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13th Annual International Research Conference 2024

November 27, 2024

"Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce "

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Faculty of Management and Commerce

South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
Oluvil

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MESSAGES

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR

Indeed, I am honored to address as the Acting Vice-Chancellor of the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka at the 13th Annual International Research Conference (AIRC 13) of the Faculty of Management and Commerce and I extend my sincere appreciation for the efforts put forth by the stakeholders in organizing this remarkable event. The theme of the conference & quot; Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce, & quot; is the need of the hour and explores a wide spectrum of opportunities in navigating the new normalcy with the scope of securing sustainability in management and commerce through the infusion of innovation and integration. The application of right management and commerce at the right time is the one and only option to make the venturing fields such as agriculture, health, construction industry, fisheries etc. into a sustainable and success path.

The commitment to excellence in research demonstrated by the contributors is commendable, and I believe that the knowledge disseminated through this remarkable conference will undoubtedly have a positive impact on our academic community and beyond. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the organizing committee for their tireless efforts in coordinating this event. The dedication to fostering a culture of research is a testament to the commitment of the Faculty of Management and Commerce to advancing knowledge and promoting scholarly endeavors. To the researchers, I extend my heartfelt congratulations on your achievements and the valuable contributions you have made in the field of management and commerce and its contributions to the development of the nation. Your dedication to pushing the boundaries of knowledge is inspiring, and I am confident that your work will pave the way for further advancements in the dissemination of knowledge among the researchers, scholars, academicians, and the students.

As we navigate the challenges of our rapidly evolving world, it is through events like this annual conference that we strengthen the foundations of our researchers to forge new paths of discovery. I encourage all the participants to engage in fruitful discussions, exchange ideas, and establish connections that will foster collaborative efforts in the pursuit of knowledge.

Once again, congratulations to everyone involved in the 13 [th] Annual International Research Conference of the Faculty of Management and Commerce. I look forward to witnessing the impact of the research presented and to the continued success of the conference of the Faculty of Management and Commerce.

Dr. U. L. Abdul Majeed
Acting Vice Chancellor
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

I am delighted to extend my heartfelt gratitude and warm greetings to all contributors and participants of the 13th Annual International Research Conference (AiRC) 2024, organized by the Faculty of Management and Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka.

The theme for this year, "Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce," underscores the urgent need to rethink and adapt management and commerce practices in a rapidly evolving global landscape. This conference serves as a vital platform for academics, professionals, and researchers to exchange groundbreaking ideas and solutions that address contemporary challenges. Since its establishment, the Faculty of Management and Commerce has prioritized excellence in education and research, earning recognition for producing highly competent and market-ready graduates. The Annual International Research Conference, since its inception in 2012, has embodied our commitment to advancing research, fostering collaboration, and promoting impactful scholarship at both local and international levels.

This year's conference proceedings reflect the culmination of tireless efforts by our dedicated organizing committee and the invaluable contributions of authors and reviewers. The selection of papers highlights innovative research in areas critical to sustainable and resilient business practices. I take immense pride in witnessing the high standard of submissions and the vibrant discussions that these works will undoubtedly inspire.

To all authors, presenters, and participants, I offer my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes. Let this conference spark enduring collaborations and serve as a beacon for innovation and progress in management and commerce.

Thank you for being part of AiRC 2024!

Prof. Dr AMM . Mustafa
Conference Chair/ AiRC - 2024
Dean - Faculty of Management and Commerce, SEUSL

MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

It is a profound honor and privilege to serve as the coordinator of the 13th Annual International Research Conference (AiRC) 2024, organized by the Faculty of Management and Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. I am delighted to contribute this message to the Book of Abstracts, which is not only a testament to the dedication and resilience of our academic community but also serves as a symbol of our commitment to advancing knowledge in the field of management and commerce. The collective contributions showcased in this publication reflect our drive to understand, innovate, and address some of the most pressing issues in today's evolving world.

The theme of this year's conference, "Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce," speaks directly to the challenges we face in the post-pandemic era. This year, the conference received a total of 98 papers, all of which underwent a rigorous double-blind peer-review process conducted by both local and international experts with extensive knowledge and experience in their respective fields. Each paper was evaluated based on its originality, methodological rigor, and contribution to the field, which ultimately led to the acceptance of 80 papers for presentation at the conference and publication in this Book of Abstracts, which will also be made accessible through the SEUSL e-repository and featured in the journals of the Faculty of Management and Commerce. We hope that these publications will inspire future research, spark innovative ideas, and serve as a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers.

Organizing an international research conference of this magnitude requires the collaboration and support of numerous individuals and teams, and the success of the 13th AIRC 2024 would not have been possible without their collective efforts. First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Acting Vice Chancellor of the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Dr. UL. Abdul Majeed, whose vision and unwavering commitment to promoting research excellence have been instrumental in making this event a reality. I also extend my sincere appreciation to the Dean of the Faculty of Management and Commerce, Prof. (Dr) AMM. Mustafa, for his invaluable guidance and steadfast support throughout the planning and execution of this conference. His leadership and dedication to fostering an environment of academic excellence have been pivotal in the success of this event.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to our distinguished keynote speakers, Professor Chandana Alawattege from the Adam Smith Business School, University of Glasgow, UK, and Chair Professor N. Kengatharan, Dean of the Faculty of Management and Commerce, University of Jaffna, for accepting our invitation and sharing their expertise as valedictory speaker. Also Prof. Dr. P Karthikeyan, for accepting our invitation as guest speaker.

I am deeply grateful to the track coordinators and the local and international reviewers who played a vital role in ensuring the high quality of the selected research papers. Their meticulous reviews, constructive feedback, and commitment to academic excellence have been invaluable in upholding the standards of this conference. Furthermore, I extend my sincere appreciation to the members of the conference team, the Steering Committee, the Organizing Committee, and the academic and non-academic staff of the Faculty of Management and Commerce, whose tireless efforts and dedication have been instrumental in the successful organization of this conference.

Special recognition must also be given to the members of the Editorial Board, who have played a pivotal role in ensuring the scholarly quality of this publication. I am also immensely grateful for the support provided by Mr. M. Siraji, Secretary of the 13th AiRC 2024, who has undertaken an immense secretarial workload with great efficiency and dedication. His attention to detail and organizational skills have been invaluable in managing the administrative aspects of the conference. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the dedication of Mr. M. Farwis, Treasurer of the 13th AiRC 2024, whose efforts have been instrumental in managing the financial aspects of the conference. Further, I must express my heartiest thankfulness to our sponsors who provided financial strength to mark our conference's richness. Furthermore, I express my gratitude to all the administrative staff and those who worked behind the scenes to arrange the necessary logistics and ensure the smooth conduct of this event.

In conclusion, the 13th Annual International Research Conference 2024 has been a remarkable event that has brought together researchers, academics, and practitioners from around the world to engage in meaningful discussions on innovation, integration, and sustainability in management and commerce. The insights and knowledge shared at this conference have provided a platform for advancing our understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the field today. Finally, I extend my best wishes to all presenters and participants, hoping that the 13th AiRC 2024 will be an inspiring, enriching, and successful experience.

Mrs. Sareena UMA Gafoor
Coordinator
13th Annual International Research Conference - 2024
Faculty of Management and Commerce
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

As the Secretary of AiRC 2024, it is with profound pride and pleasure that I present the Book of Abstracts for the 13th Annual International Research Conference – 2024. Organized by the Faculty of Management and Commerce at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, this year's conference revolves around the theme, "Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce." The theme underscores our collective endeavor to address the dynamic challenges and emerging opportunities in the post-pandemic era.

This compilation is not merely a collection of abstracts but a repository of innovative ideas and scholarly insights that seek to redefine the boundaries of knowledge in management and commerce. The wide array of topics, spanning technological advancements to sustainable business practices, reflects the resilience, creativity, and intellectual commitment of our global academic and professional community. Each contribution in this volume constitutes a vital element of a larger discourse on fostering integration, embracing innovation, and advancing sustainability. Collectively, these works illuminate the pressing need for collaborative and interdisciplinary approaches to reshaping our global economic and social landscapes.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Chief Guest, Keynote Speaker, Valedictory Speaker, Guest Speakers, Sponsors, and every member of the conference team, including researchers, academics, non-academics, and industry professionals. Your invaluable contributions and unwavering dedication to advancing knowledge and addressing critical issues are truly commendable.

Let this Book of Abstracts serve as both a testament to our shared vision for a sustainable future and a reminder of the transformative power of collaboration in navigating the complexities of our time.

Mr. M. Siraji
Secretory / AiRC - 2024
Faculty of Management and Commerce, SEUSL

KEYNOTE - SUMMARY

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to be invited as the keynote speaker at the 13th Annual International Research Conference 2024, organised by the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, especially to deliver my keynote on the theme, "Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce." This theme addresses a timely and critical issue that we all, individually and collectively as organisations, communities and nations, must embrace and address. The future of humanity, as well as the well-being of non-human entities, relies significantly on our capacity to navigate this new normalcy. Our readiness, willingness, and capability to transform our organisations, communities and individual lives towards sustainability through appropriate technological innovations and integrations will be among the defining challenges of our time.

What is essential in this endeavour is the promotion of impactful research, particularly in the fields of management and commerce, where the focus has traditionally been on enhancing corporate and market performance through various technologies and managerial practices. It is now imperative to look beyond conventional profit maximisation and other techno-managerial performance metrics to explore the possibilities for integrating sustainability into corporate practices. Given this challenge, it is commendable to see this conference being organised, as it creates a valuable platform to drive innovation and technological integration towards a sustainable future. As a well-established research conference in Sri Lanka, it promises to provide an excellent forum for both established and emerging scholars in management, commerce, and related fields.

The "new normal" that this conference addresses demands that we think beyond the economic performance of corporate entities, expanding our focus to include the often-overlooked elements of ecological and social justice, which are the foundational pillars of sustainability and are encapsulated in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Investigating how technologies can support social and ecological justice and how they can be better integrated into organisational practices to address these issues is undoubtedly a critical academic task of our time. However, as we pursue this, we must also consider a crucial question: Are the economic and productivity gains from technological innovation being equitably distributed among the global majority? Why and how have the 'magnificent' technological innovations and integrations we have made so far failed to make a better world for the majority but dragged the world into more volatile, risky, unsustainable, and unfair conditions for the current and next generations to come?

Technological innovations and integrations are essential for advancing socio-economic and political systems. Without them, progress would be unattainable. Yet, we must critically examine the fact that technological progress alone does not guarantee equitable benefits and a sustainable world. As the 2024 Nobel Prize laureates Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson have long argued, technological innovation must be supported by robust institutional frameworks that guide these advancements toward the common good. Without such frameworks, technological innovation may lead to increasing income disparities, ecological degradation, social injustice, and widespread social unrest, thus disrupting sustainable development.

This consideration—how to foster equitable and sustainable technological progress—will be a central focus of my keynote speech.

Professor Chandana Alawattage
Adam Smith Business School
University of Glasgow

VALEDICTORY SPEECH

It is both a privilege and an immense honor to deliver the valedictory address at the closing of the 13th Annual International Research Conference, at the Faculty of Management and Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. This gathering has been a remarkable convergence of intellect, insight, and innovation, driven by our shared commitment to a theme that resonates deeply with the times we live in: "Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce."

This theme speaks to the very heart of what our world urgently needs — the weaving of resilience, adaptability, and sustainability into the fabric of our practices and policies. We are living in a time when the global landscape demands a redefined approach to management and commerce. It is in such moments that academic and research forums like this one provide a platform for fostering critical discussions, presenting breakthrough ideas, and uniting diverse perspectives.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the authors of the 98 submissions, of which 80 were meticulously reviewed and accepted. Each paper represents not only a scholarly achievement but also a stepping stone toward a sustainable future in which management and commerce practices are attuned to the evolving needs of both society and the planet.

It is a privilege to share a synthesis of insights from each track, each contributing uniquely to our overarching theme. Each session revealed profound approaches and innovative solutions that demonstrate the power of thoughtful research in addressing the challenges of our time.

The Integrated Marketing Approaches for Sustainable Branding in Evolving Markets track emphasizes that sustainable branding requires a cohesive marketing approach that integrates storytelling, digital engagement, and community involvement. This track highlights the importance of fostering connections with consumers who prioritize ethical and environmental values. It encourages companies to not only market responsibly but to embody the changes they advocate, reinforcing their credibility and relevance in an era where consumers seek brands that represent positive social impact.

The Human Resource Strategies for Nurturing Resilient and Sustainable Organizational Cultures track explores HR frameworks designed to prepare a

workforce for future challenges through resilience and agility. It highlights that resilient organizations are founded on a culture of adaptability, well-being, and sustainability. Discussions in this track underscore the role of diverse, inclusive workplaces that prioritize employee development, mental health, and purpose. HR leaders are encouraged to create environments of continuous learning and innovation, equipping the workforce to handle unforeseen challenges and fostering a sustainable organizational ecosystem.

Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development discusses the power of responsible technology in driving sustainable progress. Scholars illustrate how technology can reduce resource consumption, minimize waste, and support inclusive economic growth. Yet, it emphasizes the ethical responsibilities accompanying technological progress, urging innovators to consider social and environmental impacts along with profitability. Sustainable development through innovation demands solutions that not only address present needs but also provide a solid foundation for future generations.

The Entrepreneurial Innovations Driving Sustainability and Resilience in New Markets track highlights the potential of entrepreneurship to foster sustainable impact, especially in underserved markets. Entrepreneurs are seen as pivotal in addressing environmental and social challenges while generating economic value. Social enterprises, green startups, and circular economy initiatives are spotlighted as essential to building resilience in emerging markets. This track stresses that sustainable entrepreneurship is about creating lasting, responsible innovation that uplifts communities and minimizes environmental harm.

Finance Management and Reporting in Sustainable Business Practices underscores the importance of responsible financial stewardship in sustainable growth. This track encourages aligning financial objectives with sustainability goals through transparent reporting, responsible investing, and ethical finance. Participants discuss the significance of assessing environmental and social impact alongside financial performance, showing how comprehensive reporting builds trust and attracts sustainability-minded investors. It demonstrates that finance practices can support both profitability and environmental stewardship, affirming the compatibility of long-term responsibility with financial success.

Finally, Economic Integration for Sustainable Growth and Multi-Disciplinary Research emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary and cross-border collaboration to achieve sustainable development. It stresses that sustainable growth requires integration across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. The track promotes collaborative research that bridges disciplines and nations to tackle complex global issues. By fostering cooperation, economic integration strengthens economies and promotes shared accountability for global sustainability, supporting poverty reduction, environmental justice, and collective well-being.

Together, these tracks advocate a holistic approach to sustainability, uniting marketing, HR, technology, entrepreneurship, finance, and economic integration. Through collaboration and responsible innovation, they promote a global commitment to resilient, inclusive, and sustainable development, with a vision that spans industries, disciplines, and borders.

As we bid farewell, let us carry forward the invaluable knowledge exchanged here and continue these critical dialogues beyond the bounds of this conference. Let us remain torchbearers for a future where innovation, integration, and sustainability are not mere aspirations but standard practices in our institutions, industries, and communities. Together, we can reimagine and reshape the future of management and commerce in ways that uphold the well-being of our planet and its people.

Thank you, and may the spirit of this conference inspire us to continue pushing the boundaries of knowledge, to innovate boldly, and to lead responsibly. Safe journeys to all, and may we meet again to celebrate the fruits of the seeds planted here today.

Thank you

Professor N. Kengatharan
Dean and Professor of Human Resource Management
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce
University of Jaffna

MESSAGE FROM GUEST OF HONOR

It is a great honor to join this distinguished gathering for the International Conference on Navigating New Normalcy: Innovation, Integration, and Sustainability in Management and Commerce. I extend my sincere gratitude to the organizing team, whose dedication and attention to detail have made this event possible, and to the authorities of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka for their continued support in fostering academic collaboration and thought leadership on a global scale.

This conference comes at a pivotal time, as we navigate a rapidly evolving landscape in management and commerce. The focus on innovation, integration, and sustainability is essential not only to adapt to today's new normal but also to create resilient frameworks for future growth. Through these discussions, we are equipped to explore impactful solutions that will drive progress, bridging practical and academic perspectives to meet the challenges of our time. I am truly honored to be part of this journey with you all, and I look forward to the inspiring ideas and insights that will emerge from this platform. Thank you.

Professor P. Karthikeyan,

Head, Department of Management Studies,
Periyar University Centre for Postgraduate and Research Studies,
Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu, INDIA.

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TRACK – FINANCE MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING IN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES

The Impact of Corporate Governance on Insolvency Risk: Evidence from Licensed Finance Companies in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines the relationship between corporate governance (CG) and insolvency risk (IR). It is grounded in the argument that corporate governance is essential for reducing excessive risk-taking behaviors that often lead to insolvency. The research addresses the increasing financial vulnerability of Licensed Finance Companies (LFCs) in Sri Lanka and highlights the significance of board independence, gender diversity, audit committee independence, and meeting frequency as determinants of financial stability and insolvency mitigation.

Design/methodology/approach: The sample comprised 25 LFCs listed on the CSE from 2019 to 2023. The insolvency risk was measured with Altman's emerging-market Z-score, and a panel regression analysis was employed to evaluate the impact of CG factors. Additionally, multinomial logistic regression analysis was used to explore the impact of corporate governance on the likelihood of insolvency risk.

Findings: The results reveal a statistically significant and inverse relationship between the presence of women on boards and the frequency of board meetings with insolvency risk. The inclusion of women's representation on the board is particularly influential in achieving low insolvency risk, while active audit committee engagement further reinforces a negative impact on the probability of insolvency. This indicates that increased gender diversity and consistent board engagement are associated with a lower likelihood of insolvency.

Practical implications: This research suggests that companies that prioritize gender diversity, ensure regular board meetings, and foster active audit committee engagement are more likely to enhance organizational stability and reduce excessive risk-taking behaviors.

Originality value: This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the role of corporate governance in managing financial risk within emerging markets. It explains the mechanisms through which governance structures influence insolvency risk, offering a critical basis for future research and policy initiatives to strengthen the resilience of financial institutions within developing economies.

Keywords: *Corporate Governance, Insolvency Risk, Licensed Finance Companies, Z-score, Sri Lanka.*

Impact of Accounting Information Systems on Financial Decision-Making Improvement

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigates the impact of Accounting Information Systems (AIS) on decision-making and financial processes, with a focus on financial reporting, budgeting, and internal controls. It aims to evaluate how AIS influences key areas such as cash flow management, investment decisions, cost control, and risk management, while addressing implementation challenges like data security, system integration, and user training.

Design/methodology/approach: The study employed a structured survey administered to 100 finance and accounting professionals from diverse organizations that have implemented AIS. Data were collected through a detailed questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS software. The analysis included descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression techniques to test the hypothesis of a positive correlation between AIS adoption and enhanced financial performance.

Findings: The results indicate that AIS significantly improves the reliability, relevance, and transparency of financial information, contributing to more effective and timely decision-making. The study also identifies critical success factors, such as robust training programs for users and ensuring seamless integration of AIS with other organizational systems.

Practical implications: Organizations adopting AIS are likely to experience better financial performance, improved operational efficiency, and a competitive advantage in strategic decision-making. Addressing challenges like data security and user readiness is crucial for maximizing AIS benefits

Originality value: This research provides empirical evidence of the positive correlation between AIS adoption and financial performance enhancements in Sri Lanka's organizational context. It also highlights implementation best practices to ensure successful AIS adoption and sustained benefits

Keywords: *Accounting Information Systems, Financial Decision-Making, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, Sri Lanka*

Liquidity Management Policies and Its Effect on Profitability of High Liquidity Turnover Companies in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Liquidity management encompasses both investment and financing policies, with maintaining an optimal balance being crucial for profitability. This study examines whether high liquidity turnover companies in Sri Lanka adopt conservative or aggressive strategies to financing and investing in current assets, and how these strategies effect profitability.

Design/methodology/approach: The study analyzes data from 56 companies across the materials, capital goods, and retail sectors over a 10-year period (2013–2022), using panel regression analysis in E-Views.

Findings: The fixed effect model reveals that companies with high liquidity adopting a conservative financing policy experience a significant negative effect on profitability, likely due to increased opportunity costs and growth restrictions. Meanwhile, investment policy shows an equal distribution between fixed and current assets but has no significant effect on profitability, suggesting that matching assets does not drive profit growth. However, sales levels show a significant and positive effect on profitability, indicating that higher revenue generation directly boosts profits.

Practical implications: Companies typically achieve profitability through increased sales, yet conservative financing policies may restrict these gains. This study suggests that a less conservative financing approach may enhance profitability.

Originality value: This study offers localized insights into the profitability impacts of liquidity management in Sri Lanka's high liquidity sectors. It highlights the value of balancing short-term financing with current assets through effective forecasting to optimize risk and return in similar emerging economies.

Keywords: *Financing Policy; Investment Policy; Profitability; Turnover Companies*

Does Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Impact Financial Performance and Capital Structure Decision? Evidence from Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the research is to identify the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on financial performance and capital structure decision making of listed companies in Colombo Stock Exchange of Sri Lanka (CSE).

Design / Methodology / Approach: Quantitative data analysis techniques used in this study to explain how the CSR activities affect financial performance and capital structure decision measures within listed companies on the Colombo Stock Exchange from 2018/2019 to 2023/2024. The study focuses on three key dependent variables: Return on Assets (ROA), Tobin's Q, and Capital Structure. Independent variables include CSR activities tailored towards the community, customers, employees, and environment, benchmarked against the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) framework.

Findings: The findings reveal a positive relationship between CSR activities and financial performance indicators, indicating that companies practicing CSR tend to achieve better financial performance. Moreover, the analysis uncovers insights into how CSR practices influence capital structure decisions.

Implications and Limitations: This study highlights the strategic importance of integrating CSR into corporate strategies to enhance both financial performance and decision-making processes. However, it acknowledges limitations such as potential endogeneity issues, data availability constraints, and the need for further longitudinal research to capture the full impact of CSR on listed companies in the CSE.

Originality value: The empirical evidence on the relationship between CSR, firm performance, and capital structure decisions within the context of the CSE, this study contributes to the existing literature and offers valuable insights for practitioners, policymakers, and scholars. and offer practical implications for stakeholders, policymakers, and corporate practitioners seeking to integrate CSR into their business strategies for sustainable growth and value creation.

Keywords: *CSR, Community, Customer, Employee, Environment, Financial Performance, Capital Structure*

The Extent and Determinants of Voluntary Disclosure of Companies Listed in Colombo Stock Exchange

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent of voluntary disclosure and its determinants of companies listed in Colombo Stok Exchange (CSE).

Design/methodology/approach – Complying to the previous empirical studies on corporate voluntary disclosures, the study surveyed the annual reports of 43 randomly drawn sampled firms using 60 disclosure items constructed into four voluntary disclosure indies namely corporate strategic disclosure index (CSDI), financial and capital market information disclosure index (FCMDI), forward-looking disclosure index (FLDI), social reporting disclosure index (SRDI) and total voluntary disclosure index (TVDI). The sample firms were observed for three reporting periods from 2016 through 2018. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation and OLS regression analysis.

Findings – The study found that the extent of voluntary disclosures by firms listed in CSE gradually grew over the years. Extents of disclosure of such corporate strategic information as 'ways of improvement in product/service quality and the customer service', 'research development activities' and 'future product and development' are relatively higher than the other corporate and strategic information surveyed. Financial and capital market related disclosure items that reflect on companies' market value have been disclosed relatively at higher rates than the items that connect to the assessment of current and potential risk, return and operating cash flows useful for industry comparison. Forward looking information tends to be the lowest disclosed voluntary information by companies surveyed. The study also concludes that forward looking voluntary disclosures by Sri Lankan firms largely pertains to external factors than the internal factors which mostly depends on managerial discretion. Analyzing the determinant of voluntary disclosures, the study find that firms size is a significant predictor positively impacting on the volume of voluntary disclosures with respect to all voluntary disclosure models tested. Relatively new companies volunteer more than older ones in disclosing voluntary information.

It is also documented that financial leverage significantly and positively impact on many voluntary disclosure indices while profitability and ownership concentration do not broadly impact on the spectrum of voluntary disclosures.

Research limitations/implications – Following previous studies, this paper surveyed only the annual reports of listed firms, which is a regular medium of companies' disclosures. This paper however excludes voluntary disclosure contents in other such media as company's website, magazine and sustainability reports etc.

Originality value – Distinguished from similar empirical works, this disclosure analysis been directed to items within disclosure constructs. This account of analysis helps the inference of patters/ reasons/motives/attitudes that underlie voluntary disclosures.

Keywords- Voluntary Disclosures, CSE, Annual Report, Sri Lanka, Determinants, Corporate Strategic Disclosure Index, Financial and Capital Market Information Disclosure Index, Forward-Looking Disclosure Index And Social Reporting Disclosure Index.

Impact of Accounting Software on Business Performance of Listed Companies in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Adoption of Accounting Software becomes key factor in determining the survival and success of an organization. The objective of this paper is to investigate the impact of Accounting Software on Business Performance of Listed Companies in Sri Lanka

Design/methodology/approach: This study employed a quantitative research approach, distributing 70 questionnaires and receiving 34 responses. Using a random probability sampling method, the target population consisted of accountants or users of accounting software in Sri Lankan listed companies. Data analysis included five statistical methods: Descriptive Analysis, Normality Analysis, Reliability Analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis, and Multiple Regression.

Findings: The result indicates the Efficiency has significant impacts on business performance. Meanwhile, the other four characteristics which are Reliability, User Friendly, Data Quality and Accuracy are not found to have a significant impact on business performance. Overall, the results indicate that accounting software has an impact on business performance.

Practical implications: This study is significant to the firm's owners and manager in understanding the importance of using Accounting Information System (AIS) derived from Accounting Software to achieve the business performance. The findings of this paper will help the accounting software developers to develop a new software that fulfill the needs of user's and also it will benefit the firms that acquire appropriate accounting software.

Originality value: This study offers original insights into how accounting software influences business performance in Sri Lanka's listed companies. The findings provide valuable insights for business owners and software developers, guiding future enhancements.

Keywords: *Accounting Software, Accounting Information System, Efficiency, Reliability, User Friendly, Data Quality, Accuracy and Business Performance*

Impact of Payee Tax on the Performance of State University Executive Staff in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study explores the impact of the Pay as You Earn (PAYE) tax on the performance of executive staff at Sri Lankan state universities. The research aims to identify how the current PAYE tax system affects motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity among these executive staff.

Design/methodology/approach: A sample size of 320 executive staffs from 17 state Universities was studied using the stratified sampling method. To ensure validity and reliability, the survey was pre-tested, and Cronbach's alpha was used to confirm internal consistency. Factor analysis identified the key dimensions of job satisfaction and motivation affected by the PAYE tax, while correlation analysis revealed significant negative relationships between tax burden and performance. Multiple regression analysis further highlighted that higher PAYE tax burdens significantly reduce job satisfaction and motivation.

Findings: The findings underscore the substantial financial strain caused by the PAYE tax system, which directly impacts work performance and commitment among university executive staff.

Practical implications: The study offers policy recommendations aimed at balancing taxation and employee welfare, ensuring that tax policies do not unintentionally compromise the operational efficiency of university leadership.

Originality value: By illuminating the relationship between taxation and human resource performance, this study contributes to a broader understanding of taxation policies and their effects on human resource performance in the public higher education sector of Sri Lanka, with broader implications for tax reform and employee welfare programs.

Keywords: *Pay As You Earn (PAYE), Motivation, Performance, Productivity, Satisfaction, Employee Welfare*

The Impact of Board Structure, Ownership Structure and Corporate Control on the Performance of Non-Finance Listed Companies in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study mainly focuses on examining the impact of board structure, ownership structure and corporate control governance mechanisms on firm performance of listed companies in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: Study used the sample of 100 non-financial companies listed in Colombo Stock Exchange for 10 years 2014 to 2023 using stratified random sampling, and collected data analyzed using SPSS and Stata.

Findings: The study found that firm performance is negatively impacted by board independence, the frequency of board meetings, and CEO duality. In contrast, having female directors on the board is associated with better firm performance. Concentrated ownership positively affects performance, while corporate ownership tends to decrease it. Additionally, a larger audit committee positively influences firm performance, whereas more frequent audit committee meetings are linked to poorer performance.

Practical implications: This research explores how governance variables affect firm performance. It suggests that policymakers could improve corporate governance frameworks with mandatory requirements to enhance firm performance. Additionally, the findings provide a basis for future academic research on governance and performance.

Research limitation: This sample covers 17 industries, excluding banking, finance, and insurance sectors, and represents about 35% of the population of 280 companies.

Originality value: The study revealed that in Sri Lankan firms, board size does not significantly affect performance. Companies are increasingly separating the roles of CEO and chairman, which positively impacts performance. Enhancing board diversity, especially with more female directors, could improve firm performance. Concentrated ownership and institutional shareholding may hurt performance. Larger audit committees offer better oversight, but frequent meetings can harm performance; thus, fewer, strategic meetings are recommended.

Keywords: *Board Structure, Ownership Structure, Corporate Control, Firm Performance*

Role of Cloud Computing in Modernizing the Accounting Methods

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study explores the role of cloud computing in modernizing accounting methods, focusing on operational efficiency, accessibility, and real-time financial analysis. It highlights how cloud-based systems automate accounting tasks, reduce manual errors, enhance team collaboration across locations, and strengthen data security through encrypted storage and regular backups.

Design/methodology/approach: A survey methodology was employed, targeting 100 finance professionals utilizing cloud accounting software. Data collected from the survey were analyzed using SPSS, leveraging descriptive statistics and regression analysis to measure the impact of cloud computing on accounting practices and decision-making.

Findings: Cloud accounting significantly enhances decision-making by providing real-time access to financial data, reducing operational costs, and enabling scalability. However, challenges such as data privacy concerns, integration with legacy systems, and the need for user training were also identified.

Practical implications: The findings offer practical guidance for organizations adopting cloud accounting systems, emphasizing the necessity of addressing data security, system integration, and user readiness to optimize benefits and ensure successful implementation.

Originality value: This research establishes cloud computing as a pivotal factor in modernizing accounting methods, providing enhanced flexibility, security, and operational efficiency. It offers actionable recommendations for leveraging cloud technology to transform accounting practices.

Keywords: *Cloud Computing, Accounting Systems, Operational Efficiency, Data Security, Financial Decision-Making*

Determinants of Customer Satisfaction in Banking Sector: Evidence from People's Bank, Kurunegala District

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Customers have become the lifeblood of any organization. Customers are the source of banks' profitability. By satisfying the customer, the bank is able to retain the customer and reap maximum benefits from the relationship which ultimately leads to higher profitability. The objective of this study is to determine the factors that affect customer satisfaction in banking sector of Sri Lanka

Design/methodology/approach: Data were collected using structured questionnaires from 333 randomly selected samples of customers who deal with Peoples bank Kurunegala District. The data were analyzed using Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and Regression with the support of SPSS version 26.0. The normality test, ANOVA analysis, and factor analysis were carried out.

Findings: This study used, four independent variables (branch appearance, branch staff, internet and mobile banking and service factors) and dependent variable was customer satisfaction. The study establishes branch staff, internet and mobile banking, and service factors significantly affect customer satisfaction. But branch appearance does not have a significant impact on customer satisfaction.

Practical implications: Training programs for employees should be given top priority by managers in order to improve communication and customer service abilities. And additionally, enhancing the user experience and security of internet and mobile banking is essential. Allocating funds more wisely could improve the quality of services.

Originality value: This research provides customer satisfaction within the context of People's bank in the Kurunegala district, offering localized data. This highlights the importance of digital banking in rural regions. This study addresses the operational challenges and customer expectations. The research findings can be used to improve the customer satisfaction in the banks.

Keywords: *Determinants of Customer Satisfaction, Banking Sector: People's Bank, Customer Satisfaction*

Carbon Accounting in Sri Lankan SMEs: Challenges and Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research investigates carbon accounting adoption among Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Sri Lanka, focusing on both the barriers and opportunities they face. Despite being a critical component of the Sri Lankan economy, SMEs encounter significant challenges such as financial constraints, lack of technical expertise, and insufficient regulatory support. Carbon accounting is not only crucial for environmental sustainability but also enhances operational efficiency, risk management, and access to green financing, contributing to long-term business sustainability.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A mixed-methods approach was adopted, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews across various sectors to provide a comprehensive understanding of carbon accounting adoption.

Findings: The findings reveal that although awareness of carbon accounting is increasing, implementation rates remain low. Key barriers include limited access to relevant technologies, inadequate financial resources, and a lack of expertise, especially for domestically-focused SMEs. In contrast, SMEs involved in international trade demonstrate a higher propensity for carbon accounting adoption due to external regulatory pressures and competitive demands.

Practical implications: The study highlights significant opportunities for SMEs adopting carbon accounting, including enhanced access to green financing, improved market reputation, and better alignment with international sustainability standards. These benefits contribute to operational efficiency and offer a strategic advantage in competitive markets.

Originality value: This research provides valuable insights into the challenges and benefits of carbon accounting adoption among SMEs in Sri Lanka, a relatively underexplored area in the literature. The study concludes with actionable recommendations for policymakers, emphasizing the importance of developing sector-specific frameworks, financial incentives, and capacity-building programs to help SMEs overcome existing barriers. These measures are essential for promoting widespread carbon accounting adoption, thereby enhancing the sustainability and global competitiveness of Sri Lankan SMEs.

Keywords: *Carbon Accounting, Smes, Sustainability, Green Financing, Operational Efficiency, Sector-Specific Frameworks, Regulatory Support*

The Cross-Border Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on Interconnectedness among Financial Markets, Oil and Cryptocurrencies in Asia Pacific

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines how the Russia-Ukraine war impacted the interconnectedness of stock markets, cryptocurrencies, and oil return volatility among Asia Pacific economies including Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, China, India, Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam.
Design/methodology/approach: Daily market price data from January 1, 2011, to December 31, 2023, will be analyzed. The sample is divided into pre-pandemic (2011-2019), COVID-19 (2020-2021), and Russia-Ukraine conflict (2022-2023) periods. The methodology employs Diebold and Yilmaz's (2012) connectedness approach of Time-Varying Parameter Vector Autoregression (TVP-VAR), refined by Antonakakis et al. (2020) for dynamic estimation of evolving interdependencies.
Findings: The study demonstrated increased volatility spillovers between developed and emerging markets, growing integration of cryptocurrencies with traditional assets, and amplified impact of oil price fluctuations. The research revealed dynamic, time-varying relationships among markets, highlighting the complex nature of cross-border financial interactions in the region.
Practical implications: The findings can help with regulation by developing strategies to manage volatility transmission and risk across borders during political crises in Asia-Pacific.
Originality value: This research will make an important contribution by examining how different financial assets are impacted by geopolitical instability, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. It brings together the effects on stocks, cryptocurrency, and energy futures to fill an important gap in the literature. This gives a full picture of how political tensions affect many financial areas in this region.

Keywords: *Asia Pacific Markets, Cryptocurrency Integration, Financial Interconnectedness, Russia-Ukraine War, Volatility Spillovers*

The Effect of Environmental Uncertainty and Competitive Strategy on Strategic Management Accounting and Organizational Performance

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The aim of this study is to examine the casual relationship among strategic management accounting, environmental uncertainty, competitive strategy, and organizational performance of listed companies in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: Using a qualitative research approach data were gathered from 180 respondents, including operational managers, chief financial officers, senior accountants of diverse sectors in Sri Lanka. The proposed hypotheses were tested using the partial least squares structural equation model (SEM).

Finding: The results of the study emphasize the strong relationship between the use of strategic management accounting and organizational performance. Further, the results evidence the moderating role of environmental uncertainty and competitive strategy on the relationship between the use of strategic management accounting and organizational performance.

Practical implication: The finding provides valuable insight for organizations aiming to improve strategic responses and optimize performance in indeterminate environment.

Originality value: This study explores how strategic choices and different level of environmental uncertainty configurate the use of strategic management accounting and its efficacy in enhancing organizational performance.

Keywords: *Environmental Uncertainty, Competitive Strategy, Strategic Management Accounting, Organizational Performance*

Does an Augmented Fama and French (2015) Five Factor Model Work Better in Sri Lanka?

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research aims to empirically evaluate the effectiveness of an augmented Fama and French (2015) Five-Factor Model in explaining the variation of stock returns on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) in Sri Lanka.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study uses monthly data from April 2012 to March 2022, focusing on non-financial firms. The Newey-West heteroscedasticity and autocorrelation consistent estimator is employed to predict the applicability of the model. The empirical model tests the validity of seven factors including market factor (Rm-Rf), size factor (SMB), value factor (HML), profitability factor (RMW), investment factor (CMA), momentum factor (WML), and liquidity factor (IML). Factor mimicking portfolios for the Sri Lankan market are constructed following methods from Fama and French (2015) and Carhart (1997), with liquidity factor construction inspired by Chai, Faff, and Gharghori (2013).

Findings: The augmented five factor model is found to be applicable in Sri Lanka as the regression models are significant in almost all the cases. Yet, there is no significant improvement in the augmented model noticed in many regression portfolios with the addition of momentum and liquidity. The market premium found to be positive and significant in explaining the stock return variation in Sri Lanka and the influence of market premium on the cross-sectional variation of stock returns are very robust.

Practical Implications: The findings suggest that investors and financial analysts in emerging markets, such as Sri Lanka, can achieve better asset pricing predictions by incorporating liquidity and momentum factors into their models. This enhanced model could improve investment strategies, portfolio management, and risk assessment in such markets.

Originality value: This study contributes to the asset pricing literature by offering an empirical assessment of the augmented Fama-French Five-Factor Model in the context of an emerging market, particularly Sri Lanka. The unique inclusion of liquidity and momentum factors provides fresh insights into the model's applicability and performance in markets with distinctive characteristics.

Keywords: *Fama and French (2015) Five Factor Model, Momentum, Liquidity, CSE*

Exploring the Impact of Emerging Trends in Corporate Governance and Risk Management Practices and Resilience: Evidence from Listed Companies in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the relationship between emerging trend in corporate governance and risk management practices in Sri Lankan companies, focusing on how governance frameworks influence risk management effectiveness and overall organizational stability.

Design/methodology/approach: This study adopts a quantitative approach. Primary data is collected through a survey of executive officers and corporate managers from listed companies, with a non-contrived study setting. As a cross-sectional study, data is gathered at a single point in time, and quantitative data are used to test the research hypotheses.

Findings: The study reveals that corporate governance mechanisms significantly impact risk management practices. Specifically, board attributes demonstrate a significant and positive association with effective risk management, indicating that well-structured boards contribute to stronger risk oversight and control. Similarly, the audit committee's influence on risk management practices is both significant and positive, highlighting the committee's essential role in enhancing risk governance. Conversely, the ownership structure shows a negative but insignificant relationship with risk management practices, suggesting that ownership patterns may not meaningfully affect risk management effectiveness in this context

Practical implications: Enhancing board structures and fostering effective audit committees can significantly improve risk management practices among listed companies in Sri Lanka, promoting financial stability and accountability. Given the minimal impact of ownership structure, regulatory efforts may be more effective if focused on strengthening governance frameworks rather than altering ownership patterns.

Originality value: This study provides unique insights into the distinct roles of board attributes, audit committees, and ownership structure in shaping risk management practices within the Sri Lankan corporate landscape

Keywords: *Emerging Trend, Corporate Governance, Risk Management practices, Listed Companies in Sri Lanka*

Sovereign Bond Yield Connectedness Among Major Economies During Global Crises: Evidence from the COVID-19 Pandemic and Russia-Ukraine War

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research evaluates sovereign bond yield connectedness dynamics among G7 nations and major economies such as China, Russia, and India, encompassing the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war periods.

Design/methodology/approach: The study analyzed daily sovereign bond yield data from January 2011 to November 2023, divided into three subsamples: pre-COVID, COVID-19, and Russia-Ukraine war periods. The Diebold and Yilmaz connectedness approach with a Time-Varying Parameter Vector Autoregression (TVP-VAR) model was applied to investigate yield interconnectedness.

Findings: Germany, the US, Canada, and the UK emerged as significant yield transmitters spillovers, with Germany and the US as prime net transmitters. Japan, India, and Italy were net receivers. Japan consistently received spillovers from Canada, Germany, and the USA while transmitting to the UK. Italy mainly received from Germany and France, while China transmitted to the UK, France, Germany, and the USA. The UK shifted from a net transmitter to a receiver during crisis periods.

Practical implications: The study highlights the need for coordinated policy responses and robust risk management strategies in light of the dynamic nature of sovereign bond market linkages during turbulent periods. It emphasizes the importance of monitoring major economies' roles in global financial interconnectedness.

Originality value: This research comprehensively analyses sovereign bond yield connectedness during recent global crises, offering insights into the changing dynamics of financial market interdependencies. It proposes a regulatory framework to manage interconnectedness and enhance financial stability in the face of evolving yield relationships.

Keywords: *Connectedness, Diebold and Yilmaz, Pandemic, Russia-Ukraine War, Sovereign Bonds, Spillover, TVP-VAR, Yields*

Study of Financial Literacy on Sustainable Business Performance of SMEs in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – the main objective of this study is to investigate a significantly the empirical impact of the financial literacy on the sustainable business performance. This paper also aims to theoretically and empirically assess a comprehensive FL and sustainable business performance. the model incorporates FL that considered as exogenous variables consist of Financial Knowledge, Financial Skills, Financial Attitude and Financial Behavior and endogenous variable is Sustainable Business Performance.

Design /Methodology- A structured questionnaire was issued to collect the data which was collected from 459 owner managers from eastern province, Sri Lanka were analyzed using a structural equation modeling. The owner managers provide data reflecting the degree to which they work with FL to impact sustainable business performance.

Finding – generally the all four variables: Financial Knowledge, Financial Skills, Financial Attitude and Financial Behavior were statistically supported with the Sustainable Business Performance in Sri Lankan context.

Implication – The owner-managers are provided with an approach to assess the combined effects of FL on Sustainable Business Performance. Financial Knowledge and Attitudes are identified as necessary foundation to reach Sustainable Business Performance.

Originality / value – a comprehensive FL model proposed and empirically assessed. the result of the study supports the proposition that FL practices are good business practice to improve Sustainable Business Performance

Key words: Financial Knowledge, Financial Skills, Financial Attitude and Financial Behavior and Sustainable Business Performance

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Simultaneous Determination of Major Financial Decisions

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research explores the simultaneous relationship between major financial decisions of financing, dividend and investment decisions.

Design, methodology/approach: The sample data for this study includes 198 non-financial companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange over five years period after excluding the financial sector companies listed from 2018 to 2022.This study employs the Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) to estimate the regression models on the panel data.

Findings: The results show that simultaneity in financial decisions only occurs in financing and investment. Investment and dividend payment are not simultaneously decided, whereas only dividend is affecting financing but not the other way around.

Practical implication: It supports firms find the greatest balance between investing in growth, financing those investments, and paying shareholders with dividends, which can improve long-term profitability. By seeing these decisions together, companies can bring into line their policies to meet shareholder expectations, balancing between investment and dividends.

Originality value: The uniqueness lies in integrating these key financial decisions together rather than analyzing them in isolation. This approach could offer deeper understandings into how firms make trade-offs and regulate their policies across diverse financial areas.

Keywords: *Simultaneous Determination, Major Financial Decisions, Financing, Dividend, Investment*

Corporate Governance Practice and Sustainability Reporting Disclosure in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The aim of this study is to examine what information is voluntarily disclosed in sustainability reporting and to what extent corporate governance characteristics influence the sustainability reporting disclosure of companies listed in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: This study made use of a mixed research methodology. The first stage of this study examined the corporate governance practice and sustainability reporting disclosures of listed companies using qualitative content analysis. The next stage quantified both the scores of corporate governance practice and sustainability reporting disclosures. A measuring instrument comprising 26 checklists was used to measure the disclosures.

Findings: The study found that most companies voluntarily disclose information regarding sustainability, and corporate governance practice, impacts sustainability reporting disclosure in companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange in Sri Lanka.

Practical implications: This study will benefit policymakers, organizations, and those interested in improving disclosures, not only in sustainability reporting but also in generating reports to inform stakeholders

Originality value: Research on corporate governance practices and sustainability reporting disclosure in Sri Lanka is highly original and has the potential to make significant contributions to both academic literature and practical policy. The research could influence both corporate strategies and regulatory approaches, enhancing transparency and contributing to long-term sustainable economic development in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Disclosure, Corporate Governance and Sustainability Reporting*

Impact of Owner - Based and Lender - Based Governance Mechanisms on Firm Financial Performance of Listed Food, Beverage and Tobacco Companies in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Corporate governance mechanisms play a significant role in solving agency problems within organizations and it supports in ensuring the stability of companies by increasing the firm financial performance. Corporate governance research has concentrated on the governance executed by the shareholders, among several stakeholders of a firm. Owners and lenders-based mechanisms are suffering from firm financial performance problems. This study attempted to answer this problem by identifying the impact of both owner-based and lender-based governance mechanisms on the firm financial performance of listed food, beverage, and tobacco companies in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: The research model was conceptualized by using independent variables, corporategovernance mechanisms along with the two dimensions OG mechanisms: ownership concentration, board size, board composition & LG mechanisms: loan amount, loan magnitude and the dependent variables, firm financial performance along with the three dimensions firm profitability, firm value, firm distress level. This quantitative study sampled for twenty companies from 2019-2023 using the simple convenience sampling method**.** Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were used as the analytical tools.

Findings: The results indicate that the OG mechanisms would enhance the firm profitability and firm value while significantly impacts on firm distress level. The LG mechanism significantly impacts firm profitability, firm value, and firm distress level. Therefore, both structures of governance must be regarded as relevant factors in assessing various types of financial success of companies.

Practical implications: The results of this study have significant ramifications for various parties in order to ensure the financial stability, to mitigate the weaknesses of good corporate governance.

Keywords: *Corporate Governance, Agency Problem, OG Mechanism, LG Mechanism*

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Lotteries Buying Behavior in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The main purpose of this study is to generate additional revenue to the government for public expenditure to the welfare facilities of the people in the country from the sale national lottery products. The lotteries buying behavior of people specially in the Northern & Eastern provinces are very less in compare with other districts even though there is no price variance in regional wise. It is a very big question alarming in the mind of researcher why this much of difference of buying lottery tickets in the districts of North and Easter Provinces. There may be some specific reasons for the less sales performance in these districts. It was motivated the researcher to study this problem.

Methodology: This non-experimental quantitative study is based on the research questions mentioned above. The study used the lottery buying behavior as dependent variable and its determinants – demographic, economic, social, cultural, psychological and advertisement factors as independent variables. Testing of hypotheses employs statistical procedures to draw inferences about the population to seeks answer. The sampling size cover lottery buyers from 8 districts of Northern and Eastern provinces. According to the population, a sample size of 384 respondents (Lottery buyers) was identified by using online sample size calculator at 95% confidence interval. Collected data was analyzed by means of statistical method using SPSS. In the analysis descriptive statistics, Chi-squared test, correlation test and multiple regression techniques were performed to meet the objective of the study.

Findings: The demographic factors analysis, the urban and the rural areas did not contribute, but gender contribute marginally to buying behavior of lottery tickets while age group showed differently.

Implication of the research: The findings of the study would be useful for government and the senior marketing managers of the DLB & NLB improve sales performance. Finally, the public can understand the important and the philosophy behind the corporate social responsibility for the wellbeing of the public.

Keywords: *Passive Lotteries, Betting and Gambling Business, Buying Behavior*

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TRACK – INTEGRATED MARKETING APPROACHES FOR SUSTAINABLE BRANDING IN EVOLVING MARKETS

Impact of Green Marketing Strategies on Business Performance in Hotel Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Service business firms like hotel industries have now paid their attention on its business activities by considering environmental friendly marketing activities called as green marketing strategies. Since previous findings of studies conducted in green marketing strategy and firm performance also vary this contradiction led to carry out a study on green marketing strategies and business performance in hotel industry in Ampara Coastal Belt of Sri Lanka. Objective of this study is to know the impact of green marketing strategies on business performance in hotel industry.

Methodology: This study undertook a systematic review of green marketing strategies and business performance and developed a research framework. This study is a survey method that used a questionnaire to collect data from a sample size of 121 hotel owners and hotel workers. Descriptive statistics were used to describe demographic variables of the sample respondents.

Findings: As per the results of correlation, 4 green Ps such as green product, green physical evidences, green people and green process of green marketing are having strong correlation with business performance. 3 green Ps such as green price, green place and green promotions are having low correlation with business performance. However, as per the regression analysis, all the 7 green Ps are influencing business performance of hotel industry to a greater extent.

Practical implications: Hotel industry needs to focus mainly on green product, green physical evidence, green people and green process of green marketing strategy for enhancing their business performance. Green customers do not prefer green price. Thus, hotel industry owners need to pay special attention on green pricing to convince green price.

Originality value: This study adds value to literatures in the field of green marketing. In addition, this study gives awareness to green marketing to service sector like hotels.

Keywords: *Green Marketing, Business Performance*

Factors Influencing Adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Online Shopping

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To investigate the main factors influencing consumers acceptance and use of AI technologies in online shopping focusing on how perceived usefulness of AI, perceived ease of use, familiarity with AI technology and perceived risks affect consumer acceptance of AI in purchasing online.

Design/methodology/approach: This study employed a quantitative research design, gathering data through a structured survey distributed to a sample of 350 online shoppers using convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire assessed the perceived usefulness of AI, perceived ease of use, familiarity with AI technology and perceived risks and consumer acceptance of AI in purchasing online using five-point Likert scale questions. Statistical analyses, including correlation and regression, were used to examine the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

Findings: The results of the study indicated that all independent variables such as how perceived usefulness of AI, perceived ease of use, familiarity with AI technology and perceived risks are positively correlated with the dependent variable of consumer acceptance of AI in purchasing online. Increased perceived ease of use significantly contributed to a greater willingness to use AI technologies, suggesting that users prioritize ease of use in their shopping experiences.

Practical implications: The findings of this study suggest that online marketers should prioritize enhancing the convenience and personalization of their AI tools to foster greater acceptance among consumers. By investing in user-friendly interfaces and ensuring that AI systems provide tailored recommendations, marketers can significantly improve customer engagement and satisfaction.

Originality/ value: This study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive analysis of the factors that influence consumer acceptance of AI technologies in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Perceived Usefulness of AI, Perceived Ease of Use, Familiarity with AI Technology and Perceived Risks*

Driving Decisions: The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Behavior in Sri Lanka's Automobile Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigates the influence of social media marketing on consumer buying behavior within Sri Lanka's automobile industry. This research also seeks to quantify the extent of social media's influence on purchase behavior in the industry.

Methodology: The research adopts a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data was gathered from a survey of 500 automobile consumers in Sri Lanka, with questions focused on social media influence, brand engagement, and purchase decisions. Additionally, qualitative insights were obtained through interviews with 20 marketing professionals from the automobile industry. Statistical analyses, including regression and correlation analysis, were conducted to determine the relationship between social media factors and buying behavior, while thematic analysis was used to identify key consumer motivations and perceptions.

Findings: The study reveals that 68% of surveyed consumers reported being influenced by social media when purchasing a vehicle, with 52% indicating that positive reviews and testimonials significantly impacted their trust in a brand. Furthermore, 75% of respondents cited engaging content and visuals as a factor that increased their likelihood of considering a brand. Regression analysis demonstrated that social media engagement and brand presence accounted for 45% of the variance in purchase intentions, highlighting the crucial role of social media marketing in influencing buying behavior.

Practical implications: Automobile companies in Sri Lanka can harness social media as a powerful tool to influence consumer behavior. By focusing on creating high-quality, engaging, and trustworthy content, brands can improve customer loyalty and drive sales. Collaborations with influencers and active response to customer feedback were shown to enhance brand perception, making these strategies valuable for increasing consumer purchase intentions.

Originality value: This study adds to existing research by providing a quantitative analysis of social media's impact on consumer behavior within Sri Lanka's automobile sector. It underscores the importance of social media platforms not only as a promotional tool but also as a driver of consumer trust and purchase decisions, offering a localized perspective on the topic.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing, Consumer Buying Behavior, Automobile Industry, Brand Perception, Influencer Marketing, Customer Engagement, Purchase Intention*

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A Study on the Factors Influencing Consumers' Re-Purchase Intention Towards Eco Friendly Packaged FMCGS with the Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The sustainability of packaging should be enhanced by reducing the amount of materials used and incorporating recycled components, given that packaging significantly contributes to pollution. In the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, businesses face increasing pressure to adopt environmentally friendly strategies. This research seeks to identify the factors influencing repurchase intentions, with customer satisfaction serving as a mediating factor, specifically among consumers in the Central Province of Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: A comprehensive review of the literature identified attitude, environmental concern, willingness to pay, and personal norms as independent variables, while consumers' repurchase intention was treated as the dependent variable. Additionally, customer satisfaction was employed as a mediating variable. The study followed a deductive approach, Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to 384 consumers in the Central Province, using convenience sampling technique. Hypotheses were tested using correlation analysis, multiple linear regression analysis, and the Sobel test, with IBM SPSS 27 software employed for data analysis.

Findings: The results highlighted the significant influence of attitude, personal norms, environmental concern, and willingness to pay on consumers repurchase intentions towards eco-friendly packaged FMCGs. Customer satisfaction partially mediated the relationship between attitude, personal norms, and environmental concern and there was no mediation between willingness to pay and repurchase intention.

Practical implications: These findings have important implications for marketers, government policymakers, and packaging designers, encouraging them to implement measures that enhance repurchase intentions for eco-friendly packaged FMCGs in Sri Lanka.

Originality value: In Sri Lankan context, there were no previous researches that had explored the use of customer satisfaction as a mediator in the FMCG sector.

Key words: Eco-Friendly Packaging, FMCG, Customer Attitude, Environmental Concern, Willingness to Pay, Personal Norms, Customer Satisfaction, Repurchase Intention.

Retailers' Benevolence and Consumers' Loyalty: The Role of Consumers' Specific Trust in the Retail Supermarkets in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Retailing in Sri Lanka is growing exponentially and the shopping behavior is also changing from small retail outlets to major supermarkets. Retailers' benevolence in fact plays a vital role in the creation of customer loyalty towards retailers. The purpose of the study was to explore impact of retailers' benevolence on the consumer loyalty towards retail supermarkets in Sri Lanka and the role of consumers' specific trust on retailers.

Design/methodology/approach: The study was quantitative in nature. Primary data was used for this study. Questionnaire was developed and administered among 578 customers in Sri Lanka who had experience in shopping in supermarkets. Data was analyzed using SPSS. The sampling technique adapted for this study was convenient sampling as.

Findings: Findings reveal that retailer's benevolence creates consumers specific trust and it leads to consumer loyalty towards the supermarkets in Sri Lanka. Findings also indicate that consumers' specific trust also mediating between retailer's benevolence and consumers loyalty towards retailers in Sri Lanka. Thus, retail industry may enhance its investment on the retailers' benevolence strategies and obtain a good lucrative result by creating consumer specific trust. This study further implies that retailers are committed to the satisfaction of customers and they are doing right things to the customers.

Practical implications: Supermarket retailers in Sri Lanka may further increase the strategies for increasing the benevolence strategies to attract more customers and enhance the profitability of the retailing industry. Further, benevolence also positively influence the customer loyalty towards supermarkets by creating consumer specific trust on the retail supermarkets. This study also finds that the consumer trust is also one of the important factors for the success of retail supermarket in Sri Lanka.

Originality value:
This study is important for the retail supermarket industry in Sri Lanka to grow further while changing the consumer behavior towards shopping.

Keywords: *Retailing, Trust, Benevolence, Supermarket Retailing*

Exploring the Factors Influencing the Adoption of Mobile Banking Among the Customers of Commercial Banks in Sri Lanka: Special Reference to Ampara District

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Mobile banking allows customers to perform banking transactions via smart phones or other mobile devices. However, the adoption of these services varies across different regions, influenced by various factors. Therefore, this study aims to identify factors influencing the adoption of mobile banking among the customers of commercial banks in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: Primary data was collected from 385 respondents through a structured questionnaire comprising 32 statements related to the adoption of mobile banking. The random sampling method was used to choose respondents from the Ampara district in Sri Lanka. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 25, applying descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses. The Cronbach's alpha test was performed to confirm the constructs' reliability.

Findings: The study proved that Perceived Usefulness, Digital Literacy, Perceived Security, Relative Advantage, and Accessibility all have a positive and significant impact on mobile banking adoption. The formulated hypotheses have been supported by the results of the correlation and regression analyses.

Practical implications: The research provides valuable insights to help banks design targeted marketing strategies and educational programs, promoting the adoption of mobile banking. Its findings can guide both banks and policymakers in crafting effective strategies to boost mobile banking usage in Sri Lanka.

Research limitations: The sample is limited to the Ampara district, which means the findings may not accurately represent the broader population across different regions.

Originality value: The study adds value to the existing body of knowledge regarding mobile banking adoption within similar emerging market contexts. For scholars, it offers a foundational basis for future research on mobile banking services.

Keywords: *Mobile Banking, Perceived Usefulness, Digital Literacy, Perceived Security, Cost of Service and Accessibility*

The Impact of Digital Marketing Practices on Consumer Behavior with The Mediating Role of Consumer Trust in Sri Lanka Mobile Phone Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research investigates how digital marketing influences consumer behaviour in Sri Lanka's mobile phone industry, focusing on the role of trust as a mediator between digital marketing practices and consumer responses. The study aims to offer insights into the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in shaping consumer decisions in Sri Lanka.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A descriptive research design was employed, using a sample of 300 respondents selected via stratified random sampling from all nine provinces in Sri Lanka. Data was collected through surveys, and statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS software. The study tested hypotheses regarding the positive effects of digital marketing on consumer behaviour and the mediating role of trust. A conceptual framework was developed to examine the relationships between digital marketing, trust, and consumer behaviour.

Findings: The research reveals that digital marketing significantly impacts consumer behaviour. Among various channels, email marketing had the strongest influence on consumer behaviour, primarily through trust-building. Social media, mobile marketing, and website marketing also positively affected consumer behaviour, with trust playing a partial mediating role. These findings underscore the importance of trust in shaping how consumers respond to digital marketing.

Practical Implications: The study provides valuable guidance for mobile phone companies in Sri Lanka. By prioritizing trust-building strategies, such as transparent communication and consistency across digital platforms, companies can enhance consumer engagement and loyalty. The research also highlights which digital marketing practices particularly email and social media are most effective in influencing consumer decisions. This can help businesses optimize their marketing efforts, improve targeting, and make informed decisions about resource allocation.

Originality/Value: This research contributes to the understanding of digital marketing's influence on consumer behaviour in Sri Lanka. It also highlights the critical, yet often overlooked, role of trust as a mediator in the digital marketing-consumer behaviour relationship. These insights are valuable for both academics and practitioners to refine digital marketing strategies in Sri Lanka and similar markets.

Keywords: *Digital Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Consumer Trust, Mobile Phone Industr*

A Study on The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Decision in Modern Supermarkets in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The widespread adoption of social media and advancements in digital marketing have significantly transformed organizational strategies, marketing structures, and consumer engagement dynamics. Social media, rooted in Web 2.0 technologies, has emerged as a key tool for understanding consumer behavior, brand perceptions, and purchasing patterns. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing the effects of various social media platforms, content strategies, and engagement techniques on consumer behavior, thereby offering actionable insights to enhance marketing practices.

Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative research approach was employed for this study, systematically collecting numerical data through structured survey questionnaires from 385 as the quantitative design was deemed appropriate for capturing the influence of SMM on consumer purchasing behavior in the Sri Lankan supermarket sector.

Findings: The study found that engagement and relevant content on social media platforms was found to have a substantial impact on consumer behavior, emphasizing the need for creative and audience-centered communication. Further, content sharing emerged as a critical factor, with social proof and the virality of shared posts significantly influencing purchasing patterns. The research also highlighted the importance of content quality, demonstrating that high-quality and valuable social media posts positively affect consumer decisions by fostering trust and engagement. Finally, personalization in SMM, such as tailored advertisements and targeted promotions, was shown to be highly effective in driving purchase intentions, indicating that customized approaches resonate well with consumers. Together, these findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the pivotal elements of SMM that contribute to consumer purchasing behavior in the context of Sri Lanka's modern trade supermarkets.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing, Consumer Purchase Decision*

TRACK - Human Resource Strategies for Nurturing Resilient and Sustainable Organizational Cultures

Harnessing Diversity for Resilience: The Role of Inclusive HR Strategies in Building Strong Organizational Cultures

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To achieve a clearer understanding of the link between diversity and organizational resilience response, this study will focus on how firms can become resilient through appropriate inclusive HRM practices. Such a statement supports diversity and inclusion as interviewing imperatives to develop an organizational culture that fits the modern competitive and volatile global environment effectively.

Design/methodology/approach: The paper looks at the benefits of diversity-influenced SHRM practices by exploring diverse staffing, training, and appraisal techniques through case studies and literature reviews. With regards to the topic, it considers ways in which general inclusive human resource management practice fosters psychological safety, supports organizational employee engagement power, and overall organizational resilience.

Findings: The performance of the employees is enhanced, and a culture of psychological safety is created by offering the workers management support policies during periods of transition and crises. Due to reasonable diversity cases, an organization may come across; firms with factors of diversity and inclusion can adapt, innovate, and redress thus leading to sustainable existence and enhanced competitive advantage.

Practical implications: This ease makes this study beneficial to corporate and HR leaders who want to implement the desired resilience-enhancing diversity and inclusion strategies. It is possible that organizations develop a more flexible pool of employees willing and capable of handling pressure conditions and sustaining relevant competitive advantages when providing priorities to the various forms of hiring and inclusiveness.

Originality value: Therefore, the research contributes to the existing understanding of organizational resilience recognizing the importance of HR inclusiveness and diversity. It offers a unique perspective on an organization's need for diversity management for corporate power and the global competitive market and adjustment.

Keywords: *Diversity, Organizational resilience, Inclusion, Culture, Psychological safety.*

The Impact of Emotional Contagion on Burnout of Police Constables with the Mediating Role of Emotional Resilience

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Human resources are the backbone of every organization. This study explores the impact of Emotional contagion on the burnout of police constables with the mediating role of emotional resilience. This research aims to carefully determine and examine the mediating role of emotional resilience on the relationship between emotional contagion and burnout of police constables in the police department in the Kurunegala district.

Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative research approach is applied for this study, adopting a sample of 120, selected through the simple random sampling method, from the population of 120 police constables in the police department in the Kurunegala district. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS software version 21, with descriptive and inferential analyses performed to decipher the complex relationships between variables.

Findings: As per the results of multiple regression results, four hypotheses (H2: β= .209, p=.004), (H3: β= -547, p=.000), (H4: β=.454, p=.000) and (H6: β=.189, p=.022) were accepted while (H5: β=-.189, p=.008) was rejected. The mediation analysis indicated a partial mediation effect of emotional resilience on the impact of emotional contagion on burnout. The findings suggest that emotional resilience negatively affects emotional contagion and subsequently reduces burnout among police constables in the police department in Kurunegala.

Practical implications: These results contribute to the growing body of research on workplace dynamics, highlighting the intricate relationship between interpersonal relationships and professional outcomes in police departments.

Originality value: The findings of this study will be a better guide for the administrative police department, non-gazette officers, policymakers, decision-makers, and other concerned agencies.

Keywords: *Burnout, Emotional Contagion, Emotional Resilience, Police Constables*

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Job Design Techniques and Employee Performance: An Investigation on the Management Service Employees of the Divisional Secretariat in Ampara District, Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research aimed to explore the relationship between job design techniques and employee performance among management service officers working in divisional secretariats in the Ampara district of Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: A sample of 217 was drawn from twenty Divisional secretariats in Ampara District. This study used the survey method. A standardized job design questionnaire (Munyiri, 2018) and a self-administered questionnaire was distributed among the respondents to collect the data using a random sampling method. The data that was gathered was presented in graphs and tables to explain the pattern of responses. Popular statistical SPSS version 26 package was used to analyze the data. Results obtained from descriptive, correlations and regression analyses were used for interpretations.

Findings: This study has shown that job rotation, job enlargement, job enrichment, and job simplification have an impact on employee performance. The results showed that there is a strong positive correlation ($r= 0.803$), ($r= 0.809$), ($r= 0.854$) between job rotation, job enrichment, and job simplification with employee performance respectively. Also, the results showed that there is a negative correlation ($r= -0.499$), between job enlargement and employees' performance.

Practical implications: This research has shown that the management service officers who work in the divisional secretariats in Ampara District are aware that their job design and job design techniques impact their performance. This finding will be useful for employees in choosing the most appropriate job design techniques to increase the level of employee performance.

Originality value: This study reveals that job design techniques are important to the management service officers to increase performance which increases the efficient service for the public sector.

Keywords: *Job Design Techniques, Employee Performance, Management Service Officers, Divisional Secretariat*

Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment of Administrative Officers in State Universities in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this research was to study the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment of administrative officers in state universities in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: Data collected from 136 administrative officers working in 15 state universities employing a structured questionnaire were used for the study. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation, Pearson product movement correlation, independent t-test, one-way ANOVA and multivariate regression.

Findings: The results reveal that administrative officers are satisfied with their jobs in general. Professional growth opportunities, opportunity for advancement, satisfaction with benefits and satisfaction with salary were the lowest mean scorers among the components. High degree of organizational commitment was found. According to Pearson product correlation, there was a positive moderate relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Job satisfaction components such as recognition, professional growth opportunities, clarity of mission, work itself, effective senior management, and presence of core values were found significant predictors of organizational commitment. The administrators were satisfied and highly committed in general.

Practical implications: The recommendation to policymakers was to increase commitment levels by enhancing the significant contributors to organizational commitment.

Originality value: This study improves understanding the levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment of the administrators of state universities in Sri Lanka, identifying factors that can improve their job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment, Administrative Officers, State Universities*

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The Impact of Electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM) Practices on Organizational Performance in the Banking Sector in Ampara District

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to examine how organizational performance in the banking industry of Ampara district is affected by Electronic Human Resource Management (E-HRM) practices.

Design/methodology/approach: Data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 200 employees working in banks in the Ampara district and secondary sources, including journals, articles, and websites. The research utilized stratified random sampling to gather data which was classified based on their designations.

Findings: The results showed a strong positive correlation between variables and as per the regression (80.1%) a significant impact of e-HRM practices on organizational performance in the banking sector.

Practical implications: The research offer organizations clear guidelines for how e-HRM practices (i.e. e-Recruitment, e-Basic organizational information management, e-Salary management, e-Learning and training, e-Welfare, and e-Career development systems) can be used to facilitate and improve organizational performance.

Originality/value: The research offer valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and management professionals seeking to integrate engagement into e-HRM practices and policies to enhance organizational performance.

Keywords: *Electronic Human Resource Management (E-HRM) Practices, Organizational Performance, Banking Sector.*

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Job-Related Stressors and Teachers' Performance: With Special Reference to Primary School Teachers in Akkaraipattu Educational Zone, Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The research was conducted to find out the influential relationship between work related stressors and teachers' performance among primary school teachers in the Akkaraipattu educational zone.

Design/methodology/approach: A sample of 162 was drawn from 40 primary schools in Akkraipattu educational zone. This study used the survey method. Standardized questionnaires were distributed among the respondents to collect the data. The gathered data was presented in graphs and tables to explain the pattern of responses. A popular statistical SPSS 26 package was used to analyse the data. Results obtained from descriptive, correlations and regression analyses were used for interpretation.

Findings: This study has shown that job role conflict, work overload, inadequate reward policy and job burnout impact teachers' job performance. It was found that job role conflict, work overload, inadequate reward policy and job burnout have a negative impact on teachers' job performance in primary schools in the Akkaraipattu educational zone.

Practical implications: This research has shown that the teachers who work in the primary schools in the Akkaraipattu educational zone are aware of their job role conflict, work overload, inadequate reward policy and job burnout impact on their job performance. This finding will be useful for the teachers concerning work related stressors in order to increase the level of job performance.

Originality value: This study discloses that work related stressors are to be minimized to increase the job performance of primary school teachers.

Keywords: *Job Role Conflict, Work Overload, Inadequate Reward Policy, Job Burnout, Teachers' Job Performance*

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Work-Life Balance and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: A Special Reference of the State Banking Staff in the Ampara District, Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Work-life balance has emerged as one of the key concepts in human resource management, and employees at all levels of employment place a high importance on it. Consequently, this study explores how work-life balance impacts organizational citizenship behavior.

Design/methodology/approach: The research included 130 state banking staff in Ampara district as the sample and a random sampling method was used for data collection. A standard questionnaire was used to collect the data from these banking staff.

Findings: The study findings showed that work-life balance had a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.754$) with organizational citizen behavior. The research findings provide a thoughtful understanding of the significance of work-life balance and organizational citizenship behavior. As a result, the proper balance between personal and professional life will lead to organizational citizenship behavior among employees.

Practical implications: Nevertheless, future researchers can reinvent this study with a greater sample size, and other private and state banks. In addition, the study's recommendations could help to strengthen the work-life balance among state bank employees in Sri Lanka.

Originality value: This study provides value for the existing body of knowledge on work-life balance and organizational citizenship behavior of this sample area and the understanding of the importance of Work-life balance for banking staff to increase their organizational citizenship behavior to increase the performance and productivity of the banks.

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, State Banks*

Employment Rights of Women in the Post Pandemic World: Challenges and Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The Covid-19 brought many substantial impacts on labour markets and the workforce. The pandemic disproportionally affected the women workers in terms of business, health, education and employment. The need to promote and address the employment rights of women has emerged in the post pandemic world of work. Thus, the study intends to analyze the challenges and opportunities for female workers in the post pandemic world.

Design/methodology/approach: A sample of 120 working women was drawn using convenience sampling method. The research approach used was Inductivism. Overall, the research study was qualitative in nature. Survey strategy was used to conduct the research with the survey instrument being phone call interviews. The data collected from the interviewees was analyzed using thematic analysis.

Findings: The pandemic significantly had the effects on female workers in losing jobs than men as they are the co-players at household tasks and taking care of children. On the other hand, the study finds the pandemic has paved some innovative paths for women through new types of employments such as remote and online jobs which created new opportunities for them to work from home, to earn and to use their capabilities.

Research implications: The post pandemic has created immense of female youtubers whereas the home makers have become the earners through the innovative and entertaining videos. Thus, the results will offer insight for the researchers and policymakers to understand the nature of women empowerment from the post pandemic which is a new revolution in terms of employment opportunities for women and it has somehow empowered the women to fulfill their dreams to earn and maintain the work-life balance in a possible way.

Research Limitation: This study eliminated unemployed women. For future studies, researchers may consider employed and unemployed women to get a deep insight of the findings and its generalizability.

Originality / Value: The findings of this study would help policy makers to take necessary steps in planning women empowerment strategies to promote the nations.

Keywords: *Employment, Women's Rights, Post Pandemic World, Challenges, Opportunitie*s

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Work Life Balance and its Individual Level Antecedents: Special Reference to Academic and Administrative Heads of the Universities in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This paper explores the impact of individual work life balance antecedents such as personality wellbeing and time management on work life balance of the North and Eastern province university academic and administrative heads in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: The survey method was employed to gather data from the North and Eastern province Universities such as the University of Jaffna, Eastern University, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka and Vavuniya University academic and administrative heads were taken into consideration. The sample size is 339. Of these, 257 were returned (75.8%) and utilized, and a strong analytical process followed.

Findings: The study outcomes show that individual work life balance factors of personality wellbeing and time management have considerable strength in work life balance.

Practical implications: The study offers support and a path for the Sri Lankan higher education segment. Additionally, the study's outcome would facilitate a direction for the university's academic and administrative heads to improve their work life balance by using these individual factors.

Originality value: This study is beneficial for policymakers in higher education to think about the individual aspects such as personality, wellbeing and time management to improve the work life balance of their employees.

Keywords: *Personality; Wellbeing; Time Management; Work-Life Balance; Individual Factors*

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The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Employee's Job Performance – A Study on Insurance Companies in Ampara District

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research was conducted investigated the impact of human resource management practices namely compensation, training and development and promotion policy on job performance of employees in insurance companies in Ampara district.

Design/methodology/approach: A total number of 100 questionnaires were distributed to the all employees in the insurance companies in Ampara district. This study used the survey method. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the respondents to collect the data. Gathered data were presented in graphs and tables to explain the pattern of responses. Results obtained from descriptive, correlations and regression analyses were used for interpretations.

Findings: This study has indicated that compensation, training and development, promotion policy have impact on employee's job performance. Result indicated that compensation showed a positive correlation with job performance, the regression analysis suggests it may not be a significant predictor. Training and development, promotion policy was confirmed to have positive and significantly associated with employee's job performance in insurance companies in Ampara district.

Practical implications: This research has shown that the employees work in the insurance companies in Ampara district are aware about their human resource management practices impact on employee's job performance. This finding will be useful for insurance companies to increase employee's job performance.

Originality value:
This study reveals that human resource management practices is important to the insurance company employees to increase their job performance.

Keywords: *Compensation, Training and Development, Promotion Policy, Employee's Job Performance.*

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Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on The Retention of Sales Staff (Northern and Eastern Provinces) of Union Assurance Plc.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: In today's competitive environment, effective human resource management (HRM) is critical for organizations striving to attract and retain talented employees. In this context, insurance companies struggle to attract and retain the best sales staff. Currently, insurance Companies accept that human resource management practices are the cornerstone for attracting and retaining talented sales Employees who continue to contribute to achieving profitability and other corporate objectives. Union Assurance Plc served as the focal point of this study. This study focused on Union Assurance PLC, specifically its sales staff in the Northern and Eastern provinces (Cluster 4) of Sri Lanka, to investigate the impact of HRM practices on sales staff retention. The aims of the study were to find the impact of HRM practices on the retention of sales employees which has emerged as the dominant research issue in the field of HRM.

Design/methodology/approach: A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data from 199 sales staff from the Eastern and Northern branches of Union Assurance. The questionnaire covering independent variables such as recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and rewards, and performance management with retention of sales staff as the dependent variable. Descriptive, correlation and regression analyses were employed to analyze the data.

Findings: The analysis revealed that HRM practices, including recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and rewards, and performance management, significantly impact the retention of sales employees at Union Assurance PLC. Among these factors, performance management had the most substantial effect on employee retention in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

These findings not only address the research questions by demonstrating the overall significance of HRM factors on retention but also provide practical insights for HR professionals in the insurance industry, highlighting performance management as the most critical factor.

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Practical implications: The study's results provide valuable insights for Union Assurance PLC in developing targeted HRM strategies to enhance sales employee retention. By focusing on effective performance management and other HRM practices, the company can improve job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention rates. Additionally, the findings contribute to the broader literature on HRM and employee retention in the insurance industry, particularly in the context of Sri Lanka, offering a foundation for future research and practical applications in HRM strategies.

Originality value: This is the additional contribution to human resource management theories from Sri Lankan context. This is a new contribution among insurance industry in the Sri Lankan context in the relevant scope.

Keywords: *Human Resource management Practices, Employee retention, Union Assurance*

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F M C   S E U S L

Impact of Internship Training on Employee Performance

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The major purpose of the study is to analyze the impact of internship training for management undergraduates on employee performance

Design/methodology/approach: Primary data was collected from the management graduates that passed out from state universities between 2010 – 2018. The study collected data from the 165 respondents according to the random sampling method. A questionnaire survey was conducted during a two-month period. The level of measuring variables was interval and the relevant statistical techniques for these measures were univariate analysis and bivariate analysis.

Findings: Internship training for undergraduates has a significant positive relationship with employee performance. In addition, the study found the technical and professional skills gained from internship training have more influence on job performance.

Practical implications: Undergraduates should more focus on their internships to develop their skills and state universities and the other higher education institutions need to focus to send their undergraduates for internship training program compulsorily.

Originality value: This study offers new insights on the relationship of internship training of undergraduates of state universities to employee performance.

Keywords: *Internship Training, Employee Performance, Undergraduates, State Universities.*

Corporate Social Responsibility and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Does Employee Job Satisfaction Matter? Case of Sri Lankan Tourism Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the studies to find the influence of CSR on the perception of employee's job satisfaction (JS) are very few. Additionally, studies on the mediating effect of JS on the relationship between CSR and OCB seems to be not conducted as far as the published literature is concerned. The first objective of this study was to investigate the effect of employees' perception of CSR on OCB, and JS, and the second objective was to explore the mediating role of JS to link employees' perception of CSR and OCB.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data from 500 employees in the tourism industry in the eastern province of Sri Lanka. The OCB scale measuring two dimensions of OCB (OCBO and OCBI) developed by Williams and Anderson (1991) was used to measure OCB. Maignan and Ferrell (2000) questionnaire was used to measure perceived CSR of employees. The satisfaction questionnaire having fifteen items adopted from Tamm et al., (2010) was used to measure JS. The causal step method of Baron and Kenny (1986) was employed for analyzing the effect of mediation in this study.

Findings: CSR were found to be significant in promoting employee OCB. The results also demonstrated that job satisfaction fully mediate the relationship between CSR and OCB.

Practical implications: Findings highlighted that CSR among hotel industry is important to increase OCB which will improve its overall performance. The concept of CSR should be considered as the essential part in the strategies of tourism companies. This study discusses the theoretical and practical implications of these findings, and offers suggestions for future studies. This is the additional contribution to social identity theory and social exchange theory from Sri Lankan context.

Originality Value: This is a new contribution among hotel industry in the Sri Lankan context in the relevant scope.

Keywords: *Corporate Social Responsibility, Job Satisfaction, OCB, Sri Lanka, Survey*

Impact of Occupational Stress Factors on Job Performance: Study on Teaching Staff of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to evaluate the impact of occupational stress on job performance among teaching staff at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. The factors of occupational stress examined include workload, working environment, and home-work interference.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study population comprised 244 teaching employees at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, from which a simple random sample of 150 employees was selected. Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire administered via Google Forms and emailed to the teaching staff, yielding 116 valid responses for analysis. The data were analyzed using SPSS 26.

Findings: Outputs of the correlation analysis indicated that each factor; workload, working environment, and home-work interference had a strong negative and significant relationship with job performance. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis demonstrated a strong negative impact of occupational stress on job performance.

Practical Implication: These results enhance our understanding of the significant inverse relationship between occupational stress factors and job performance, highlighting the urgent need for stress management interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of stress on the teaching staff's job performance.

Originality/Value: Future research could build on this study by including a larger sample size and examining additional private and state universities, and other educational institutions. This study also provides a new contribution to the education industry in Sri Lanka regarding occupational stress and job performance.

Key Words: Workload; Working Environment; Home-Work Interference; Occupational Stress; Job Performance

Factors Influencing Performance in Academic Teamwork of Special Reference to Undergraduates of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research was conducted to identify the factors influencing performance of undergraduates in academic teamwork of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka (SEUSL).

Design/methodology/approach: A sample of 18 groups was drawn from final year undergraduates from SEUSL. The research approach used was Inductivism and qualitative in nature. Survey strategy used to conduct the research with the survey instrument being focused group discussion and interviews. The data analyzed using thematic analysis.

Findings: This research conducted to identify the factors influencing performance of undergraduates in academic teamwork in SEUSL The factors, such as team cognition, psychological safety, trust, reflexivity, effort, perceived leader integrity, implicit coordination, team coaching and team creativity and positive note. We found that team coaching is the factor that contributes most in the team performance.

Practical implications: This research shows that when undergraduates perform as a teamwork that they should follow the coach and guidance of the relevant subject lecturer. This finding useful for undergraduates themselves to enhance the team spirit for their best academic performance and future researchers and academicians may focus team work and its importance to enhance students. performance.

Originality value: This study reveals that team coaching is important to undergraduates to perform as a teamwork efficiently and effectively within the university which will be a model for academician, researchers, and undergraduates to design team-based teaching and learning in their curriculum.

Keywords: *Academic Teamwork, Performance, Undergraduates*

Online Education- A Post Pandemic of COVID: With special Reference to Higher Educational Institutions in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The aim of this research is to evaluate the performance of students in the higher educational institutes in online learning after the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: The research framework was conceptualized with four variables such as Learners' experiences, learning facilities, teacher support, institutional support to measure the performance of the participants. This research employed a quantitative research design. An online questionnaire was issued among students in 10 higher educational institutes such as universities and Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technical Education (SLIATEs) in Sri Lanka. In order to collect primary data for the study among a sample of 330 students selected randomly. Gathered data was assessed by using SPSS 23.0 student version. Univariate, bivariate, and multiple regression analysis were used in this study to test the hypotheses.

Findings: Learners' experiences, learning facilities, teacher support, supports organization have significant positive impact on students' performance in online learning, Students' satisfaction is the crucial factor for the success of education.

Research implications: It is important to reduce the challenges associated with online learning to enhanceperformance of students in online learning. It is responsible for academics and academic institutions to setup the necessary arrangements to enhance students' performance via online mode education since it has been an alternative teaching learning process now a days.

Research limitation: This study eliminated selected higher educational institutes. For future studies, researchers may consider all higher educational and professional institutes to get a deep insight of the findings and its generalizability.

Originality value: Findings of this study will be beneficial to students, academics and policy makers in order to ensure the success of the online education in future educational planning.

Keywords: *Learner's Experience, Learning Facilities, Teacher Support, Institutional Supports, Students' Performance.*

The Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction on the Relationship of Training and Development and Performance Appraisal System on Employee Performance: Empirical Evidence from Private Commercial Banking Sectors in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose - The purpose of this research is to examine the effects of Training & Development and Performance Appraisal system on Employee Performance through the mediating role of Job satisfaction in the private commercial Banking sectors in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka.

Design / Methodology/ Approach -The Questionnaires were administered to collect primary data from the 200 managerial and non-managerial level employees in the private commercial banking Sectors in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Structural Equation modeling was used to analyze the structural relationship between research variable using Smart PLS-4.0**.**

Findings- The findings of this study revealed that the Training & Development and Performance Appraisal system have significant and positive relationship with employee performance and job satisfaction mediates the relationship among variables.

Research limitations- Data have been gathered from private commercial banking Sectors operating only in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Thereby the findings of the study should not be generalized to the whole banking Sectors operating throughout the country.

 Practical Implications - The findings of the study provide a clear guidance to the banking practitioners / policy makers to take further steps in achieving the organizational goal through the employee performance.

Originality value –The study contributes to the current literature by linking Training & Development and Performance Appraisal System to employee performance through job satisfaction in the banking sectors of Sri Lanka

Keywords – Training & Development, Performance Appraisal System, Jobs satisfaction, Employee Performance.

Assessing the Mediating Effect of Work-Life Balance Between Antecedents of Work-Life Balance and Job Performance of Academic and Administrative Heads in the Sri Lankan Universities

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The current Work-Life Balance (WLB) is the major issue confronted by the employees. This study aimed to find out the impact of the WLB antecedents such as personality, well-being, time management, job stress, organizational support, WLB company practices, family support, child and elderly care, and technology on job performance in the presence of WLB in Academic and Administrative Heads of the Sri Lankan University.

Design/methodology/approach: To achieve this aim, the quantitative method was implemented, and academic and administrative heads from the universities in the North and East provinces were selected. A structured questionnaires were distributed to 371 participants, and 274 responses were received among participants. Further, SPSS-AMOS version 23 was used to analyze the conceptual model through structural equation modeling through the collected data.

Findings: The structural model of the study presented that WLB is a significant mediator between personality, well-being, time management, job stress, and technology with job performance. Also, WLB is not a significant mediator between organizational support, WLB company practices, family support, child and elderly care and job performance.

Practical implications: The findings revealed that the antecedents of WLB such as personality, well-being, time management, job stress and technology are important antecedents of WLB which should be considered by the university administrators.

Originality value: This study novel provides valuable contributions by examining the mediation role of WLB between antecedents of WLB and job performance. This research addresses a leadership cohort to fill a gap in the literature about the influence of WLB on leadership-improved job performance in higher education institutions.

Keywords: *Antecedence of Work-life balance, Job Performance, Work-life balance; Academic and Administrative Heads.*

Impact of Social Media Usage on Work Life Balance of Working Professionals in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research aims to identify the impact of social media usage on work life balance of working professionals in Sri Lanka. Specially the study going to analyze the impact of professional and personal life social media usages on Work Life Balance of Working professionals separately in Sri Lanka.

Design/ Methodology approach: This study employs a quantitative research design using a survey method to collect data from working professionals in Sri Lanka. The research aims to quantify the impact of social media usage on work-life balance. The population for this study includes all working professionals in Sri Lanka. A stratified random sampling technique will be used to ensure representation across different sectors (e.g., IT, education, healthcare, finance, etc.). The sample size of 950 working professional in Sri Lanka used to collect the data through structured questionnaire to ensure representativeness and reliability.

Findings: Social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter help professionals in networking, knowledge sharing, and career development, which can enhance job satisfaction and work-life balance. Excessive use of professional social media during work hours can lead to distractions and reduced productivity, negatively impacting work-life balance. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp facilitate communication and connection with friends and family, contributing to personal well-being and a better work-life balance. Overuse of personal social media can lead to procrastination, increased stress, and a blurred boundary between work and personal life, adversely affecting work-life balance.

Practical implication: Employers should encourage balanced social media use, providing guidelines and training to enhance productivity and work-life balance. Employees should be mindful of their social media habits, ensuring professional and personal use does not interfere with each other, thereby improving overall job satisfaction and personal well-being.

Originality value: This research uniquely explores the dual impact of professional and personal social media use on work-life balance among Sri Lankan professionals, providing actionable insights for better digital habits.

Keywords: *Social Media usage, Work Life Balance, Working Professionals*

TRACK – INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Effects of Cyberbullying on Learners' Writing Skills at the University of Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study explores the impact of cyberbullying - defined as the use of electronic communication to harass or intimidate - on university students' writing skills, particularly those using social media. It examines how cyberbullying affects both the social and psychological aspects of students' academic writing, highlighting an underexplored consequence of online harassment in higher education.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The target population for the study comprised undergraduate students from the University of Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir. A random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 350 undergraduates. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire to analyze the relationship between cyberbullying and writing proficiency.

Findings: The study reveals that cyberbullying significantly impacts students' confidence, self-expression, and clarity in writing. Participants exposed to cyberbullying reported reduced focus and coherence in academic writing, demonstrating that online harassment negatively influences critical academic skills.

Practical Implications: The findings highlight the need for educational institutions to implement digital literacy and anti-cyberbullying programs. Policymakers can also leverage these insights to strengthen regulations aimed at minimizing cyberbullying and safeguarding students' academic performance.

Originality/Value: This study provides novel insights into how cyberbullying affects students' writing skills, bridging a gap in existing research that often overlooks the academic consequences of cyberbullying. It offers valuable implications for educators, students, and policymakers to foster safer online environments.

Keywords: *Cyberbullying, Writing Skills, Social Media, Academic Performance, Learners*

The Effect of FinTech on Mobile Payment and Digital Wallet Services in the Retail Banking Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research investigates the impact of FinTech on mobile payment (MP) and digital wallet services within the retail banking industry. It evaluates how these technologies enhance accessibility, integration, and security, while also addressing the challenges such as security issues, compliance risks, and additional costs.

Design/methodology/approach: The study utilized a mixed-method approach, including a literature review and an online survey of 100 participants who are retail bank customers. The literature review examined significant milestones and challenges in mobile payment systems and digital wallet implementation. Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis to provide insights into user experiences and practical implications.

Findings: FinTech was found to significantly enhance accessibility and efficiency for users and improve service delivery for organizations. However, challenges such as security risks, compliance concerns, and implementation costs remain. The study highlights the need for strategic measures in these areas to optimize the benefits of FinTech adoption.

Practical implications: Retail banks can leverage FinTech to streamline services, improve customer satisfaction, and remain competitive. This requires investments in robust security measures, customer education, and strategic adoption of emerging technologies to address existing challenges and anticipate future developments.

Originality value: This research provides a detailed analysis of FinTech's role in mobile payments and digital wallets, offering actionable insights for the retail banking industry to enhance its technological infrastructure and customer offerings.

Keywords: *Fintech, Mobile Payments, Digital Wallets, Retail Banking, Security, Compliance*

Transforming Public Services: The Impact of Big Data on E-Government Implementation in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research examines the usefulness and relevance of metadata in e-government services. It examines how big data, which has the 5V's (Volume, Velocity, Variety, Veracity, and Value), affects e-government platform efficiency and effectiveness. The emphasis is on how this integration may boost performance amid fast technology advancements and increased data complexity.

Design/methodology/approach: A standardized questionnaire is used to collect data from 242 senior, operational, and intermediate managers in four areas for quantitative research. Expert ratings and Cronbach's alpha coefficient confirmed the questionnaire's reliability and validity. SmartPLS 4 was used to evaluate the model's validity and dependability. The study examined how the 5Vs' big data criteria affect e-government services.

Findings: The research shows that big data is crucial to e-government service implementation. The research found that these parameters significantly improve e-government service stacking. Big data analytics helps digitally alter government services, improve decision-making, and improve service delivery.

Practical implications: The findings emphasize the need for big data analytics in e-government infrastructure to improve service quality and responsiveness. Big data may help governments increase public engagement, optimize resource allocation, and provide more personalized services.

Originality value: This paper provides empirical evidence of big data's 5V's impact on e-government services. The declaration emphasizes metadata and big data analytics as key tools for public sector digital transformation.

**Keywords*: 5Vs, E-Government Services, Big Data, Public Services, Sri Lanka*

Analyzing the Collaboration Between Industry 4.0 And Circular Economy Towards Supply Chain

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This review paper aims to analyze the interconnection of Industry 4.0 (I4.0) and the Circular Economy (CE) within the supply chain management concept, focusing on how these standards can collectively lead to improved sustainability and efficient operations. The study pursues to identify the collaborations between digital technologies and circular economic practices while submitting a thorough knowledge of their collective influences on supply chain applications and sustainability.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A systematic literature review was conducted, developing outcomes, based on several research articles, that analyze the association amongst Industry 4.0 technologies, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), big data analytics and automation, and circular economy moralities. The review incorporates empirical studies, theoretical frameworks, and case studies to deliver a complete interpretation of the present research states on this topic.

Findings: The findings determine that the collaboration between the Industry 4.0 technology applications evidently boosts the performance of circular economy practices in the supply chain field. Digital tools increase efficient resource management, zero waste base, and enhanced collaboration among stakeholders, collectively leading to sharped operational efficiency and sustainability. Furthermore, the review emphasizes the demand for collaborations in-between several industries and stakeholder involvement as a critical success factor for the effective implementation of circular-based business models.

Practical implications: The consequent findings of this review study can direct the followers to adopt short-term circular economy initiatives within their existing supply chains while uplifting Industry 4.0 technologies. Since digitalized solutions not only heighten resource use, but also endorse interconnective performance among cross-industries, organizations are advised to adopt them, thus increasing the inclusive supply chain flexibility.

Research Limitations: This review study is restricted to the space of early studies; those may not be able to comprehend the entire relevant research under this topic. In addition to that, the suddenly converting nature of Industry 4.0 and circular economy thoughts insists the enduring research work to step with the latest expansions and practices.

Originality value: Through granting an inclusive combination of how Industry 4.0 and circular economy philosophies can be unified within supply chains, this study adds further values to the prior structure of knowledge. It highlights the necessity for additional observed research to discover the real-world applications and findings of this combination in different industrial frameworks.

Keywords: *Industry 4.0, Circular Economy, Supply Chain Management, Sustainability, Collaboration.*

Green Guard: A Deep Learning-Based Android Application for Detecting Plant Diseases

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research aims to expedite the diagnosis of plant diseases to avert agricultural losses. Considering that plant diseases account for up to 40% of global food crop losses, this study employs advanced deep-learning techniques for rapid and efficient diagnosis. This proactive strategy enhances agricultural output and sustainability.

Design/methodology/approach: The study classified leaf images as healthy or diseased using a CNN. Several pre-processing methods improve model correctness and durability. Real agricultural photos were added to the training dataset to increase the data collection. Hyperparameter adjustment and deep learning architecture evaluation optimized model performance. The model was eventually incorporated into a simple IoT smartphone app for real-time disease detection and reporting.

Findings: The research created an accurate CNN picture classification model. In particular, the model obtained up to 95% accuracy on a smaller sample of 300 authentic leaf photos and 92% accuracy on an improved dataset of 2800 images. When taught with additional data, the deep learning model may reliably identify plant illnesses, making it a reliable early disease detection tool.

Practical implications: This model may be integrated into an IoT smartphone app to help farmers and agricultural specialists monitor and manage diseases in real-time. The method quickly and accurately identifies plant diseases, reducing crop losses, improving food security, and benefiting farmers, particularly in agriculturally dependent countries.

Originality value: Deep learning and IoT-based plant disease monitoring technologies are novel in agricultural technology, and this study advances the field. This method integrates accurate deep-learning models with real-world crop disease control applications.

Keywords: *Plant disease Detection, Machine Learning, Mobile Application, CNNs, GreenGuard*

AI-Driven Agriculture: A Comprehensive Review of Machine and Deep Learning Applications

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study assesses and consolidates Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotic-based farm automation advancements, focusing on machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL). The paper compares AI algorithms and architectures for plant disease detection, weed and crop identification, fruit counting, land cover classification, and crop and plant recognition.

Design/methodology/approach: This article analyses the current ML and DL algorithm advances in agricultural robotics over the last decade using a systematic literature review. Region-based Convolutional Neural Networks (RCNN), ResNet-18, and Fully Convolutional Networks (FCN) are compared to traditional ML algorithms like Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP), K-nearest Neighbour (KNN), Random Forest (RF), and Support Vector Machine (SVM) to determine their precision and effectiveness.

Findings: RCNNs identify plant diseases at 79.78% vs 57.18% for MLP and KNN. ResNet-18 has a high Area Under the Curve (AUC) of 91.74% for crop-weed separation. This discriminates better than RF and SVM. FCN outperforms SVM and RF in land cover classification at 84.9%. The data show that DL techniques improve agricultural automation very well.

Practical implications: This investigation shows that DL algorithms can considerably improve agricultural automation. Agriculture professionals may enhance disease identification, crop classification, and land coverage analysis by using advanced DL models.

Originality value: This paper analyses the current ML and DL breakthroughs in agricultural automation to expand knowledge. It offers fresh viewpoints on AI model efficacy and highlights key research areas.

Keywords: *AI-Driven Agriculture, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Agricultural Robotics, Systematic Review*

Safeguarding Privacy in the ChatGPT Era: A Comprehensive Analysis of Data Protection Measures

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: With an emphasis on ChatGPT specifically, this study attempts to look into data protection measures in AI-driven conversational models. As artificial intelligence (AI) technology become more ubiquitous in daily life, worries regarding data security and privacy have grown. The study aims to evaluate ChatGPT's present data protection practices, spot potential dangers and weaknesses, and suggest solutions that fit changing user expectations, regulatory requirements, and ethical standards. The main objective is to ensure privacy in the development and application of conversational AI models by bridging the gap between technical breakthroughs and ethical issues.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A thorough approach for reviewing the literature was used, looking at academic studies, industry reports, and legislative frameworks pertaining to cybersecurity, data privacy, and AI ethics. With a focus on ChatGPT-like models, the review summarized findings from earlier research on data safety in conversational AI. The study evaluated the benefits and drawbacks of the state-of-the-art data protection procedures and pinpointed research needs by critically examining the literature. In order to guarantee compliance, the investigation also looked at regulatory requirements like GDPR in relation to AI-driven dialogues.

Findings: The analysis of the literature showed that even with ChatGPT's many data protection features, there are still a number of serious weaknesses, especially when it comes to handling dynamic chats and retaining user data. The main dangers that have been identified include inadequate user control over personal data, inadequate openness in data handling, and unauthorized access to sensitive information. The study also revealed shortcomings in user education about privacy procedures. The report suggested a number of improved approaches to deal with these problems, such as stronger encryption, increased data usage transparency, and better user education initiatives.

Practical Implications: The study provides stakeholders, legislators, and AI developers with useful suggestions. Through the identification of weaknesses in current data protection protocols, the study offers a path forward for enhancing conversational AI privacy and security protocols. The suggested tactics, which include improved encryption procedures, adherence to changing regulatory requirements, and improved user training, can assist developers in building AI models that are more private-focused and safe. These results also aid in the development of regulatory frameworks that guarantee the appropriate application of AI while protecting user privacy and confidence.

Originality/Value: This work contributes to the literature by concentrating on the data privacy issues that conversational AI models such as ChatGPT face. Although data privacy and AI ethics are extensively researched, this study tackles the particular issues associated with AI-driven dialogues and suggests customized remedies. The study's conclusions offer insightful information to audiences in academia and business, laying the groundwork for further investigation and advancement in the safe application of conversational AI.

Keywords: *Chatgpt, Data Protection, AI Ethics, Conversational Models, Cybersecurity, Legal Frameworks*

Advanced IoT-Based Automated Greenhouse Monitoring System Using Arduino and GSM Modules for Sustainable Agricultural Enhancement

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to develop a cost-effective IoT-based greenhouse monitoring system that automates the control of critical environmental parameters such as temperature, humidity, soil pH, and electrical conductivity (EC). The research aims to address inefficiencies in traditional manual methods and provide a scalable solution that can be adapted for diverse agricultural applications.

Design/methodology/approach: A structured survey of 25 greenhouse farmers in the Gampaha District of Sri Lanka identified key environmental challenges, including temperature and humidity management and nutrient delivery. Based on these findings, an IoT system using Arduino and GSM modules was designed and simulated using Proteus software to evaluate its ability to maintain optimal conditions. Real-time data is transmitted via GSM modules, allowing remote monitoring and control.

Findings: The system successfully regulated temperature, humidity, and pH levels, providing consistent environmental conditions. The simulation results showed rapid responsiveness and reliable data transmission, demonstrating the system's potential to reduce manual intervention and optimize crop growth.

Practical implications: The system offers a low-cost and adaptable solution for small-scale farmers, enhancing crop productivity while minimizing labor costs. Its flexible configuration enables application to different crop types, making it suitable for varied greenhouse setups.

Originality/value: This research presents a unique, scalable IoT solution for small- and medium-scale greenhouses, contributing to sustainable agricultural practices by integrating real-time monitoring and automated environmental control.

Keywords: *IoT, Greenhouse Monitoring, Arduino, Sustainable Agriculture, Crop Adaptability.*

An Integrated IoT Solution for Smart City Development

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The rapid pace of urbanization, particularly in developing countries like Sri Lanka, has placed significant pressure on existing infrastructure, transportation systems, and public services. The purpose of this study is to explore the integration of Internet of Things (IoT) technologies as a solution to infrastructure, transportation, and public service challenges within the context of smart city development in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: This research combines a comprehensive literature review, in-depth case studies, and primary data analysis collected from stakeholders, including city planners, government officials, IoT experts, and citizens, to identify key opportunities and challenges in implementing IoT solutions within urban environments.

Findings: The results reveal a significant positive relationship between IoT awareness and perceived benefits, which underlines the need to enhance the public's awareness to enhance the perceived value of IoT applications. But privacy and security issues greatly limit the adoption and integration of IoT technologies, which shows the need to address these factors to enhance the level of acceptance. The study also shows that regulatory and infrastructure readiness plays an important moderating role, increasing the likelihood of IoT adoption even in contexts with high awareness. Furthermore, perceived benefits have been shown to be a strong predictor of public support for IoT-driven smart city initiatives, whereas clear regulatory guidelines significantly increase public trust in these technologies.

Practical implications: The research contributes valuable insights into the socio-economic, environmental, and ethical implications of widespread IoT integration, offering actionable recommendations for policymakers, city planners, and stakeholders. These guidelines are designed to facilitate the effective deployment and management of IoT in smart cities, ensuring sustainable urban development and improved quality of life for citizens.

Originality value: This study improves understanding of IoT's socioeconomic, environmental, and ethical implications, addressing issues such as privacy, security, and regulation.

Keywords: *Internet of Things (IoT), Smart Cities, Urbanization, Regulatory Readiness*

D.S. Senanayake Samudra Irrigation Water Distribution and Optimization System Using AI

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To design and implement an AI-based irrigation water distribution and optimization system for the D.S. Senanayake Samudra reservoir, ensuring efficient water usage, sustainable agriculture, and improved crop yields by utilizing advanced AI algorithms and real-time analytics.

Design/methodology/approach: The research involves developing a hybrid AI model combining Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) and Gated Recurrent Units (GRU). The system integrates real-time sensor data with weather forecasts to dynamically optimize irrigation schedules. A mobile application complements the system for real-time monitoring and actionable recommendations. Findings: The system demonstrated significant reductions in water waste and improved irrigation efficiency. The CNN+GRU model outperformed other machine learning models, with optimal performance metrics for predicting water distribution needs.

Practical implications: This AI-driven system empowers farmers with precise irrigation management tools, enhancing agricultural productivity while conserving water resources. It also addresses infrastructure vulnerabilities through real-time monitoring and proactive maintenance.

Originality value: The research pioneers the integration of AI in large-scale irrigation systems, leveraging hybrid AI models and mobile applications to address real-world agricultural challenges. This innovation contributes to sustainable farming practices and efficient water management.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Irrigation Optimization, Water Distribution, AI Algorithms, Crop Yield, Sustainable Agriculture, CNN, GRU, Real-Time Data Analytics, Water Management*

Impact of Hypermedia-based Learning with Video Clips on Business Report Writing; An Experimental Study

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The application of hypermedia; refers to facilitate with graphics, images, animation, sound and hypertext shows importance. This research was to find the relationship between the hypermedia-based video in the Higher National Diploma in Accountancy with strategies: operations and actions in video corner with picture method and the performance in the business report writing in HNDA of Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education as there were no any previous research.

Design/methodology/approach: 90 students from HNDA – A for experimental group and 90 from HNDA- B for controlled group were taken. A pre-test was for the groups to find the previous knowledge in the report writing and the mean differences were found to be negligible. The experimental group was to pursue hypermedia-based video on the strategies; operations and actions in video corner with picture method for 6 months with 60 hours while the controlled group was without hypermedia-based video. After 6 months a post-test was conducted.

Findings: During the post test, the mean was slightly improved for the group - B, and the mean was considerably improved for the group - A.

Practical implications: The research findings imply that hyper-media video learning improves business report writing of the learners and supports the learners' thought in all language skills.

Originality value: The study assists in applying different policies in terms of business reporting studies in English language in Sri Lanka with broader result in updating the policy makers in the educational field.

Keywords: *Hypermedia, Video Learning Strategies, Business Report Writing, Video Corner, Picture Method.*

The Factors Influencing the Smart Banking Application: A Study of the Banking Industry in South Eastern Region, Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines the factors influencing the adoption and use of smart banking applications in the banking industry in the South Eastern region of Sri Lanka. It seeks to identify key determinants, including technological, behavioral, and environmental factors, that contribute to the successful implementation of smart banking solutions. The research highlights the role of user perception, trust, security, and the convenience offered by such applications in driving their adoption.

Design: The study employs a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative data gathered through structured surveys distributed among customers and qualitative insights obtained through interviews with banking professionals. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework is applied to analyze the data. Statistical tools, such as regression analysis and correlation analysis are used to determine the significance of various factors.

Findings: The findings reveal that ease of use, perceived usefulness, and trust significantly influence customer adoption of smart banking applications. Additionally, factors such as the availability of robust security measures, compatibility with user needs, and the role of banking staff in promoting these technologies are critical. The study highlights that socioeconomic and cultural elements unique to the South Eastern region also play a pivotal role.

Practical Implications: The results provide actionable insights for banks to enhance the adoption of smart banking applications. Recommendations include investing in customer education programs, strengthening security protocols, and designing user-friendly applications tailored to local needs. This research also highlights the need for policy support to encourage technological advancements in the banking sector.

Originality Value: This study contributes to the limited literature on smart banking application adoption in Sri Lanka, mainly focusing on the South Eastern region. It offers a comprehensive understanding of both customer and institutional perspectives, addressing a significant gap in regional research and providing a foundation for future studies.

Keywords: *Smart Banking, Technology Adoption, Customer Behavior, Security, Banking Industry, Sri Lanka.*

Authentication Mechanism for Online Marketplace in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to develop a comprehensive authentication system along with three step process verification for SMEs in Sri Lanka, enabling them to enter the global market with government certified legitimacy, while addressing issues of fraud and trust.

Design/methodology/approach: The methodology structured with three step verification boundaries as National Identity Card (NIC) verification, business registration (BR) verification, and address verification via government-issued utility bills on a web-based platform. In order to proof the legitimacy, the entrepreneurs will receive a government verified certificate to ensure that they are eligible to enter to the global market. The approach integrates several programming languages, development tools, and database management systems to create a robust, secure, and user-friendly platform. The primary technologies utilized include Laravel, PHP, JavaScript, CSS, and Visual Studio, with database management facilitated through WAMP server.

Findings: Through the findings of this study more than 95% of the sellers successfully completed the authentication process by providing valid front and back images of their NIC and BR documents. The remaining 5% were flagged for further review due to inconsistencies in their documentation. The verification process significantly reduced fraudulent registrations, leading to a safer and more trustworthy marketplace environment. The results confirm that a multi-layered authentication system, incorporating NIC, BR and address verification is effective in securing an online marketplace.

Practical implications: Maintaining an authentication mechanism from the government for the sellers to granting an opportunity for SMEs to enhance their marketplace globally and on the other hand the government would be in the safe side as they are able to ensure that only the legitimated parties are allowed.

Originality value: This study uniquely addresses the challenge of global market access for SMEs with a government-certified solution. The three-step verification process and specialized databases enhance its technical novelty. The results show how both sellers a government is advantageous on relying on this authentication mechanism.

Keywords: *Authentication, SMEs, Verification, Global Marketplace, Fraud Prevention an Investigating the Impact of Brand Equity on Re-Visit Intention of Super Markets in Colombo Dis*

TRACK - ECONOMIC INTEGRATION FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

Proper Usage of Subject –Verb Agreement in English Simple Present Tense among Second Language Learners via Mind Maps

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Students need to use sentences with proper subject–verb agreement for better English language communication. The objective of this research is to identify the difficulties in constructing correct present simple sentences in English through usage of appropriate subject-verb agreement rules of HNDE first year students. This action research examines how mind map activities can help the students on avoiding making errors in subject-verb agreement of English language communication.

Design/methodology/approach: The study collected data through various methods, including tests (pre-test, mid-test, and post-test), activities, observations, reflective journals, interviews with lecturers and students' written and spoken assignments. Focused attention was given to 20 selected participants based on their pre-test marks.

Findings: The average marks of the selected samples at the pre-test level were 36%. However when the post-test had been held it was 83%. Hence, this research finds that the mind map activities help students avoid making errors in subject-verb agreement of English language communication.

Practical implications: This study is essential in carrying the plans that permit all to concentrate on fine tuning the presentation of subject-verb agreement and functions as an important section to the management of the institute on the best practices. other tenses by using mind map activities. Furthermore, researches can be done on Subject verb agreement of other tenses by using mind map activities.

Originality value: The study highlights the importance of implementing language policies to enhance student performance. Its findings are valuable for helping lecturers improve teaching methods and support students in avoiding subject-verb agreement errors.

Keywords: *Subject-Verb, Descriptive Writing, Teaching Methods, Errors, Mind Maps*

Post-Trade Liberalization: The Role of FDI and Tourism in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This paper has sought to quantify the contribution of foreign direct investment (FDI) and tourism receipts (TR) to Sri Lanka's gross domestic product (GDP) and account for their contribution to economic growth after trade liberalization.

Methodology: The paper uses annual time series data from 1978 to 2023. All the econometric estimations in this paper are made using EViews 12. Unit root tests are implied to check the stationarity of variables. Then, a co-integration analysis was tried to see the long-run relationship among the variables. Granger causality tests were conducted to observe the direction of causality.

Findings: The empirical estimation results indicate that the estimated TR-FDI and GDP have a statistically significant and robust long-run relationship. This means that FDI and tourism are significant contributors to economic growth in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, the Granger causality test supports the bidirectional causality between variables, clearly showing how the variables have mutually affected and depended on one another since the trade liberalization.

Implications: This suggests the strategic relevance of FDI and tourism to economic growth in Sri Lanka. Thus, policymakers must invest more in investment promotion policies, which may attract more FDI inflows, develop tourism-related infrastructure, and develop effective marketing strategies to ensure further sustainable economic development.

Originality: The present study contributes to the literature based on an empirical analysis, focusing on the impact of FDI and tourism on Sri Lanka's GDP in a post-war context. Such a contribution serves as valuable insights for policy-makers, researchers, and practitioners who aim to understand the dynamics of economic growth in developing countries.

Keywords: *Foreign Direct Investment, Tourism Receipts, Gross Domestic
Product*

Factors Affect English Speaking Performance among Learners of English as a Second Language in Sri Lankan Context

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: English is used as the second language globally and the speakers still face affecting factors in speaking. The purpose of the study is to identify the factors impact on English-speaking performance among second language learners of grade ten students at Arafa Vidyalaya Addalaichenai. The Objectives of the study were; to identify the barriers of English-speaking performance among second language learners, to Examine the students' attitude towards learning second language learners, to Identify the ways to establish the English-speaking performance among second language learners.

Design/methodology/approach: Descriptive cross-sectional study and self-administered questionnaire were to collect data with simple random sampling and SPSS version 25 software with Excel were for the analysis. 50 students were in the analysis and results were presented using texts, tables, charts, and graphs.

Findings: The study reveals that 66% of participants are male and 34% are female. Most students (44%) do not participate in English-related activities outside the classroom, while 24% actively engage. A majority (76%) struggle with expressing their ideas, with only 24% feeling confident in doing so. Key factors influencing speaking performance include fear of mistakes, lack of confidence, anxiety, and fear of criticism. Additionally, 24% of students identified the classroom environment as a significant factor affecting their speaking practice.

Practical implications: The study highlights a lack of vocabulary as a key linguistic challenge. It recommends that teachers create a supportive environment to boost students' confidence in communicating in English.

Originality value: The study emphasizes strategies to improve English-speaking performance in schools, guiding school management on best practices and supporting policymakers in developing effective language policies.

Keywords: *Speaking Challenges, Motivation, Speaking Performance, Linguistic Factor, Language Barrier*

Tourism's Impact on Sri Lanka's Economy: A Time Series Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigates the nexus between tourism receipts and economic growth in Sri Lanka in the short and long run. It is also meant to study the impact of Foreign Direct Investments, economic freedom, and war periods on economic growth.

Methodology: The paper's annual data ranges from 1978 to 2023, sourced from the Annual reports of the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Central Bank of Sri Lanka, and the World Bank. In this respect, the methodological section employs the econometric approach by applying an Augmented Dickey-Fuller test for stationarity, a cointegration test for the presence of long-run relationships, and a Granger Causality test to test any causal links between all series analyzed using EViews 12.

Findings: Estimations show that In the long run, tourism receipts and economic growth are positively and significantly related. This factually means that with a 1% increase in tourism receipts, GDP increases by 0.601%. The FDI also positively influences the GDP, but this influence will be significant after three years. While doing so, the negative and significant coefficient of the economic freedom index shows that the GDP affects it negatively, thereby signaling a complex relationship that may require more deliberations. Finally, the war dummy variable assumes negative significance, indicating a lower GDP growth rate at the time of war since the government spends much on defense. Results from a Granger causality test showed that tourist revenue contributed to economic growth via a unidirectional causal relationship.

Practical Implication: Tourism is a strategic driver for sustainable economic growth in Sri Lanka. Policymakers are envisaged to provide facilities and incentives to trigger international tourism demand promotion and development for more significant inflows of tourists, who will, in turn, create growth in tourism and the multiplier effect to stimulate other industries' contribution to general economic growth.

Originality/ Value: The worth of this research to the existing literature lies in the fact that it provides empirical proof for a positive relationship of tourism with economic growth in Sri Lanka, the lagging effect of FDI, and the puzzling role of economic freedom. In addition, it tries to highlight that tourism is one-way sustainable growth can be achieved. Hence, policymakers might draw some valuable insights from this while chalking out some effective strategies regarding tourism development.

Keywords: *Economic Growth, Tourism Receipts, Foreign Direct Investments, War*

Tourism an Important Sector of Economic Development in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Michael Hitchcock (2004) had explained that tourism and culture have a deep relation. Culture is based on originality, authority, authenticity and many more. Tourists are attracted by such types of factors; he says that invest and reinvest is not modernization and it's the human culture that remain there for a long time. Tradition is invested and process goes on its known as constructivist. Cultural transmission is not an authentic option, reproduction is not renewed it have its own originality. This study investigated the influence of tourism development to Sri Lankan economic Growth.

Design/methodology/approach: Qualitative research data were collected from Articles books and online resource.The study was entirely based on the secondary sources information that published by the Central Bank Of Sri Lanka, Department of Census d Statistics, and Srilanka Tourism Development Authority(SLTDA)

Findings: According to Pizam's article (1982), the tourism and hospitality industry has been applauded by industrialized and developing countries for the number of jobs created. A large amount of position vacancy is generated within the tourism industry and the supported industries. As a labor-intensive industry, its contribution to employment is not only restricted to the area or country but it also provides those jobs to women, youngsters, unskilled, minorities and the socially disadvantaged who find it very hard to get any jobs (Pizam, 1982). However, the unskilled and semi-skilled workers who are directly employed in the industry are usually considered to be the uneducated, unmotivated, untrained, unskilled, and unproductive employees (British Tourist Authority, 1974).

Practical implications/ Originality value: it is quite evident from the foregoing that tourism can play a major role in the socio-economic development of Sri Lanka and its people. At the same time, tourism can lead the way to help preserve, nurture, and develop the pristine environment, and rich culture of Sri Lanka, to ensure proper and sustainable growth, which will benefit the entire country and its people.

Keywords: *Tourism Industry, Economic Development, sustainable Tourism, Investment, Revenue*

The Impact of Renewable Energy on Gross Domestic Product in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To investigate the influence of renewable energy consumption on Sri Lanka's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from 2000 to 2023, focusing on whether renewable energy contributes significantly to economic growth.

Methodology: This study employs time-series econometric analysis. Key methods include the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test for checking the stationarity of variables and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression for examining the relationship between GDP and energy sources (renewable, coal, and oil consumption). Diagnostic tests, such as residual analysis, heteroskedasticity tests, serial correlation tests and CUSUM of square are applied to ensure the robustness of the model.

Findings: The analysis reveals that renewable energy consumption has a positive and statistically significant impact on Sri Lanka's GDP, indicating its potential as a driver of economic growth. In contrast, while oil and coal consumption also show positive associations with GDP, they are less impactful compared to renewables, underlining the strategic importance of renewable energy.

Implications: The findings suggest that Sri Lanka's policymakers should prioritize renewable energy initiatives, which can foster sustainable economic growth while reducing dependency on oil and coal. Strategic investments in renewable energy infrastructure can not only boost GDP but also help achieve environmental sustainability goals.

Theoretical Contributions: This research contributes to the literature by evidencing the specific impact of renewable energy on GDP within a developing country. It adds to energy-economics theory by quantifying renewable energy's role in economic models, emphasizing its unique benefits over non-renewable sources.

Originality: This study is among the few to comprehensively assess the influence of renewable energy on Sri Lanka's GDP over an extensive period, distinguishing it from similar studies by focusing specifically on renewable sources and their comparative economic impact.

Keywords: *Renewable Energy, Gross Domestic Product, Economic Growth, Time-Series Analysis*

Violence Against Women in South Asian Countries

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: In the new millennium, Women's Rights have been the focus of vision worldwide. The Charter of United Nations Endorsement of the equal rights of men and women and the subsequent International Treaties and Declarations, the Vienna Declaration in 1993 (Khan, 2001) and Declaration of Beijing in 1995 (Khan, 2001), stands in 2002 as a sharp contrast to the reality of the life for millions of women worldwide (Khan, 2001). Women's economic, social, and cultural rights continue to be neglected.

Design/methodology/approach: There are several changes which are necessary to combat violence against women. Changes are required at the level of specific countries, the United Nations, and the international community.

Findings: Many traditional social attitudes towards women persist amongst the people across these countries. Even increased access to education and information has often failed to wipe out deeply engrained concepts about women. One such idea is that a girlchild is only a "visitor" in the house where she is born and that, eventually she must go to her "real" or married home.

Practical implications: Pakistan is supposedly bound by its ratification of the International Treaties to ensure respect for women's human rights and fundamental freedom. As a party to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1992; Burney and McArthur, 1999), Pakistan is obliged to pursue "by appropriate means and without delay" a policy of eliminating discrimination against women, including any distinction made on the basis of sex, which has the purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition of women as being equal to men in regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Originality value: Despite the awareness of the widespread prevalence of all types of violence against women in South Asian countries, governments appear to be unable or unwilling to put a stop to it. The HRCP reports and the government's own Commission of Inquiry for Women reported that domestic violence in Pakistan has been described as the most pervasive violation of human rights.

Keywords: *Violence Against Women; Domestic Violence; Honor Killings; Women's Mental Health; Gender Issues; Cross-Cultural Issues.*

The Potential of Wellness Tourism in Sri Lanka: A Path to Holistic Health and Sustainable Growth

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study explores the potential of wellness tourism in Sri Lanka, a niche within the broader tourism industry focusing on enhancing health and well-being. It examines Sri Lanka's unique wellness resources, market demand, challenges, and strategies for sustainable growth, aiming to position the country as a premier wellness tourism destination.

Design/methodology/approach: The research adopts a qualitative approach, employing a case study method. Primary data was collected through interviews with key stakeholders, including wellness tourists and practitioners. Secondary data sources include government reports and industry publications. A SWOT analysis framework was utilized to assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Sri Lanka's wellness tourism sector.

Findings: Sri Lanka has significant potential to grow as a wellness tourism destination, thanks to its traditional practices like Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani, alongside its diverse natural landscapes. However, the industry faces challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure and limited international marketing. A targeted strategy focused on quality assurance, eco-friendly practices, and improved infrastructure is essential to compete with leading destinations like Thailand and Bali.

Practical implications: To realize its potential, Sri Lanka needs infrastructure improvements, global marketing efforts, and standardized quality measures in wellness services. Emphasizing sustainable tourism practices and creating a strong brand identity centered on unique wellness offerings can attract a diverse international audience, fostering economic growth and sustainable development.

Originality value: This research highlights Sri Lanka's distinct advantages in the wellness tourism sector, underpinned by a unique blend of cultural heritage, traditional healing practices, and scenic beauty. It provides actionable insights for stakeholders to leverage these strengths for sustainable and inclusive growth within the wellness tourism sector.

Keywords: *Wellness Tourism, Ayurveda, Sustainable Tourism, Holistic Health, Tourism Infrastructure, Cultural Heritage, Eco-Friendly Tourism*

Enhancing Story Writing Skills in English Language Among Second Language Learners Through Digital Story Telling Platforms

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study's purpose is to evaluate the story-writing proficiency of Grade Eight students in English and identify the challenges these students encounter while learning and improving their storytelling skills.

Design/methodology/approach: The study analyzed Grade Eight students' story-writing skills by examining gender distribution, proficiency levels, writing habits, and satisfaction. A pre-test established a baseline, followed by concept mapping-based instruction. Post-test results showed significant improvement in storytelling skills, with many students progressing from lower to higher scores. The study used SPSS for both quantitative and qualitative analyses, addressing challenges through a detailed methodology and sampling approach.

Findings: The research findings emphasized the effectiveness of digital storytelling in improving language proficiency and encouraging creative expression among L2 learners.

Practical implications: The study recommended integrating digital storytelling platforms into the Grade Eight English curriculum, contributing to a broader understanding of innovative methods in language education.

Originality value: The findings recommended that educators use digital storytelling platforms to boost language proficiency in L2 learners.

Keywords: *Digital Storytelling, Language Proficiency, Concept Mapping Technique, Sequential Storytelling, Second Language Learners*

Tourism 4.0 and Smart Technology Applications in the Tourism Industry: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The paper seeks to discuss smart technologies that are being applied in the tourism industry, focusing more on Tourism 4.0. To be specific, it discusses potential issues that may be identified with regard to benefits, challenges, and future implications from such technological advancement to serve tourists better, make the industry efficient, and create a sustainable practice of tourism.

Methodology: An extensive literature review was carried out in order to understand the adoption of Tourism 4.0, smart technologies, and their various applications in the tourism industry. Papers from peer-reviewed journals from Scopus database were consulted with the purpose of identifying the main trends, challenges, and best practices.

Results: The integration of smart technologies like artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, virtual and augmented reality, big data analytics, and blockchain has a very great potential that will alter the face of tourism. It is bound to enhance the experience of tourists, make the processes in the industry more efficient, and engender the principles of sustainable tourism. However, several problems relating to data privacy and security, a digital divide, and infrastructure constraints have to be overcome.

Implications: The findings of this study have an important contribution for tourism businesses, policymakers, and technology providers in that smart technologies embraced by the tourism industry can make the environment competitive, sustainable, and customer-orientated.

The theoretical contribution: This present study is that it gives a wide overview of the adoption of smart technologies in the tourism industry. It underlines the possible benefits and challenges of the technologies at hand and gives important insight into future research and industrial practices.

Originality: The originality of the current study comes from an attempt to discuss how different smart technologies will be integrated in the framework of Tourism 4.0, depicting holistically the future perspective of the tourism industry.

Keywords: *Tourism 4.0, Smart Technologies, Tourism Industry*

AiRC
FMC SEUSL

Effective Usage of Adverbs for Improving Speaking Skills in English Language among Grade 07 Students

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Effective usage of adverbs demonstrates higher level of language proficiency and improvement in the speaking skills in ESL context. The purpose of the research is to enhance the correct usage of adverbs to improve speaking skills.

Design/methodology/approach: The study involved 40 Grade 7 students from Al-Manar National School to assess the impact of adverb instruction on spoken English. Using a quantitative approach, pre- and post-tests were conducted to measure students' proficiency in adverb usage. The results showed significant improvement in students' adverb usage after the intervention.

Findings: The findings highlight the importance of varied teaching methods, with an emphasis on teacher engagement and regular instruction. The study highlights the pivotal role of adverbs in enhancing the speaking skills of Grade 7 students.

Practical implications: The recommendations provided aim to build upon the study's findings, offering practical strategies for educators and policymakers to improve English language teaching, with a particular focus on the effective use of adverbs.

Originality value: The overarching goal is to equip students with the linguistic tools they need to express themselves more precisely and confidently in English.

Key words: Speaking Skills, Adverb Usage, Comparative Analysis, Proficiency Level, Linguistic tools.

Effective Strategies for improving Vocabulary Proficiency among Upper Secondary Level Students

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to enhance upper secondary students' vocabulary proficiency through the use of literature in English language teaching, highlighting its role in improving language skills and knowledge.

Design/methodology/approach: The study used a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis from tests and qualitative insights from questionnaires and observations. Initially involving 35 GCE (O/L) students, 20 were selected for the final sample. Data analysis was conducted using MS Excel.

Findings: The research found significant improvement in students' vocabulary skills through strategies like song-based learning, vocabulary games, and language boards in English literature. Pre- and post-test comparisons confirmed the effectiveness, while questionnaires and observations revealed positive student feedback and valuable qualitative insights.

Practical implications: The researcher recommends incorporating literature-based instruction, interactive activities, and selected literary works into the curriculum to enhance students' vocabulary proficiency.

Originality value: Educators should consider instructional strategies to individual needs and include interactive, engaging elements to support language development.

Keywords: *Vocabulary Proficiency, English Literature, Effective Strategies, Song Based Learning, Language Board, Vocabulary Development Games*

Households' Perception of The Aswesuma Cash Transfer Program: A Study Based on Ankumbura Area, Poojapittiya Divisional Secretariat

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Many low- and middle-income countries implement a poverty alleviation programme to eradicate poverty and achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. cash transfer program, considered safety nets for the low-income population. The Aswesuma cash transfer initiative, launched as a social protection mechanism, aims to alleviate poverty and improve living standards through direct cash transfers to low income families. This study mainly aims to assess households' perception of the Aswesuma cash transfer program in the Ankumbura area, Poojapitiya Divisional Secretariat.

Design/methodology/approach: This study selected 100 samples from the Aswesuma beneficiaries of Ankumbura area using a simple random sampling method. The primary data were collected through a questionnaire and interview period from July 2023 to July 2024. This study applied the arithmetic mean method Likert scale (5) such as 5-strogly agree, 4-agree, 3-nutual, 2-disagree and 1-strogly disagree to identify awareness among Aswesuma recipients, used factors such as rural development, Community development, financial stability, Health condition, Samurdhi beneficiary, school attendance of children, Investment in livelihood activities and data is collected through Likert scale data collection and descriptive method to analyze trends for utilization of amount of Aswesuma, investment in livelihood activities, changes in living standard of family of Aswesuma recipients, education expenditure, health expenditure, housing improvements, Samurdhi beneficiary analyzed mixed methods with SPSS – 23 and Excel tools

Findings: This study found that most of the Aswesuma recipients utilized the cash for more consumption, less investment in livelihood (91%) and poor financial security, not that much change in education and health expenditure, poor housing condition. More than half of the Samurdhi beneficiary received the Aswesuma Cash transfer.

Likert scale of Arithmetic means, more than 50 % of the Recipients revealed, that they disagree with livelihood activities, rural infrastructure development, community development and not enough cash transfer amount for households' investment in livelihood and activities of saving group of Samurdhi

Practical implications: In this study suggest that the increasing the cash transfer amount for Aswesuma recipients and encourage to invest in income generating sources. This Aswesuma program did not have any infrastructure development phenomena. Policymakers can consider poor people to implementing a conditional cash transfer system rather the unconditional Aswesuma cash transfer for human development index (HDI), and also beneficiaries should be regular monitoring and evaluation to measure the success of the poverty alleviation program.

Originality value: This study contributes to monitoring and evaluating of newly implementing Aswesuma cash transfer for each type of category for poor people in the particular time period.

Keywords: *Aswesuma Recipients, Cash Transfer, Poverty, Household Perception, Samurdhi Beneficiary*

Sri Lanka's Higher Education Quality Assurance Practices: An Institutionalization Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study is an outcome of a preliminary review forming a part of a broader research project that examines how quality assurance practices have been institutionalized in the Sri Lankan higher education field and how they impact accountability and governance within public sector universities. This preliminary review was mainly concerned with identifying the institutional challenges that have been highlighted in the literature connected to the institutionalization of quality assurance practices in the higher education field in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: The study was conducted as a desk review. The review was performed using Sri Lanka's quality assurance literature and documents, which included regulations and guidelines issued by various government authorities governing Sri Lanka's higher education institutions since 2000.

Findings: Findings suggest that quality assurance (QA) is evolving into a distinct institutional field of practice within the higher education sector in Sri Lanka with coercive, normative, and mimetic isomorphic pressures. Coercive pressures operate mainly in the form of regulatory measures by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Quality Assurance Council (QAC), which have prescribed formal quality assurance frameworks that universities need to comply with in institutional and program reviews. Normative isomorphism is prompted by peer review mechanisms and training and awareness campaigns by the UGC, QAC, and various other donor-driven projects. Mimetic forces operate in the form of the adoption of benchmarking practices against successful universities and courses. The literature, however, suggests that the process of embedding quality assurance practices varies across universities; while some universities embrace QA as a mechanism for continuous improvement, others tend to view it as an external imposition. University actors tend to view QA practices as a bureaucratic requirement and, thus, an additional administrative burden rather than an opportunity for improving actual performance and accountability.

Research limitations/implications: The findings are informed by a review of extant literature and documents. Though it provides us with a grounding for theoretically informed dialogue and detailed empirical investigation, the empirical evidence may, however, challenge these initial findings. The variation in QA practice also highlights the need to examine human agency and how it is shaped by extant structures and power dynamics.

Originality/value: Though a body of literature that examines the QA practices in higher education institutions in Sri Lanka has emerged, these works have not been investigated in light of the institutionalization of QA as a practice. Such insight is important for policymakers to implement measures to embed the QA practice so that it reproduces its existence over time.

Keywords: *Quality Assurance, Sri Lanka, Higher Education, Institutionalization*

Infrastructure's Effect on Sri Lanka's Post-War Tourism Growth: A Statistical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research examines the impact of infrastructure development on Sri Lanka's tourism industry post-war (2009-2024). It aims to determine how infrastructure development affects the industry. It examines the long-run and short-run dynamics to better understand this influence.
Methodology: This study uses a multiple regression model to examine how multiple independent variables (infrastructure: Road, Sri Lanka) affect a single dependent variable (tourism growth: tourism arrival). The analysis covers 2009–2024, including the crucial years after the Sri Lankan civil war. Statistical tests are used to verify the findings. A correlation analysis and Granger causality tests are used to find causal links and strengths between variables. Co-integration tests determine if the variables have a long-run equilibrium relationship. EViews 12 software analyzes data using these statistical methods.
Finding: Co-integration tests show a long-term relationship between tourism and infrastructure. Improvements to infrastructure like roads and transportation systems will benefit Sri Lanka's tourism industry in the long term. A two-way causal relationship from Granger causality tests strengthens this connection. This is important because it suggests that infrastructure development and tourism growth can both encourage infrastructure investment.
Practical Implications: This knowledge can help make strategic infrastructure development decisions. Road networks, transportation systems, and other infrastructural facilities must be invested in to improve accessibility, the tourist experience, and Sri Lanka's global tourism competitiveness.
Originality/ Value: This post-war Sri Lankan analysis adds to the literature on the infrastructure-tourism relationship. Focusing on significant economic and political transformation, the research provides insights that may not be apparent in longer-term or more stable political studies.

Keywords: *Infrastructure, Post-War Tourism Growth*

Learner Engagement in Virtual Learning Environments: A Qualitative Case Study among English Teacher Trainees

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The objective of this research is to examine the learner engagement in virtual learning environments and challenges face by the learners.

Design/methodology/approach: This reach is a qualitative case study adopts semi-structured personal interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). 20 personal interviews and 8 focus group discussions were conducted among Diploma in TESL English teacher trainees in two private colleges.

Findings: This research found that though students prefer virtual learning, most of the students skip online classes than physical lectures. However, they find virtual learning is tedious and not motivating and they feel that face-to-face physical classroom is much more effective than virtual since physical classes improve very positive teacher- students' rapport. This research also found that the students prefer blended mode due to many

Practical implications: Most of the research conducted so far has focused on emergency remote teaching and online learning during the pandemic and post-pandemic. Insignificant research has been done on exploring learner engagement in virtual teaching and learning environment. This research finding may be an eye opener for the institutes and teachers to think more about Lerner engagement in virtual teaching and learning.

Originality value: This research is a one of the cutting edge research which highlights the new perspectives on virtual learning context.

Keywords: *Covid-19, Virtual learning, Post-pandemic, Learner engagement.*

Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Tourism Development: A bibliometric analysis

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This bibliometric analysis study aims to provide trends and patterns of scholarly output in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainable Tourism Development (STD). It provides insights into the growth of submissions, leading authors, essential sources, intellectual structure, and thematic research areas on CSR and STD.

Design/methodology/approach: The analysis was based on a clearly defined dataset comprising 144 indexed documents from Scopus databases covering 2006–2024. More specifically, bibliometric software tools like Bibliometrix and VOS Viewer are applied to the publication data for performance analysis and science mapping.

Findings: The study reveals that the research area of CSR and STD is developing adequately, with an average annual growth rate of 15.31%. This is an indicator of increasing interest from scholars. In addition, the most relevant sources for disseminating research on this topic are CSR, Sustainability, Ethics, and Governance and Sustainability (Switzerland). Also, the most productive authors based on the h-h-index and g-index are Manente M, Minghetti V, Mingotto E, and González-Morales O. Moreover, China occupies first place regarding the number of documents in which international collaboration is present. Finally, it determines the dominant themes are community participation, environmental sustainability, and ethics.

Practical implications: The findings provide valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. This bibliometric analysis study aims to provide trends and patterns of scholarly output in CSR and STD. It provides insights into the growth of submissions, leading authors, essential sources, intellectual structure, and thematic research areas on CSR and STD.

Originality value: This bibliometric analysis's novelty lies in its focused approach, whichwill allow the intersection of CSR and STD. It is based on very recent data and is multifaceted. This more detailed examination of specific thematic areas identifies emerging trends, thus establishing a fresh field perspective.

Keywords: *Bibliometric Analysis, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainable Tourism Development*

TRACK - ENTREPRENEURIAL INNOVATIONS DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE IN NEW MARKETS

Impact of Transformational Leadership Style on SMEs' Performance in Kandy District

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine how transformational leadership style influences the performance of SMEs in Kandy district.

Design/methodology/approach: The study was based on a quantitative approach. Data were collected from 200 registered SMEs in Kandy district. The data analysis was done using the SPSS 26 version to examine the relationship between research variables.

Findings: The findings showed that the transformational leadership style has a moderate positive relationship with SMEs performance.

Practical implications: Through comprehensive data analysis, the study endeavors to provide empirical evidence supporting the positive correlation between transformational leadership style and SME performance, offering valuable insights for business leaders and policymakers seeking to foster a culture of innovation and growth within the SME sector.

Research limitations: The study's geographical scope was limited to the Kandy district, which may not fully represent the diversity of SMEs across the entire Sri Lankan landscape. The sample size represents only a fraction of the total SMEs in Kandy district. Qualitative data, such as in-depth interviews or open-ended survey questions, could have provided richer insights into the topic.

Originality Value: Finding of this study provides empirical evidence to support existing leadership theories and enhances scholarly discourse on leadership effectiveness within SMEs and informs future research endeavors aimed at optimizing leadership practices to drive organizational success in diverse business environments.

Key Words: Transformational Leadership, Small and Medium sized Enterprises, Performance.

Investigate the Rewards Impacts on Employee Turnover Intention in Small and Medium Businesses in Sri Lanka (Special References in Ampara District)

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of organizational rewards both financial and non-financial on employee turnover intention within small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Sri Lanka. By exploring the relationship between these rewards and turnover intentions, the study aims to provide valuable insights that can help SME owners and managers develop more effective retention strategies, thereby enhancing the overall sustainability and competitiveness of SMEs in Sri Lanka.

Design/methodology/approach: Data were collected through structured questionnaires from a random sample of 280 employees working in selected small and medium enterprises within the Ampara Divisional Secretariats. The data were analyzed using Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and Regression with the support of SPSS version 26.0. The normality test, ANOVA analysis, and factor analysis were carried out.

Findings: This study used financial rewards (salary, employee bonuses, and fringe benefits) and non-financial rewards (supervisor support, recognition, working environment, training, and promotion) as independent variables, with employee turnover as the dependent variable. In this study, Cronbach's Alpha was 0.837 indicating good reliability and validity for the research variables. The study found that both financial and non-financial rewards displayed a strong negative correlation with turnover intention. Specifically, as financial rewards increased, employee turnover intention decreased.

Practical implications: This study highlights the importance for owners and managers to understand the reasons behind employees' turnover intentions. It emphasizes the need to focus on activities that can help maintain a high retention rate within SMEs by ensuring employees are satisfied and motivated in the workplace. Specifically, it focuses on how both financial and non-financial rewards can influence retention rates in SMEs in Sri Lanka. By exploring these dynamics, the study offers practical recommendations for improving employee satisfaction and motivation, which in turn can enhance retention and overall business performance.

Originality value: Retaining talented and high-quality employees is considered one of the key long-term sustainable competitive advantages for SMEs. However, it has become a significant challenge for companies in the modern business environment. Therefore, this study provides new insights into the rewards-turnover relationship in SMEs in Sri Lanka, offering valuable guidance for business owners seeking to enhance employee retention.

Keywords: *Rewards System, Financial Rewards, Non- Financial Rewards, Turnover Intention, Small and medium Enterprises.*

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