intention, Model of Goal Directed Behavior*

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Does Sustainable Responsible Investment Cause Better Portfolio Performance: Concept Paper

Rathnayake, S.¹ and Nanayakkara, K. G. M.²

The aim of this paper is to examine the performance of portfolios that are constructed based on environmental, social and governance (ESG) scores. The financial industry's growing need for sustainable products indicates that interest in ESG and sustainable investing is set for the long haul. The subject has been debated for a while, and earlier research on the risk-adjusted return differential between conventional and sustainable funds has produced various findings. This study will be carried out in part because previous research has concentrated on capital markets that are bigger, mostly developed countries. There is a huge lack of research in the developing country context. The purpose of this study is to close the knowledge gap about how different fund types performed financially in a developing market. This study will select all developing countries in the South Asian region. According to the World Bank categorization, the following are the countries: Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. Data will be collected using Bloomberg. Financial data collected will be analyzed using panel data regression analysis.

Keywords: *Socially Responsible Investment (SRI), Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), Portfolio Performance, Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM)*

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Developing a Conceptual Framework to Investigate the Demand Articulation of SMMEs for Digital Marketing Adoption and Performance: Reference to SMMEs in the Sri Lankan Tourist Lodging Industry

Herath, H. M. B. I.¹ and Razi, M. J. M.²

The concept of demand articulation is acknowledged in the field of marketing science as a valuable tool for implementing industry-specific policies aimed at expediting the commercialization of emerging technologies. The objective of this study is to construct a conceptual framework for examining the relationship between social media adoption and performance in the tourist lodging industry in Sri Lanka, focusing on the demand articulation for digital marketing by small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs). The researcher conducted a thorough content analysis of the digital marketing behaviors on social media of SMMEs in the tourist lodging industry. The findings indicate the applied gap reflecting the scarce levels of digital marketing strategies in the realm of social media marketing (SMM), specifically in areas of video marketing, property management system (PMS) utilization, content updating, social media boosting and optimization, and overall liveliness. The researcher has considered the policy-related demand articulation on social media adoption by investigating the impact on the existing TOE model to construct a new framework to address the theoretical gap. The study mainly revealed that the new technology demand articulation leads to its adoption by the SMEs on demand-side innovation policies, sectoral policies, and challenge policies based on the literature review.

Keywords: *Demand Articulation, SMMEs, Social-media, TOE Model, Tourist Lodging Industry*

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Workplace Phubbing and Organizational Embeddedness: A Conceptual Paper

Malalage, G. S.¹ and Karunaratne, R. A. I. C.²

Despite the increasing reliance on the internet and mobile devices while giving less attention to companions which is known as phubbing, very few studies have explored workplace phubbing and its outcomes, in particular, organizational context. The aim of this study is to develop a conceptual model to increase our understanding of workplace phubbing and organizational embeddedness. Based upon Social Exchange Theory, embeddedness literature and congruence concept, we developed a conceptual model. The model delineates how (in)congruence effect of employee (self) and supervisor (other) phubbing influence on employee embeddedness through self-efficacy. We propose that the congruence effect of supervisor and employee phubbing significantly influence employee self-efficacy. Moreover, we propose that this effect is higher when employee phubbing is higher than supervisor phubbing. In addition, we postulate that workplace phubbing influence on organizational embeddedness through self-efficacy. Thus, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature by proposing the simultaneous effect of employee and supervisor phubbing on self-efficacy and organizational embeddedness. We recommend future researchers to test this model with empirical data.

Keywords: *Organizational Embeddedness, Self-efficacy, Social Exchange Theory, Workplace Phubbing*

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Relationship between Digital Content Marketing and E-Brand Loyalty in the Non-Bank Finance and Leasing Sector of Sri Lanka

Warnakula, K. N.¹

The study begins by emphasizing the importance of DCM in building connections, trust, and brand engagement. It highlights the lack of a clear definition for content marketing but underscores its role as a comprehensive skill set. The research explores the theoretical foundations of DCM, incorporating concepts such as hedonic and utilitarian values, and the uses and gratifications theory, which explains factors affecting consumer demand for media content. A conceptual framework is proposed to illustrate the relationships between DCM, hedonic and utilitarian values, and E-Brand Loyalty. Hypotheses are formulated to examine these relationships. The study adopts a quantitative approach, conducting surveys among social media users in the non-bank finance and leasing sector of Sri Lanka. Reliability analysis confirms the internal consistency of survey scales. Correlation analysis demonstrates strong positive relationships between DCM, hedonic and utilitarian values, and E-Brand Loyalty, confirming the significant impact of DCM on E-Brand Loyalty. The study underlines the importance of considering both hedonic and utilitarian values in digital marketing strategies. In conclusion, this research highlights the crucial role of DCM in shaping E-Brand Loyalty in Sri Lanka's non-bank finance and leasing sector. It emphasizes the need for marketers to incorporate both hedonic and utilitarian values into their digital marketing campaigns. Future research should explore specific factors influencing E-Brand Loyalty and expand the study's geographical scope. The study's limitations offer opportunities for further investigation and provide valuable insights for marketers navigating the digital landscape in this sector.

Keywords: *Digital Content Marketing, E-Brand Loyalty, Hedonic and Utilitarian Value, Non-Bank Finance and Leasing Sector, and Social Media Marketing*

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**Nexus Between Sustainability Learning and Pro-Sustainable Behavior:
A Case of Sri Lankan Employees with
Professional Accounting Background
[A Concept Paper]**

Perera, H. M. M.¹ and Patabendige, S. S. J.²

Sustainable development that balances economic, social, and environmental concerns is seen as a key requisite for the future survival of life on our planet, as we know, and there have been fervent calls in the past for global education systems to support knowledge, skills, and competencies that lead to such behavior. Yet, there is a paucity of research on how sustainability development objectives are incorporated into learning and whether such efforts have yielded the desired outcomes. In recent times, accounting professionals have been drummed up as sustainability champions in businesses where they are expected to not only focus on their traditional accounting duties but also create and link internal systems and processes to ensure that sustainability matters are measured and managed to support the business objectives of their firms. This study draws on Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior to elucidate pro-sustainable behavior by identifying such behavior to depend on three dimensions i.e., personal attitude towards a particular behavior, normative beliefs, and motivation to comply, and their belief in the ability to control their performance. Moreover, the study expects such pro-sustainability behavior to be supported by complex knowledge and skills acquired through formal sustainability learning detailed through five competencies – system thinking, anticipatory thinking, value thinking, strategic thinking, and interpersonal competencies. In particular, the present study aims to investigate the relationship between competencies developed through sustainable learning initiatives and their subsequent influence on the pro-sustainable behaviors of accounting professionals covering all three sustainability components i.e., pro-environmental, pro-social, and pro-economic behaviors.

Keywords: *Pro-Sustainable Behavior, Sustainability Accounting, Sustainability Learning, Theory of Planned Behavior*

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3MT Contest 2023

Presentations of the Finalists

Mr. Chandana Aluthgama

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Candidate, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Topic: Unsung Hero

The research focuses on analyzing the impact of person-organization fit on technology use within state-owned key financial enterprises in Sri Lanka. Person-organization fit refers to the compatibility between an individual's values, skills, and characteristics, and those of the organization. This study aims to investigate how well individuals align with the technological requirements and organizational culture of state-owned financial enterprises in Sri Lanka, and how this alignment influences their use of technology. By understanding the relationship between person-organization fit and technology adoption the research seeks to provide insights and strategies to enhance technology utilization, improve organizational performance, and shape effective human resource management practices in the focused financial sector.

Ms. Preethi Dinusha Pinnaduwa

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Linguistics Candidate, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Topic: Is Japanese Passive that Difficult?

In the Sinhala language, passive voice is rarely used in everyday communication. Yet, in Japanese, it is used even in simple conversations. I, as a Japanese teacher, found that teaching as well as learning the passive is difficult. To overcome these difficulties, I conducted interviews with 20 Japanese teachers and collected data from 100 students through a questionnaire. The results show that the Japanese passive is strongly connected with their rich culture and is unable to absorb easily. With these findings, I have come up with a few approaches to blend cultural awareness with teaching. And these methods can enhance teaching productivity.

Mr. Rukmal De Silva

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Candidate, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Topic: How to Design a Monopoly Game that will Enhance Innovation Readiness?

This research aims to investigate the process of developing a set of design principles and a scientifically validated business simulation game to enhance the level of innovation readiness within organizations. It will employ an empirical approach using the Design-Based Research (DBR) method, which uses an iterative validation of theory and design elements. The final game would be a validated learning artifact based on emerging innovation practices, using psychology theories, game design principles. The outcome of the research will provide guidance for future research endeavors and aid in the development of similar simulations and measurement instruments. Secondly, it will enable organizations to enhance their level of innovation readiness, leading to better and faster innovations.

Ms. Inoka Gunarathne

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Candidate, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Topic: How Consumer Involvement Impacts on Brand Usage?

My study aims to talk about how Facebook's reactions to mobile brands impact purchase intention in Sri Lanka. I studied five dimensions determining consumer involvement in purchasing a mobile brand using 384 social media fans. Consumer involvement is positively correlated to brand engagement and usage intent. 63.3% of usage is influenced by personal relevance or the need for the mobile, and 53.5% engage with the content because the brand is important to them. It is statistically evident that 48.2% of brand usage could be influenced by the likes, shares, and comments on Facebook. However, brand engagement only partially mediates the relationship between involvement and usage.

Mr. Sandrasekaran Chandramohan

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Sri Lanka*

Topic: Impact of Teaching and Learning Environment on Student Engagement, with the Moderating Impact of Behavioral Intention in Higher Education in Sri Lanka

This study addresses challenges in student satisfaction, retention, and academic performance in global higher education, with specific focus on Sri Lanka's non-state and state universities. While non-state universities face significant challenges in student retention, the state universities encounter the employability of the graduates. Student engagement has been proposed as a good measure by many scholarly works to face these challenges. However, the multifaceted concept of student engagement requires contextualized investigation within the teaching and learning environment. The study further expanded with the technological integration into the teaching and learning environment and measured the moderating impact to the student engagement concept.

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