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6TH RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS STUDIES

RCBS - 2025

“Emerging Business Trends: Paving the Way for the Future”

18th of August 2025

Faculty of Business Studies
University of Vavuniya
Sri Lanka

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(RCBS - 2025)

Theme:

“Emerging Business Trends: Paving the Way for the Future”

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Disclaimer

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TP: +94 242228231

Fax: +94 242228231

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Message from the Vice Chancellor



It is with great pride and profound pleasure that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Faculty of Business Studies, University of Vavuniya, for organizing the Research Conference on Business Studies 2025. This significant academic event is a testament to the faculty's unwavering dedication to advancing research, fostering intellectual dialogue, and promoting knowledge dissemination that addresses the complex challenges of today's dynamic business environment.

The theme, *"Emerging Business Trends: Paving the Way for the Future,"* is both timely and pertinent, as Sri Lanka strives to navigate its path towards economic resilience and inclusive growth. It is through rigorous research, evidence-based policy recommendations, and industry-academia collaboration that we can pave the way for sustainable development and long-term socio-economic prosperity. As a national university with a deep commitment to the region, the University of Vavuniya is proud to nurture a vibrant academic culture where research is not only an academic pursuit but also a powerful instrument for societal transformation. Conferences of this nature provide an essential platform for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to share insights, exchange ideas, and foster innovative solutions that contribute to the nation's progress.

I wish to commend the Dean, the Organizing Committee, the Editorial Team, the panel of reviewers, and all contributors for their tireless efforts in bringing this conference to fruition. I also extend my sincere appreciation to all researchers and participants for their valuable contributions.

May this conference inspire constructive dialogue, ignite collaborative research initiatives, and enhance the global visibility of Sri Lankan scholars in business studies.

I wish the conference very success.

Senior Professor A Atputharajah
Vice Chancellor
University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

Message from the Dean



It gives me immense pleasure to extend my warmest greetings on the occasion of the Research Conference in Business Studies 2025, organized by the Faculty of Business Studies, University of Vavuniya. This annual scholarly gathering stands as a testament to our faculty's unwavering commitment to fostering a vibrant research culture, promoting academic excellence, and contributing to the national and global discourse on business and management practices.

The theme of this year's conference, *"Emerging Business Trends: Paving the Way for the Future"*, is timely and highly relevant, given the dynamic economic landscape and the challenges faced by emerging economies in navigating towards inclusive and sustainable growth. The research contributions presented in this conference offer valuable insights and pragmatic solutions that are essential for policy-makers, industry leaders, and academic communities alike. I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the organizing committee, track coordinators, editorial team, reviewers, and all academic and non-academic staff members who have worked tirelessly to ensure the success of this conference. I am equally grateful to the scholars, researchers, and practitioners who have enriched this forum with their thoughtful research and innovative ideas.

May this conference serve as a catalyst for meaningful collaborations, knowledge dissemination, and academic advancement, thereby reinforcing the pivotal role of the Faculty of Business Studies in shaping the future of business education and research in Sri Lanka.

I wish all participants a productive and intellectually stimulating conference.

Prof. Y. Nanthagopan
Dean
Faculty of Business Studies
University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

Message from the Convener



It is my great pleasure to extend this message for the 6th RCBS, organized by the Faculty of Business Studies, University of Vavuniya. This year's theme, "Emerging Business Trends: Paving the Way for the Future", reflects our shared commitment to understanding the forces shaping today's business environment and fostering innovative ideas that promote sustainable growth. The conference embodies our vision of bridging academic research with practical applications, ensuring that knowledge creation directly benefits communities, industries, and policymakers.

This event provides an important platform for academics, industry professionals, and students to share research findings, practical experiences, and diverse perspectives in the areas of Accounting and Finance, Agribusiness, Banking and Insurance, Business Communication, Business Economics, Business Information Systems, Cross-cultural Communication, Cultural Tourism, Entrepreneurship, Human Resource Management, International Business, Marketing, Project Management, Regional Planning, and Tourism and Hospitality Management. The contributions presented in this proceedings are a testament to the depth, relevance, and dedication of our research community. By bringing together scholars and practitioners from various disciplines, the conference not only strengthens academic studies but also encourages interdisciplinary collaboration to address real-world business challenges.

I extend my sincere thanks to all authors, reviewers, keynote speakers, panel speakers, session chairs, and the organizing committee for their invaluable efforts in making this event possible. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to our participants, whose active engagement ensures the vibrancy and success of this gathering. I trust that the discussions and insights gained from this conference will inspire future research, encourage innovative thinking, and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of business studies in both local and global contexts. May the knowledge shared here serve as a catalyst for positive change and sustainable progress in the business world.

V.Kajanthy

Convener

Research Conference in Business Studies 2025

Faculty of Business Studies

University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

Message from the Editor-in-Chief



It is with immense pleasure and a profound sense of responsibility that I extend my heartfelt greetings as the Editor-in-Chief of the Research Conference in Business Studies 2025, organized by the Faculty of Business Studies, University of Vavuniya. This conference serves as a dynamic platform that brings together scholars, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers to engage in critical dialogue, share innovative insights, and explore sustainable solutions to the ever-evolving challenges in the fields of business and management. The theme of this year's conference, "*Emerging Business Trends: Paving the Way for the Future*", reflects the pressing need for academic rigor and practical wisdom in addressing the socio-economic aspirations of emerging economies like Sri Lanka. In this context, the contributions made through empirical research, conceptual explorations, and case-based studies presented in this conference will significantly enrich the academic discourse and foster knowledge-driven development. The editorial process of this conference proceedings has been meticulously designed to ensure academic excellence, integrity, and relevance.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the panel of reviewers, the editorial board members, and the entire academic fraternity whose unwavering commitment has upheld the scholarly standards of this publication. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to the authors and presenters who have contributed their valuable research to this conference. Your intellectual efforts and scholarly endeavors are vital in bridging the gap between theory and practice, thereby empowering both academia and industry. On behalf of the Editorial Team, I wish all participants an engaging and fruitful conference experience. May this gathering ignite meaningful collaborations, inspire future research, and contribute to the advancement of business studies in Sri Lanka and beyond.

G. R. M. Gamlath
Editor-in-Chief
Research Conference in Business Studies 2025
Faculty of Business Studies
University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

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Keynote Speech 01

Emerging HRM Trends: Paving the Way for the Future

H.H.D.N.P. Opatha

*Senior Professor and Chair of Human Resource Management
Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management
Studies and Commerce,
University of Sri Jayewardenepura
opatha@sjp.ac.lk*

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a universal consideration, and regardless of their type, almost all problems faced by organizations can, at least partially, be addressed through sound HRM. Emerging HRM trends refer to new developments or general patterns of change that are becoming increasingly visible in the field. Most of these trends are driven by broader business shifts such as globalization, technological advancement, demographic changes, and the growing emphasis on sustainability. In the 21st century, the role of HRM has evolved significantly—from the traditional personnel function to a strategic role, then to a participative approach, and finally to a sustainability-oriented paradigm. Today's HRM is vast, indispensable, business-driven, and sustainability-driven, constituting both a pure and an applied field of study and practice.

The objective of this keynote address is to briefly identify and discuss key emerging HRM trends. While numerous trends merit attention, this speech will focus on ten due to time constraints: Hybrid and Flexible Working Arrangements, Greening in HRM, Employee Ethicality and Ethicality in HRM, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Digital HRM, HRM Analytics, Employee Happiness and Holistic Well-being, Economic HRM and High-Performance Organization through HRM, Presenteeism, and Quiet Quitting.

Other notable trends not covered here include managing a gig workforce, work-life integration, knowledge management, HRM in mergers and acquisitions, managing call centre employees, and robotics in HRM. While these trends pose both challenges and opportunities for HRM professionals, they can be managed in ways that generate substantial benefits for all stakeholders. Challenges should be viewed as opportunities that can be efficiently and effectively capitalized on through appropriate thoughts and appropriate actions. In this era of unprecedented disruption and possibility, our role is to anticipate trends, embrace innovation, and humanize almost every transformation. The true measure of HRM's success will not only be how well we manage processes, but how profoundly we elevate people, because only then it is possible for organizations to achieve sustainable excellence.

Keynote Speech 02

Business Ethics and Social Responsibility in Emerging Countries: Challenges and Opportunities in Research

Dr. Sammy Ying

This presentation aims to provide valuable insights into business ethics and social responsibility in emerging economies, highlighting both the challenges and unique opportunities for impactful research. Drawing on two of my publications, I explore how cultural and governance contexts shape ethical decision-making and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices. The first study, published in the *Journal of Business Ethics*, investigates how intrinsic Islamic religiosity influences auditors' judgments in Pakistan. The findings reveal that deeply held values, captured through the Islamic Worldview construct, significantly affect professional behavior. The second study, published in *Emerging Markets Review*, examines how multinational enterprises operating in Ghana are influenced by their home country's governance and corporate governance structures. The findings suggest that board independence enhances the positive impact of home country governance on CSR. These insights contribute to a better understanding of ethics and CSR in under-researched contexts and offer practical implications for global firms, regulators, and scholars. The presentation also shares practical strategies for publishing in high-impact journals, aimed at assisting researchers to contribute meaningfully to the global discourse on business ethics and social responsibility.

Dr. Sammy Ying
The University of Newcastle
Australia

Keynote Speech 03

Transformation of Artificial Intelligence and Project Management

Mr. Prasanna Sampathkumar

The future of work is being shaped by Artificial Intelligence (AI), and project management is at the forefront of this transformation. This session explores how PMIXAI, an initiative by the Project Management Institute (PMI), is paving the way for next-generation project professionals to thrive in an AI-driven world. With tools like PMI Infinity™, AI-powered coaching, and GPT-4.o enhancements, PMIXAI empowers learners and practitioners to automate, assist, and augment key project tasks—from decision support and resource management to risk and budget forecasting.

Students and early-career professionals will gain insights into the skills and certifications (such as CPMAI™) required to become AI-enabled project leaders. We'll examine real-world use cases, community-driven learning platforms, and thought leadership that help bridge the gap between academic learning and industry expectations.

This session invites the next generation to lead the AI transformation by embracing new technologies, building future-ready competencies, and becoming part of a global community driving innovation in project work. In a world where AI won't take your job, but someone using AI might, this is your opportunity to stay ahead of the curve.

Mr. Prasanna Sampathkumar
Regional Mentor - South Asia
Project Management Institute (PMI)



Track 01: Accounting and Finance



The Relationship between Ownership Structure and Dividend Policy: Evidence from Licensed Commercial Banks in Sri Lanka

Gowsalya, S^a and Ekanayaka, R. G. I. D^b

*^{a,b}Department of Finance and Accountancy, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka
sinnayagowski@gmail.com*

Abstract

In today's dynamic business environment, ownership structure and dividend policy are increasingly recognized as critical financial concepts. This study aims to examine the impact of ownership structure on dividend policy in licensed commercial banks in Sri Lanka. The research considers Managerial Ownership, Institutional Ownership, and Foreign Ownership as independent variables, while Dividend Policy serves as the dependent variable, with Firm Size included as a control variable. The study utilizes annual data from 2019 to 2023, covering a sample of 20 licensed commercial banks. Data analysis was conducted through applying descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis to assess the relationships among variables and the influence of ownership structure on dividend policy. The correlation analysis indicates a significant negative relationship between Institutional Ownership and Dividend Policy, while Foreign Ownership exhibits a significant positive relationship with Dividend Policy. Multiple regression results further confirm that Institutional Ownership negatively impacts Dividend Policy. However, the study finds no significant impact of Managerial Ownership, Foreign Ownership, or Firm Size on Dividend Policy. The findings of this study provide valuable insights for investors and companies, enabling them to make informed investment decisions. Understanding the relationship between ownership structure and dividend policy enhances investor performance and contributes to corporate governance practices.

Keywords: dividend policy, foreign ownership, institutional ownership, managerial ownership



Exploring Factors influencing Mobile Banking Adoption in Jaffna District: A Study of Government Sector Licensed Commercial Banks

Abishagini, U^a and Fernando, R. L. S^b

^{a, b}University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka
abiabishagini9@gmail.com

Abstract

In today's digital age, banks use ICT to improve customer service. Mobile banking, in particular, plays an important role in providing rapid and accessible financial services. However, Customers confront several hurdles when it comes to adopting mobile banking. As a result, the purpose of this research is to explore the key factors influencing the low adoption of mobile banking services in government-licensed commercial banks in the Jaffna district. This study used a sample of ninety-six mobile banking users and took a quantitative approach. Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived security, awareness, and intention to adopt are the primary constructs that were the subject of this study. A standardized, self-administered questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was used to gather data. The SPSS software was used to evaluate the data that was gathered. Pearson correlation analysis disclosed that perceived usefulness and awareness significantly affect the intention to adopt mobile banking. Further, perceived ease of use and perceived security do not significantly affect intention to adopt mobile banking. Institutions should focus on maintaining and enhancing the perceived usefulness of the mobile banking application while consistently engaging users to raise awareness about its capabilities and advantages.

Keywords: awareness, intention to adopt, licensed commercial banks, mobile banking, perceived usefulness



Impact of Working Capital Management on Financial Performance of Listed Materials Sector Companies in the Colombo Stock Exchange

Karunarathna, K. G. R. D^a and Abeyrathna, S. P. G. M^b

^a *Department of Management Studies, Open University of Sri Lanka*

^b *Department of Accountancy, Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education, Sri Lanka*
gayan.a@sliate.ac.lk

Abstract

Effective working capital management (WCM) is critical for ensuring liquidity, operational efficiency, and sustained profitability, particularly in volatile economic environments. This study examines the relationship between working capital management and profitability in the materials sector companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and Sri Lanka's economic downturn. Utilizing a quantitative methodology, the research analyses data from 18 companies over the period 2020–2024, employing regression and correlation analysis to identify key patterns. The findings reveal that efficient management of accounts payable, accounts receivable, and inventory positively influences profitability. Specifically, a positive correlation exists between accounts payable days and gross operating profit (GOP), while the relationship between accounts payable and return on assets (ROA) is insignificant. Similarly, accounts receivable days exhibit a positive impact on profitability, suggesting that accommodating customers with extended credit periods can drive future sales. Effective inventory management also enhances profitability, emphasizing the need to maintain optimal stock levels. Key recommendations include adopting robust credit policies, leveraging integrated inventory and financial management systems, and optimizing the cash conversion cycle. Furthermore, the study highlights the necessity of aligning working capital strategies with broader financial goals to ensure resilience and growth in challenging economic conditions.

Keywords: accounts payable, accounts receivable, Colombo Stock Exchange, inventory management, profitability, working capital management



Investment Behaviour of Generation Y Employees in Sri Lanka: An Exploratory Study

Rathnayaka, R. M. K. R. K^a and Abeyrathna, S. P. G. M^b

^a *Department of Management Studies, Open University of Sri Lanka*

^b *Department of Accountancy, Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education, Sri Lanka*
gayan.a@sliate.ac.lk

Abstract

This study explores the key factors influencing the investment behaviour of Generation Y (Millennials) in Sri Lanka, focusing on employed individuals aged 27 to 43. As Millennials enter their peak earning years, understanding their financial decision-making is vital for developing effective financial products and education programs. Using purposive sampling, data were collected from 1,000 employed respondents through a structured online questionnaire. The study examined four main factors: financial literacy, investment goals, media and information sources, and risk tolerance. Despite the non-probability sampling, the large sample size permitted the use of parametric techniques such as Pearson correlation and multiple regression. Assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were tested and met. Findings revealed that financial literacy and media sources had strong positive impacts on investment decisions. Risk tolerance had a modest but significant effect, while investment goals unexpectedly showed a negative relationship, indicating a possible gap between goals and actual planning. These results emphasize the importance of targeted financial education and the influence of digital media. While the findings are not generalizable due to sampling limitations, they offer valuable insights into the investment behavior of working Millennials in Sri Lanka and suggest directions for broader future research.

keywords: behavioral finance, financial literacy, generationy, investment decisions, risk tolerance, socioeconomic factors



Who Moves the Market? Long-term Dynamics between Investor Behaviour and Stock Performance in Sri Lanka

Mithila, G

Department of Financial Management, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka
gmithila@univ.jfn.ac.lk

Abstract

This study examines the long-term interaction between investor behaviour and market performance in Sri Lanka, a representative frontier market marked by moderate liquidity and macroeconomic fluctuations. Using monthly data from 1994 to 2024, investor transactions are categorised by type and origin, including purchases and sales by foreign companies, foreign individuals, local companies, and local individuals. Johansen cointegration and Vector Error Correction Models (VECM) are applied to assess whether these investor groups influence or respond to long-run market dynamics. The results indicate that while overall market movements, proxied by the All Share Price Index (ASPI), significantly affect all investor categories in the short term, only sales by local individuals play a leading role in long-run equilibrium adjustments. In contrast, foreign investors exhibit reactive behaviour, responding to rather than anticipating market shifts. These findings question the assumed informational advantage of foreign investors in frontier settings and underscore the critical role of local retail sentiment in price formation. Policy implications include enhancing investor education and managing retail-driven volatility.

Keywords: cointegration, frontier, investor behaviour, price discovery, retail sentiment, stock markets, vector error correction model



The Impact of Capital Adequacy Requirements on Profitability of Licensed Finance Companies in Sri Lanka

Larojan, C

Department of Finance and Accountancy, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

larojan@vau.ac.lk

Abstract

The Licensed Finance Companies (LFCs) have a higher risk portfolio compared to the banking industry of Sri Lanka. This study aims to examine the impact of capital adequacy requirements on the profitability of LFCs in Sri Lanka. Capital funds to deposits (CFD), Borrowings to equity (BE) and Core capital to risk weighted assets (CCR) are considered as capital adequacy requirements related measurements. Return on equity (ROE), Return on assets (ROA) and Interest income to interest expenses (IIE) are considered as profitability measures of the LFCs. The study used a quantitative research approach. Based on the data during the sample period from December 2013 to June 2024, the time-series data were collected. The results revealed that only BE had positively significant impact on ROE. Using ROA as the proxy for LFCs' profitability, it was found that BE and CCR had positively significant impact on ROA. Using IIE as the proxy for LFCs' profitability, it was found that only CCR had negatively significant impact on IIE. The CFD was found to be insignificant with the profitability as measured by ROE, ROA and IIE. The author suggests that further empirical studies should be conducted on capital adequacy requirements, which would be a source as it will help LFCs to improve their financial performance.

Keywords: borrowings to equity, capital adequacy requirements, capital funds to deposits, core capital to risk weighted assets, interest income to interest expenses



Track 02: Economic and Information Technology



A Qualitative Diagnosis of Factors influencing Presumptive Tax Collection in Sri Lanka

Thampoe, E. J^a Abeywardana, N. L E^b and Munasinghe, M. A. T. K^c

^{a, b, c} Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies, University of Kelaniya

edgar_thampoe@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

This study aims to explore the factors influencing presumptive tax collection in Sri Lanka. An interpretivist paradigm was adopted in this study using a qualitative research approach. Primary data were collected through virtual (Online) in-depth interviews with 15 participants, including tax consultants from the Department of Inland Revenue, tax practitioners, academics, and the General public in Sri Lanka. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results of the qualitative analysis of the factors influencing presumptive tax collection in Sri Lanka show the institutional, legal and regulatory framework as well as the governance and political factors, which will help the Department of Inland Revenue and policy makers formulate policy strategies to promote presumptive tax collection and voluntary tax compliance in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: informal economy, lump-sum tax systems, presumptive tax, thematic analysis



Enhancing Lecturers' Teaching Knowledge through AI-Based Teaching Tools: Evidence from Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna

Wijayarathna, B. D. I. K^a, De Silva, P. H. M. P^b, Inthusha. K^c and
Wijekoon, M. G. N. D. S. K^d

^{a, b, c}*Department of Commerce, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka*

^d*Department of Marketing, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka*
ishaniwijerathna1234@gmail.com,

Abstract

This study explores the Enhancing Lecturers' Teaching Knowledge through AI-Based Teaching Tools: Evidence from Faculty of Management studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna. The main objective is to examine how AI tools, particularly those offering Personalized Teaching Insights (PTI), Knowledge Enhancement (KEN), and Adaptive Learning (ADL), influence pedagogical development. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 54 lecturers, and quantitative analysis methods were applied to identify the impact of the selected variables and teaching knowledge. The findings reveal that AI tools providing personalized teaching insights and adaptive learning support significantly contribute to the improvement of teaching knowledge, while knowledge enhancement methods show a less positive or even adverse effect. This highlights the importance of integrating intelligent, adaptive technologies into academic environments to support lecturers' instructional practices. The study emphasizes the need for continuous professional development and the rethinking of knowledge acquisition strategies in the era of AI. It further recommends extending similar investigations across broader educational contexts to strengthen the evidence base for AI-driven pedagogical innovation.

Keywords: AI-based teaching tools, adaptive learning, knowledge enhancement, personalized teaching insights



Determinants of AI Adoption among Small and Medium Enterprises in Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Inthu, M^a, Jeyaramanan, S^b, and Nimalathan, B^c

^{a, b, c}*Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology, Northern Uni, Jaffna, Sri Lanka*
jeyarajasingami@gmail.com

Abstract

In this digital era, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as one of the critical tools for boosting innovation, productivity, and competitiveness in the global market. In that context, the present study aims to analyse the key determinants influencing the adoption of artificial intelligence among Small and Medium Enterprises operating in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. Therefore, the researcher employed the framework Technology-Organisation-Environment (TOE) to give a clear picture of the factors influencing AI adoption among small businesses in Jaffna. The present study is based on a cross-sectional time horizon, capturing the current state of AI adoption and its determinants at a single point in time. In that context, data were collected from 150 Small and Medium Enterprises owners through a structured, self-administered questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale. The data collected were analysed by the SPSS software package using statistical analysis, including reliability analysis, descriptive analysis, the Shapiro-Wilk test, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression analysis. The findings of the study proved that technological readiness, perceived usefulness, and organisational innovativeness have a positive impact on AI adoption, while financial constraints negatively influence AI adoption by SMEs in Jaffna. In that context, the present study contributed to policymakers, technology providers, and small business owners in formulating strategies that foster AI adoption. Further, it is recommended to conduct future research by exploring longitudinal impacts and the role of external support mechanisms in enhancing technological uptake among small businesses.

Keywords: AI adoption, financial constraints, SME innovation, technology readiness



Determinants of Foreign Exchange Rate in Sri Lanka

Nayanakanthi, A^a and Ravinthirakumaran, N^b

^{a, b}*Department of Business Economics, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*
apsara99smc@gmail.com^a

Abstract

The exchange rate is a crucial economic indicator reflecting a country's international economic health and competitiveness. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic instability, the Sri Lankan rupee has experienced significant depreciation. This study examines the determinants of the foreign exchange rate in Sri Lanka using secondary macroeconomic annual time series data from 1990 to 2023. Data were obtained from the World Bank and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, with the exchange rate considered the dependent variable. Independent variables include the GDP growth rate, foreign direct investment (FDI), inflation, interest rate, balance of payments, and trade openness. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller and Phillips-Perron tests were used to assess the stationarity of the data, while the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) model was employed to determine long-run relationships among variables. The ARDL bounds test confirmed a co-integration relationship, and the error correction model revealed the significant impacts of these variables on the exchange rate. The findings indicate that the exchange rate has a positive relationship with the balance of payments and inflation and a negative relationship with GDP growth and FDI. Interest rates and trade openness exhibit mixed effects in the long run, with interest rates showing a positive relationship and trade openness a negative one. Overall, the results confirm that all the examined variables significantly impact the exchange rate in both the short and long run, providing insights for policymakers aiming to stabilize Sri Lanka's currency and macroeconomic environment.

Keywords – ARDL bound test, economic growth, exchange rate, Sri Lanka



Spending Behaviour and Financial Decision-Making Among Single Working Women: Insights from the Western Province of Sri Lanka

Herath, D. M. H^a and Ransara, M. S. N^b

^{a, b}*Department of Business Economics, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*
nilupulisupuni7@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores the spending behaviour and financial decision-making of single working women in the Western Province of Sri Lanka, focusing on how socioeconomic, demographic, and financial factors influence their consumption patterns. With the rising economic participation of this demographic, understanding their financial behaviour is essential for policy formulation and targeted financial services. Primary data were collected from a sample of 200 respondents using a structured questionnaire. Statistical techniques such as frequency analysis, chi-square tests, independent sample t-tests, and multiple regression analysis were employed to identify key determinants of spending behaviour. Findings reveal that education level, income, household composition, savings frequency, and access to credit and financial investments significantly impact spending patterns. Women with higher educational qualifications and income levels tend to exhibit more strategic and planned spending habits. Access to credit facilities and insurance policies was also associated with increased average expenditure, reflecting enhanced financial confidence and stability. However, financial investments showed no significant impact on spending, suggesting a preference for short-term financial satisfaction over long-term planning. This study highlights the economic importance of single working women and the need for financial institutions and policymakers to consider their unique financial needs. The insights gained can aid in developing tailored financial products, improving financial literacy programs, and promoting inclusive economic policies. Addressing the distinct challenges faced by this group will contribute to their financial empowerment and broader socioeconomic development in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: average income level, demographic influence, financial literacy, spending behaviour, single working women



Track 03: Human Resource Management



The Influence of Green HRM on Organisational Sustainability with the Mediating Role of Organisational Commitment: A Conceptual Exploration with Reference to the Hotel Industry in Sri Lanka

Romita De Silva^a and Tharani, V^b

*^aSri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education, Sri Lanka
romitadesilva4@gmail.com*

Abstract

Numerous organizations prioritize organisational sustainability to ensure long-term viability and financial performance while mitigating adverse effects on the environment and society. Despite the growing focus on green HRM and organizational sustainability research, few studies have investigated the contribution of organisational commitment as a mediator in the relationship between green HRM and organizational sustainability. The study aims to develop a conceptual framework that integrates green HRM, organisational commitment, and organizational sustainability in the hotel industry. This study applied the SLR methodology, followed by the PRISMA guideline, and the study review is based on 28 articles and 3 reports. The review found that green HRM practices directly influence organisational commitment toward environmental activities. It also found a positive and significant relationship between green HRM and organisational commitment, with direct and indirect contributions to organizational sustainability. Therefore, the implementation of sustainable policies by aligning with green HRM practices in the hotel can lead to a competitive advantage while enhancing overall organizational performance. Researchers suggest that organizations should foster a supportive culture where employees are committed to green HRM practices and sustainability efforts.

Keywords: green HRM, hotel industry, organisational commitment, organisational sustainability



Job Satisfaction among Retail Clothing Shops Sales Persons in Sri Lanka: Special Reference Nolimit, Kandy, CIB and Thilakawardhene Companies in Sri Lanka

Dilmika, K. A. S

Department of Social Statistics, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka
k.a.shehandilmika@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores job satisfaction among retail clothing salespersons in Sri Lanka, with a focus on NOLIMIT, Kandy, CIB, and Thilakawardhene. Job satisfaction is a critical factor influencing turnover rates, organizational performance, and customer satisfaction. Previous literature indicates that factors such as pay, work environment, and management support significantly affect job satisfaction in retail, though limited research exists on Sri Lanka's retail clothing sector. A Quantitative -methods approach was employed, combining descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. A survey with 239 participants from the four retail companies was conducted. Descriptive statistics analyzed demographics, while Chi-square, Kruskal-Wallis, and MANOVA tests assessed the influence of gender, work experience, and workplace environment on job satisfaction. Results showed no significant gender-based differences in satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 113.145$, $p = 1.000$). However, employees with more than five years of experience reported higher satisfaction levels (Kruskal-Wallis $H = 26.341$, $p < 0.001$). The MANOVA revealed significant differences in stress levels, work-life balance, and shift types across workplaces (Pillai's Trace = 0.932, $p < 0.000$). Post-hoc analysis highlighted Kandy's superior work-life balance and Nolimit's lower stress levels. The study recommends improving shift schedules, training, and career advancement opportunities, particularly for less experienced employees. It also suggests addressing gender differences in satisfaction and improving work-life balance, especially in workplaces with irregular shift management. This research contributes to understanding job satisfaction in Sri Lanka's retail clothing sector, providing actionable insights for improving employee well-being and organizational performance.

Keywords: employee well-being, gender differences, job satisfaction, retail industry, work stress



Impact of Employees' Interpersonal Skills on their Performance in the selected Divisional Secretariat, Nuwara Eliya District, Sri Lanka

Janani, R^a and Hiruni Imasha, B. M^b

Department of Human Resource Management, Open University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

S17004051@ousl.lk

Abstract

Interpersonal skills are essential for cultivating productive workplace relationships, fostering collaboration, and ensuring the smooth functioning of public institutions. This study examines how interpersonal skills, specifically communication, teamwork, leadership, and conflict resolution, impact employee performance within the selected Divisional Secretariat, situated in the Nuwara Eliya District of Sri Lanka. The main objective of this research is to assess the extent to which these skills contribute to employees' overall performance in the public sector context. A quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional research design was adopted. The unit of analysis for this study is the individual employee working within the selected divisional secretariat, allowing for a detailed understanding of how each person's interpersonal abilities influence their job performance. Data were collected from a sample of 86 staff members using a structured questionnaire, selected through a simple random sampling technique, and supported by institutional records. The total population consisted of 110 employees. The data were analysed using SPSS software to identify the impact of interpersonal skills on job performance. The reliability of the measurement scales was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha, ensuring internal consistency. Analytical procedures included both descriptive statistics and inferential techniques such as correlation analysis and multiple regression. Despite existing studies on interpersonal skills, a significant research gap persists regarding context specific investigations in unique public sector environments. There is limited understanding of how these skills interact and influence performance over time, particularly within culturally diverse and rural administrative settings. The findings indicate that strong interpersonal skills are positively associated with enhanced employee performance. These insights underscore the need for targeted training initiatives and policy interventions aimed at strengthening interpersonal competencies to boost organizational effectiveness in public service delivery.

Keywords: *communication, conflict resolution, employee performance, leadership, teamwork*



The Impact of Distributive Justice on Employee Commitment: The Moderating Role of Procedural Justice in Sri Lanka's Hotel Industry

Manjula, S^a Thasika, T^b and Mayuran, L^c
^{a,b,c}University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka
mayuranl@univ.jfn.ac.lk

Abstract

In Sri Lanka's high-pressure hospitality industry, employee commitment is critical to operational excellence and long-term competitiveness. Drawing on Social Exchange Theory (SET), this study investigates how distributive justice influences employee commitment, and whether this relationship is moderated by procedural justice. Researchers argue that fair allocation of resources strengthens employee loyalty, but this effect is significantly amplified when employees also perceive fairness in decision-making processes. In such environments, fairness signals mutual respect and trust, fostering deeper emotional attachment to the organization. A cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from 211 frontline employees in Sri Lanka's hotel industry, using convenience sampling. Self-administered questionnaires assessed perceptions of distributive justice, procedural justice, and commitment. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted using SPSS. Results revealed a significant positive effect of distributive justice on employee commitment ($\beta = .43$, $p < .001$), and a significant interaction effect with procedural justice ($\beta = .14$, $p = .02$), accounting for an additional variance in commitment ($\Delta R^2 = .02$). Simple slope analysis showed that the impact of distributive justice on commitment was stronger when procedural justice was high ($\beta = .51$, $p < .001$), compared to when it was low ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$). These findings underscore the importance of reinforcing both outcome fairness and process fairness to sustain employee commitment in service-intensive settings. Managers in the hotel industry should prioritize transparent and inclusive decision-making processes alongside fair reward systems. Training programs should be implemented to educate supervisors and HR personnel on the principles of procedural and distributive justice. While the study contributes to justice literature in collectivist, hierarchical cultures, it is limited by its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported measures. Future research should explore longitudinal models and include cultural variables that influence justice perceptions and employee behavior.

Keywords: distributive justice, employee commitment, sri lankan hotel industry, procedural justice, social exchange theory



Relationship between High Performance Work System and High Performance Organization State Banking Sector in Ampara District

Sandaruwan, E. G. S

Department of Human Resource Management, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Shehan20126@mgt.pdn.ac.lk

Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and organizational performance within the Banking Sector in Sri Lanka. HPWS comprises a set of interrelated human resource practices aimed at enhancing employee competencies, engagement, and commitment, thereby improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency. HR practices, including selective hiring, extensive training, performance-based compensation, and transformational leadership, align with HPWS principles. This practices emphasises fair working practices, equal pay, and a safe working environment, fostering a culture of inclusivity and employee well-being. Training and development opportunities are provided to all employees, ensuring equal access to career advancement. This research aims to empirically examine how these HPWS practices influence organizational performance, offering insights that extend beyond the banking sector to other industries. The study addresses a significant gap in the literature concerning the application of HPWS in transforming organizations into High-Performance Organizations (HPOs). While existing research has predominantly examined individual HPWS practices and their direct impact on organizational performance, there is limited exploration of how these practices collectively foster a high-performance culture within organizations. The study employs a quantitative research design, utilizing structured questionnaires to collect data from a sample of 100 employees across various job roles within branches in the Ampara district. The research investigates the relationships between HPWS components, including staffing, training, compensation, flexible work assignments, and communication, and organisational performance indicators such as employee productivity, job satisfaction, and overall branch effectiveness. Findings indicate that each HPWS element positively correlates with various facets of organizational performance, including employee productivity, job satisfaction, and overall branch effectiveness. Notably, practices that foster employee involvement and continuous development were found to be particularly influential. These results align with existing literature suggesting that HPWS can lead to enhanced organizational performance through improved employee outcomes. Based on these findings, the research recommends that continue to invest in HPWS practices, with an emphasis on aligning them with organizational goals and cultural contexts. This study contributes to the understanding of how HPWS can be leveraged to enhance organizational performance in the Sri Lankan banking sector, offering valuable insights for HR practitioners and policymakers.

Keywords: communication, compensation, flexible work assignment, high performance work system, staffing.



Personal Loans and Well-being: The Moderating Role of Financial Literacy and Spousal Employment in the Military Context

Darshani, R. K. N. D^a and Gunasekara, N. M. S^b

^a*University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka*

^b*Defence Services Command and Staff Collage, Sri Lanka*
niroshidarshani@kln.ac.lk

Abstract

This study examines how taking personal loans affects the economic and psychological well-being of officers in the Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF). It also examines whether financial literacy and spousal employment change this relationship. Data were collected through a structured survey from 317 SLAF officers. The findings show that personal loans are positively related to both economic and psychological well-being. Importantly, officers whose spouses are employed reported higher well-being, showing that spousal employment helps reduce the negative effects of debt. However, financial literacy did not significantly influence the relationship between loans and well-being. This suggests that having another income in the household is more helpful than simply having financial knowledge. The study recommends that military financial programs consider family income when assessing financial risks and provide better support for officers through targeted counselling. These findings are useful for improving well-being in military settings where debt is common.

Keywords: financial literacy, personal loans, spousal employment, well-being



Enhancing Motivation through Training: The Mediating Role of Work Engagement among Government Nurses in Sri Lanka

Darshani, R. K. N. D
University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
niroshidarshani@kln.ac.lk

Abstract

This study explores how training affects employee motivation among government nursing officers at Teaching Hospital Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, and examines whether work engagement acts as a mediating factor in this relationship. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire from a sample of 300 nursing officers. The results revealed a significant positive impact of training on motivation. Furthermore, work engagement was found to mediate the relationship partially, indicating that while training directly enhances motivation, it also influences motivation indirectly through increased engagement. These findings highlight the importance of providing training that not only enhances skills but also fosters deeper involvement in work. The study contributes to understanding employee motivation in public healthcare settings and recommends policy makers focus on work engagement as a mechanism for improving training outcomes.

Keywords: government nurses, motivation, Sri Lanka, training, work engagement



Impact of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles on Employee Performance: A Study of Ministry of Women's Affairs in the Northern Province, Sri Lanka

Thusiya, G^a and Raveendran, T^b

^aMinistry of Women's Affairs, Northern Province, Sri Lanka

^bDepartment of Human Resource Management, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka
rthanes@univ.jfn.ac.lk

Abstract

This study was designed to examine the impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employees' job performance in the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Northern Province, Sri Lanka. The study was conducted with a survey research strategy in a cross-sectional time horizon. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires. A sample of 97 employees working at the departments coming under the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Northern Province and a convenient sampling method was used to draw the sample. The leadership styles were measured using the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire, while employee performance was assessed using the Work Performance Scale, to suit the study's context. Regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Results indicated that transformational leadership has a positive impact on employee performance, while the effect of transactional leadership on employee performance is not significant. The findings suggest that public sector organisations should consider adopting an appropriate leadership style, recognising that employees are the most valuable assets, and their performance is closely linked to leadership style.

Keywords: employee performance, transactional leadership style, transformational leadership style



Empower to Engage: Impact of Leader Empowering Behaviour on Employee Engagement: Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment among Employees working in the Sri Lankan Apparel Sector

Jasintha, N

Department of Human Resource Management, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

jasinthabn@univ.jfn.ac.lk

Abstract

In today's complex and fast-paced workplaces, employee engagement is indispensable to an organisation's overall success, as it has a direct impact on organisational outcomes. Leader Empowering Behavior is a well-known leadership strategy for increasing employee engagement. Even with its proven advantages, little is known about the psychological empowerment by which empowered leadership raises engagement, especially in multicultural and quickly changing work environments. The impact of LEB and employee engagement is examined in this study via the mediation of psychological empowerment. Through the lens of social exchange theory, mediating effect of psychological empowerment on the impact of leader empowering behaviour on employee engagement was tested. Using sophisticated structural equation modeling through Smart PLS 4.0 and data from 297 employees in the apparel industry, results demonstrate that LEB significantly affects engagement directly and indirectly through increased psychological empowerment. In actuality, managers who foster cultures of independence and meaningful involvement provide their staff members a psychological boost that increases their level of engagement. These findings highlight the importance of leadership philosophies that go beyond conventional command and control structures by encouraging self-motivation and improving working conditions. By recognising psychological empowerment as a crucial mechanism connecting leadership behaviours to employee outcomes, the study adds to the body of knowledge on leadership and provides organisations looking to cultivate leaders who can effectively empower their people with useful advice. To improve theory and practice, future studies should look at these interactions over time and in a variety of cultural situations.

Keywords: employee engagement; leader empowering behavior; psychological empowerment; Sri-Lankan apparel



Impact of Job Stress on Work-Life Balance among Employees in the Banking Sector: A Study of Licensed Commercial Banks in Kurunegala District

Somathilaka, H.P.A.D^a and Pratheepan, N^b

^{a, b} *Department of Finance and Accountancy, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*
avindudhananjaya98@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to determine the relationship between Job Stress and the work-life balance (WLB) among employees working at Licensed Commercial Banks in Kurunegala District, Sri Lanka. Four independent variables, namely Work Overload (WO), Role Conflict (RC), Role Ambiguity (RA), and Working Environment (WE) were examined as the independent variables that measures job stress. Data were collected through structured questionnaire using a sample of 100 employees working at Licensed Commercial Banks in Kurunegala district. Data were analysed using multiple regression analysis with SPSS. Results indicated that Work Overload and Role Ambiguity have a significant negative impact on Work Life Balance of employees working at Licensed Commercial banks in Kurunegala district. Further, findings revealed that bank employees in the Kurunegala district are working under a higher level of stress, with workload being the main factor. But they are experiencing a positive working environment. Furthermore, the findings highlighted the importance of addressing employees' issues to reduce job stress, which results in higher employee turnover, lower productivity, and improved work-life balance, benefiting both employers and employees. Finally, this research would serve as a blueprint for determining the optimal level of job stress and work-life balance in the banking sector to maintain both productivity and employee satisfaction, thereby ensuring operational sustainability.

Keywords: role ambiguity, role conflict, working environment, work-life Balance, work overload



Decoding the Role of Diversity Management in boosting Employee Engagement

Shehan Sandaruwan, E.G^a and Issath Jahan, S.M^b

^a*Department of Human Resource Management, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

^b*Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka*

Shehan20126@mgt.pdn.ac.lk

Abstract

Diversity management of the workforce has become a critical component of improving employee performance in today's complex and multicultural healthcare environment. At the Regional Directorate of Health Services (RDHS), Ampara, Sri Lanka, this study investigates the relationship between employee performance and important diversity management practices, including communication, fair performance appraisal, diversity training, and leaders' commitment. Managing a diverse workforce is essential for providing high-quality patient care since human contact and cultural sensitivity have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the healthcare sector. Eighty-five employees chosen by stratified random sampling were given a structured questionnaire as part of a quantitative, descriptive-correlational study design. The data was assessed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation analysis. Employee performance and the independent variables were found to have strong and statistically significant positive correlations. Leaders' commitment ($r = 0.813$) and fair performance appraisal ($r = 0.808$) showed very high correlations, while communication ($r = 0.510$) and diversity training ($r = 0.691$) showed moderate and high correlations, respectively. According to the study's findings, good diversity management techniques greatly improve worker performance and engagement. Implementing leadership development programs, ongoing diversity training, conducting culturally sensitive performance reviews, and bolstering internal communication tactics are some of the recommendations made in light of the findings. The study adds to the shortage of empirical research on diversity management in Sri Lanka's healthcare industry and offers useful suggestions for legislators and HR professionals. In order to improve generalizability, further research is urged to investigate other diversity dimensions like hiring, promotion, and decision-making. Additionally, the study should be replicated in other government sectors or larger geographic areas.

Keywords: commitment, employee performance, leaders' performance appraisal workforce diversity management



Impact of Individual-level Determinants of Knowledge Sharing on Employee Job Performance: A Study in the ABC Telecommunication Company in Sri Lanka

Madhushani, W. K. U^a and Darshani, R. K. N. D^b

^{a, b}*Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies, University of Kelaniya*

madhusha-bm18258@stu.kln.ac.lk

Abstract

Since not all employees possess the same knowledge in an organization, individuals, teams and departments need to share what they know. This helps the organization to collect, use and grow its knowledge. (Wang, Wang, & Liang, 2014) Knowledge gaps can arise when key employees leave a company and there is no good system in place to store and share their knowledge. (Miller, 2025) The objective of the current study was to examine the contribution of individual-level determinants of knowledge sharing, including interpersonal trust, intention to share knowledge, and motivation to share knowledge, to employee job performance. This was a quantitative study, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a convenience sampling technique. The sample size was 200 employees who worked at ABC Telecommunication Company in Colombo District. The number of employees who responded was 195 out of 200 employees. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), version 23.0, was used for data analysis. According to the results of the present study, there is a significant and positive relationship between knowledge sharing and employee job performance. Considering each sub-dimension, the greater impact is having interpersonal trust on sharing knowledge for employee job performance as an individual determinant of knowledge sharing.

Keywords: employee job performance, intention to share knowledge, interpersonal trust to share knowledge, Knowledge sharing, motivation to share knowledge, telecommunication industry



The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on the Personal Effectiveness of Employees in the Apparel Sector: A Study of Selected Garments in Sri Lanka

Hemasiri, A.R.M. P^a and De Zoysa, H.I.S^b

^{a,b}*Department of Public Administration, Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka*
malshahemasiri@gmail.com

Abstract

Human resources play a critical role in determining organisational effectiveness, particularly in labour-intensive industries like apparel and manufacturing. This study investigates the impact of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, specifically training, leadership, and compensation, on the personal effectiveness of employees in a selected garment industry in Sri Lanka. The study employed an explanatory quantitative research design. The convenience sampling method was used. Using a structured questionnaire, data were collected from 248 operational-level employees, a sample of the research selected according to the Morgan Table. The questionnaire was distributed among the target audience for their responses. Multiple regression analysis was performed using SPSS 2025. The results indicate that all three HRM dimensions significantly and positively influence employees' effectiveness. Hence, the findings proved that well-structured HR practices can enhance employee productivity and individual goal achievement. Thereby contributing to improved organisational performance. Managers in the apparel sector should prioritize HR investments in training programs for employees, leadership skill development and performance-based compensation to strengthen workforce capabilities.

Keywords: apparel sector, compensation, HRM practices, leadership, personal effectiveness, training



Amplifying Employee Engagement: The Interplay of Organisational Voice, Employee Voice, and Transformational Leadership

Mathushan, P^a Nanthagopan, Y^b Kengatharan, N^c Harikaran, S^d and Ithrees, A. G. I. M^e

^{a,b,d,e}University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

^cUniversity of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

mathush@vau.ac.lk

Abstract

Despite growing attention on employee engagement in organisational research, the specific mechanisms that drive engagement, especially within voice-enabled and leadership-rich environments, remain underexplored. This study addresses this gap by examining the influence of organisational voice, employee voice, and transformational leadership on employee engagement, along with the moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between organisational voice and engagement. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of previously validated scales. The target population for this study comprised employees working in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. The rationale for selecting this sector stems from its labor-intensive nature and the critical role of leadership and communication practices in enhancing employee engagement and performance. A purposive sampling technique was employed to identify respondents who had direct exposure to leadership practices and were involved in routine communication processes within their organisations. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed across selected apparel companies. Of these, 267 completed responses were returned, yielding a response rate of 89%, which is considered highly acceptable in organisational research. After careful data screening and validation, all usable responses were retained for statistical analysis. Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the findings reveal that employee voice is a strong predictor of engagement ($\beta = 0.319$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.829$), with transformational leadership demonstrating an even stronger impact ($\beta = 0.677$, $p < 0.001$). While organisational voice shows a weaker direct effect on engagement ($\beta = 0.105$, $p = 0.090$), it significantly influences employee voice ($\beta = 0.548$, $p < 0.001$), which in turn boosts engagement. Notably, transformational leadership positively moderates the relationship between organisational voice and engagement ($\beta = 0.079$, $p = 0.026$), indicating that leadership can amplify the impact of organisational voice. Reliability and validity criteria are met, with strong AVE, CR, and discriminant validity. The model also exhibits substantial predictive relevance ($Q^2 = 0.735$ for engagement). These results suggest that fostering a culture of voice and transformational leadership can significantly enhance employee engagement. The findings provide theoretical insights and practical implications for managers aiming to strengthen workplace motivation and performance through voice empowerment and leadership development.

Keywords: employee engagement, employee voice, organisational voice, transformational leadership



Unveiling the Power of Authentic Leadership: Pathways to Organisational Innovativeness through Creativity and Knowledge Sharing

Mathushan, P^a Priyatharsini, M^b Nanthagopan, Y^c, Kengatharan, N^d, and Harikaran, S^e

^{a,c,e}University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

^bUniversity College of Jaffna, University of Vocational Technology

^dUniversity of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

mathush@vau.ac.lk

Abstract

While authentic leadership has gained increasing attention in organisational behaviour research, there remains a lack of empirical evidence exploring how it translates into innovation outcomes through psychological and behavioral mechanisms such as knowledge sharing and creativity. This study addresses this gap by investigating the mediating roles of creativity and knowledge sharing in the relationship between authentic leadership and innovativeness. The target population for this study consisted of employees working in the apparel industry. The focus on this sector is due to its significance in the manufacturing economy and the relevance of leadership, creativity, and knowledge sharing in enhancing innovativeness within such organisations. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select respondents who were knowledgeable and experienced in organisational processes related to leadership and innovation. Data were collected from multiple apparel industries, and the study achieved a response rate of 87%, which is considered highly satisfactory for organisational surveys. Utilizing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the findings reveal that authentic leadership significantly enhances creativity ($\beta = 0.479$, $p < 0.001$), innovativeness ($\beta = 0.368$, $p < 0.001$), and knowledge sharing ($\beta = 0.742$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, creativity mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and innovativeness (indirect effect $\beta = 0.170$, $p < 0.001$), while knowledge sharing also serves as a key mediator between authentic leadership and both creativity ($\beta = 0.245$, $p = 0.005$) and innovativeness ($\beta = 0.238$, $p = 0.007$). Further, the model's predictive relevance is supported by satisfactory values of R^2 and Q^2 for all endogenous constructs, with innovativeness showing the highest R^2 (0.885). Reliability and validity assessments confirm the robustness of the measurement model, as reflected in high composite reliability ($\rho_c > 0.9$) and AVE values above 0.5 for all constructs. Additionally, HTMT ratios and Fornell-Larcker criteria affirm discriminant validity. These findings underscore the pivotal role of authentic leadership in fostering a knowledge-sharing environment that enhances both individual creativity and organisational innovativeness. The study adds to leadership literature by identifying knowledge sharing and creativity as mechanisms through which authentic leaders can cultivate innovation. Implications suggest that organisations aiming for sustained innovation should prioritize the development of authentic leadership traits and supportive knowledge-sharing cultures.

Keywords: *authentic leadership, creativity, innovativeness, knowledge sharing, psychological and behavioral mechanisms*



Track 04:

Management

Entrepreneurship

Marketing and

Communication



Factors influencing Youth Entrepreneurial Intention: A Study on Fourth-Year Students of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna

Subramaniam, V.A.S^a Vithurshika, R^b and Tharshiga, P^c

^{a, b, c}*Department of Financial Management, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka*
tharshiga@univ.jfn.ac.lk

Abstract

Youth entrepreneurial intention is influenced by various factors that shape the willingness and motivation of individuals to engage in entrepreneurial activities. The study aims to analyse factors influencing youth entrepreneurial intention. To achieve the research objective, the study focuses on fourth-year students pursuing only management studies. A stratified random sampling method was used to collect two hundred data. Based on the Multiple regression analysis, the study concludes that capital is the most critical factor influencing entrepreneurial intentions, emphasising the vital role of financial resources in achieving business success. It also highlights the significance of educational programs, as academic exposure tends to foster greater entrepreneurial ambition. Additionally, familial support is shown to enhance motivation for entrepreneurship. In contrast, support and motivation from friends proved to have an insignificant effect, suggesting that peer influence may not be as pivotal. The study recommends that financial institutions should make funding more accessible and that educational institutions should improve entrepreneurial training. It also encourages families to support their members' business endeavours actively. Moreover, implementing structured mentorship and networking opportunities could help address the limited impact of peer influence. Future research should delve into industry-specific entrepreneurship, cultural influences, and psychological factors such as risk-taking and resilience. Longitudinal studies are particularly encouraged to evaluate how these factors contribute to long-term business sustainability. These insights will be valuable for policymakers, educators, and researchers in crafting effective strategies to promote entrepreneurship and drive economic growth. Additionally, highlighting successful entrepreneurial stories within the community could inspire students and alleviate their apprehensions about starting a business.

Keywords: *capital, friends' support, motivation, education programme, family support, youth entrepreneurial intention*



"Beyond Humour": An Auto-ethnographic Exploration of Nicknaming Practices in a Higher Education Institution in Jaffna

Sukirthan, T

Department of Management and Entrepreneurship, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

Sukiir.available@gmail.com

Abstract

This auto-ethnographic study examines the multifaceted and interrelated functions of nicknaming within a higher educational institution in Jaffna. Drawing from my experience as an employee and insider, I examine how nicknaming operates as more than mere workplace humour, functioning as a practice entangled with the interplay of power and culture. Guided by a qualitative interpretivist paradigm and rooted in analytical auto-ethnography, this study thematically analyses my roles as a giver, receiver, and observer of nicknames. Three core themes were identified, aligning with the social, political, and psychological domains: nicknaming as a form of social bonding and relational softening; nicknaming as a means of symbolic power and everyday resistance; and nicknaming as a catalyst for identity formation and psychological stimulation. This study also strengthens the notion that nicknaming is a double-edged phenomenon, producing both positive and negative outcomes depending on the context. It further calls for a rethinking of professional norms through a critical examination of workplace behaviours and encourages awareness among those involved in nicknaming about its benefits and challenges. This study also recommends fostering a consent-based culture, encouraging critical self-reflection through auto-ethnographic exercises, and integrating nickname analysis into organizational assessments. Finally, further qualitative in-depth interviews have been suggested to deepen and broaden the findings.

Keywords: everyday resistance, identity formation, liveliness, nicknaming, social bonding



Building up Social Work Practices for Decolonial Solidarity and Social Justice in Asia

Sivaretinamohan, R

*Symbiosis Centre for Management Studies, Bengaluru campus, Symbiosis
International (Deemed University), India*
mohan.dimat@gmail.com

Abstract

The present study aims to explore the transformative power of decolonised social work practices in Asia, specifically focusing on the key constructs that can facilitate rural and urban change. By challenging Western beliefs that perpetuate problems and adopting decolonized approaches, this research seeks to address the socioeconomic challenges and tribal/clan societies prevalent in postcolonial Asian countries. An extensive review of past literature was made to gather existing knowledge on decolonisation in social work. Expert discussions and in-depth interactions with 25 participants were carried out to identify critical constructs of decolonised social work practices. Based on these findings, a research instrument was designed and administered to 600 respondents across Asia through a Google form. Structural Equation Modeling was employed to validate the continuous construct of the effects of decolonisation. The study found that social planning, family therapy, consultation, group work, research, supervision, and casework have significant positive effects on the adoption of social technologies. These practices, directly and indirectly, impact trust in resolving various social issues such as drug abuse, adult criminality, juvenile delinquency, mental retardation, child abuse and neglect, racial discrimination, poverty and illness, alcoholism and mental illness, and social units of concern. Overall, the decolonisation of social work supports underprivileged individuals and those affected by colonisation. While this study contributes valuable insights into the transformative power of decolonised social work practices in Asia, it has limitations. The research instrument was administered through a Google form, which may have limited the depth of responses. Additionally, the study focused on a specific set of constructs, and further research is required to investigate other decolonisation-related aspects of social work. The research findings provide practical implications for Asian social work practitioners. By embracing decolonised approaches and implementing the identified key constructs, practitioners can enhance their effectiveness in addressing social issues and promoting positive change in rural and urban contexts. The decolonisation of social work practices carries significant social implications for postcolonial Asian countries. By challenging Western beliefs and adopting contextually relevant approaches, social work can contribute to dismantling the legacy of colonialism, promoting self-determination, and empowering marginalized communities. This, in turn, can lead to more significant social equity, inclusivity, and justice. This study contributes original insights by focusing on the transformative power of decolonised social work practices in Asia. By identifying key constructs and their effects on the adoption of social technologies, the research adds value to the existing literature on decolonisation. It provides practical guidance for social work practitioners seeking to address the socioeconomic challenges and tribal/clan societies prevalent in postcolonial Asian countries.

Keywords: alcoholism, and mental illness, family therapy, indigenous knowledge, social planning, social work practices



The Impact of Service Rendering Constraints on Entrepreneurial Performance in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka: A Quantitative Approach

Sasitharan, P

Career Guidance Unit, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

stpsasi4@gmail.com

Abstract

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a vital role in regional economic development, particularly in post-conflict areas like Sri Lanka's Northern Province. This study explores the impact of service delivery constraints on the performance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Sri Lanka's post-conflict Northern Province. Anchored in the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Institutional Theory, the research investigates how limitations in financial accessibility, infrastructure and digital connectivity, capacity building and training, and institutional coordination affect entrepreneurial performance. A quantitative methodology was adopted, utilizing survey data from 110 MSME owners and managers across five districts. Employing multiple regression analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), the results indicate that all four service constraints exert a statistically significant and adverse impact on MSME performance. Among these, financial barriers were identified as the most detrimental, followed by infrastructural deficits, inadequate training, and limited market access. The findings underscore persistent structural and institutional challenges impeding business growth, innovation, and sustainability in post-conflict environments. The study calls for targeted, context-sensitive policy interventions aimed at strengthening institutional frameworks, enhancing infrastructure and digital access, expanding financial inclusion, and fostering coordinated market support. Addressing these systemic barriers is critical to cultivating a resilient, inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem that underpins sustainable economic recovery and long-term development in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka.

Keywords: capacity building, digital connectivity, financial accessibility, institutional coordination, MSME performance



Reimagining Ravana: Constructing Sri Lankan Identity through the Titan Hero in Gamini Gunawardena's "*Rama and Sita*" Versus the Demon King in Valmiki's "*Ramayana*"

Preethika, T^a and Sarmatha P^b

^{a, b}Department of English Language Teaching, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka
preethikathavanesan@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores the reimagining of Ravana in Gamini Gunawardena's *Rama and Sita* versus Valmiki's *Ramayana* to construct a distinct Sri Lankan identity. It challenges the dominant Indian/Hindu portrayal of Lanka as a demonic realm and its ruler, "Ravana" as an unequivocal villain in Valmiki's *Ramayana*. Valmiki's epic casts Ravana as a malevolent Rakshasa king, a symbol of unrighteousness, defeated by the divine Rama. In contrast, Gunawardena's narrative reframes him as an atheist hero and patriotic monarch—a powerful, learned, and culturally advanced sovereign defending his land against invasion. This study investigates how Gunawardena subverts traditional portrayals by emphasizing Ravana's wisdom, his just rule within Lanka, and the tragic circumstances that led to his downfall, thereby imbuing him with heroic and patriotic qualities through a qualitative methodology. Through a comparative analysis of characterization, thematic development, and narrative perspective in both texts and a review of previous studies, this research illuminates how Gunawardena's work reclaims Ravana as an indigenous figure embodying Sri Lankan glory and resistance. This reinterpretation serves a crucial socio-cultural function: presenting Ravana as the protagonist, not the antagonist, fosters a sense of national pride and asserts a unique cultural lineage distinct from, and often in opposition to, Indian narratives. Ultimately, this research argues that Gunawardena's reinterpretation portrays Ravana with an atheist ideology and a patriotic motivation. His abduction of Sita is presented as an act of justice for Soorpanakai, stemming from a paternalistic perspective rather than lust.

Keywords: demonic, heroic, reimagining, Ravana, Sri Lankan identity



Digital Wallets as a Driver of Financial Empowerment among Indian Women Entrepreneurs: An Empirical Analysis

Hemamalini, E^a and Nedumaran, G^b

Department of Commerce, Alagappa University, India
hemamalinielangovan@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examines the chances of digital wallets serving as a driver for empowering Indian women entrepreneurs. Since digital financial tools are getting accepted at a rapid rate, women entrepreneurs are being forced to use mobile wallets for managing transactions, availing financial services, and enhancing business activities. The study follows the quantitative approach by surveying 250 women entrepreneurs from urban and semi-urban regions of India. Using SPSS to conduct data analysis, the study investigates the linkage between digital wallet adoption and key indicators of financial empowerment, including access to financial services, business growth, and financial independence. The study findings indicate that frequent digital wallet adoption expands financial independence, reduces dependency on intermediaries, and promotes business growth. The study stresses the importance of digital literacy programs, fintech products tailored to their requirements, and policy interventions to facilitate more inclusive and empowering opportunities for women entrepreneurs. The results offer practical recommendations for policymakers and financial institutions looking to contribute to gender-inclusive economic growth through digital finance.

Keywords: financial empowerment, digital wallets, literacy, women entrepreneurs



Green Fintech and Emerging Business Trends: Catalysing Sustainable Agriculture and Inclusive Growth in India

Jansi Rani, P^a and Nedumaran, G^b

^{a, b}*Department of Commerce, Alagappa University, India*
jansiranipphd@alagappauniversity.ac.in

Abstract

Green fintech is emerging as a transformative force in promoting sustainable agriculture and inclusive growth in India. By integrating financial technology with environmentally sustainable practices, green fintech solutions offer innovative ways to enhance financial inclusion, optimize resource utilization, and mitigate the adverse environmental impacts of agriculture. This article explores the role of green fintech in advancing sustainable farming practices through digital payment systems, blockchain-based supply chains, AI-driven climate risk assessment, and green credit financing. The study highlights how green fintech enables small and marginal farmers to access financial services, such as microloans, crop insurance, and digital subsidies, fostering economic resilience. Furthermore, fintech-driven solutions promote precision farming, reducing carbon footprints and ensuring optimal resource efficiency. By leveraging digital financial services, farmers can adopt climate-smart techniques, access global markets, and contribute to India's broader sustainability goals. Despite its potential, challenges such as digital literacy, inadequate infrastructure, and regulatory constraints hinder the widespread adoption of green fintech in Indian agriculture. Addressing these barriers through policy interventions, public-private partnerships, and farmer-centric digital initiatives can enhance the impact of green fintech. This article provides strategic insights into how green fintech can drive sustainable agriculture while ensuring inclusive economic growth in India.

Keywords: climate-smart farming, digital payments, financial inclusion, green fintech, sustainable agriculture



Effect of Online Shopping Behaviour among Arts and Science College Students

Tamil Selvi, R. M^a.Nedumaran, G^b and Ramu G^c

^{a, b}*Department of Commerce, Alagappa University, India*

^c*Department of Commerce, M R Govt. Arts School, India*

Tamilramu2805@gmail.com

Abstract

The rapid growth of online shopping has changed consumer behaviour across different socioeconomics, especially among college students. This study investigates the online shopping behavior of arts and science college students in Sivaganga District, focusing on factors influencing their purchasing decisions, frequency of online purchases, and the overall impact of online shopping on their lifestyles. 385 students from various colleges in the district were given a structured questionnaire as part of a quantitative study. The findings reveal that convenience, price competitiveness, and product variety are significant drivers of online shopping among students. Additionally, social media influence and peer recommendations play a crucial role in shaping their shopping habits. However, concerns regarding product quality and delivery times persist. The study concludes that online shopping has become an integral part of students' lives, enhancing their shopping experience while also presenting challenges that need to be addressed by e-commerce platforms. Recommendations for improving online shopping experiences for students and suggestions for further research are also discussed.

Keywords: ecosystem, habits, internet, products, purchasing, shopping, shopping experience



Effect of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Purchase Intention Towards Mobile Communication Networks among University Students: A Special Reference to University of Vavuniya

Bandara, D. M. S. M^a and Kajanthys, V^b

Department of Marketing Management, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka.

kajanthys@vau.ac.lk

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer purchase intention towards mobile telecommunication networks among state university students in Sri Lanka, with a special focus on the University of Vavuniya. In today's highly competitive telecom market, celebrity endorsement has emerged as a key marketing strategy for influencing consumer behavior. The research examines four core dimensions of celebrity endorsement such as trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, and respect to assess their influence on purchase intention. Data were collected from 112 university students using a structured questionnaire and a convenience sampling method. The findings indicate that while expertise and attractiveness do not significantly affect purchase intention, trustworthiness and respect have a meaningful and positive impact. Based on these results, telecom companies may benefit from selecting celebrities who are not only popular for their expertise and appearance but are also seen as reputable and respected figures to enhance brand influence and consumer engagement. These insights can guide companies in deciding whether to invest further in celebrity-driven marketing or to explore alternative strategies such as competitive pricing, service quality, and digital marketing. Given that university students are highly active on social media, understanding their perceptions of celebrity attributes is essential for refining brand communication. Ultimately, this study offers valuable implications for marketers, strategists, and academics, helping telecom providers optimize promotional efforts, allocate resources effectively, and build stronger connections with consumers in a competitive environment.

Keywords: celebrity endorsement, consumer purchase intention, mobile telecommunication networking



Sustainable Practices of Hotels in Chilaw, Sri Lanka: Challenges of Balancing Growth and Guest Satisfaction

Sathyangani, P. A^a and Selvarajan, P^b

^aDepartment of Marketing Management University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

^bDepartment of Management and Entrepreneurship, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

ahinsasathyangani2000@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores the implementation of sustainable practices in three-star hotels located in Chilaw, Sri Lanka. As sustainability becomes increasingly crucial in the hospitality sector, hotels in developing regions face unique challenges in balancing environmental responsibilities with business growth and guest satisfaction. The aim of this study is to examine how much sustainability is being implemented in selected hotels in Chilaw, and the objectives are to investigate the environmental, social, and economic actions taken by them and how the operations of sustainability affect guest satisfaction. Using a qualitative multiple case study method, the study collected data through semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and focus group discussions at three selected three-star hotels in Chilaw. The research applies the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework and thematic analysis to assess the environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Findings reveal that while basic practices such as LED lighting, towel reuse, and local sourcing are in place, these hotels face financial, operational, and perceptual barriers. Innovative, low-cost adaptations are noted with the composition of local partnerships and community involvement. Key recommendations include government support, structured staff training, and improved communication with guests. The research offers valuable insights for sustainable tourism development in emerging destinations like Chilaw.

Keywords: business growth, guest satisfaction, hospitality industry, qualitative research, sustainability practices



Track 05: Project Management



Project Governance and AI Adoption Readiness: Qualitative Study of Sri Lankan Software Industries

Sathuthika, S^a Nanthagopan, Y^b and Mathivathany S^c

^a*Access Engineering PLC, Sri Lanka*

^{b, c}*Department of Project Management, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*
sathurshikasasikumar@gmail.com

Abstract

This research investigates the current state of project governance structures within Sri Lanka's software industry and assesses organizational readiness for Artificial Intelligence (AI) adoption in project governance. It addresses the misalignment between existing governance practices and the transformative capabilities of AI, which can lead to inefficient AI integration and missed opportunities. Through qualitative methodology, including semi-structured interviews with ten professionals from Sri Lankan software companies, the study identifies challenges and barriers limiting the effective integration of AI tools into existing governance frameworks. The findings inform actionable recommendations for enhancing AI-driven project governance, aligning with Sri Lanka's unique socioeconomic context and globally recognized best practices. The study contributes critical insights enabling Sri Lankan software firms to effectively integrate AI into their project governance frameworks, fostering sustainable digital transformation and enhancing global competitiveness. Furthermore, this study addresses gaps in the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on AI adoption challenges specific to the Sri Lankan software industry. It offers practical guidance for aligning project governance frameworks with AI capabilities, which is essential for software firms in emerging economies aiming to leverage AI for improved project outcomes. The research also contributes to the broader understanding of organizational readiness factors that influence successful AI integration in project governance.

Keywords: AI adoption, governance, project management, software industries



Sector-Based Evaluation of Project Management Tools: A Qualitative Study of International Non-Governmental Organizations and Software Companies

Sharangi, S^a Jeyamohan, M^b and Mathivathany, S^c

^{a, c} *Department of Project Management, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*

^b *Department of Physical Science, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*

sharangi0920@gmail.com

Abstract

This study provides a thorough comparison of project management tools (PMTs) utilised by International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and software companies (SC), examining how each industry handles operational issues and maximises project results. The study uses a qualitative methodology to show how different priorities, such as automation and agile workflows in software companies versus compliance and resource limitations in INGOs, affect the adoption of tools in different sectors. The results assess the utility, usability, sustainability, and efficiency of the tool using the OECD-DAC criteria and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The study identifies disparities in digital literacy, infrastructure preparedness, and resource allocation tactics using insights from interviews and real-world examples. In order to support better project management techniques in both industries, the paper ends with practical suggestions for improving tool integration, forecasting capabilities, and operational efficiency.

Keywords: agile methodology, international non-governmental organizations, project management body of knowledge, software companies



Building Resilient Livelihoods: Women's Role in Home Gardening and Climate-Smart Agriculture in Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

Priyadharshini, S^a and Nanthagopan, Y^b

^{a, b}*Department of Project Management, Faculty of Business Studies
University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka
priyad2027@gmail.com*

Abstract

This study examines the impact of gender-responsive climate-smart agriculture interventions on rural women's livelihoods and resilience in Vavuniya, Northern Sri Lanka. Amid post-conflict recovery and increasing climate stress, the Climate Resilient Integrated Water Management Project implemented a suite of adaptive strategies, including home gardening kits, water-efficient irrigation, aquaculture training, and women-led agro-enterprise support. Using a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative project data (n=2,644 households) and qualitative insights from in-depth interviews (n=37), the study assesses outcomes for women participating in home and commercial gardening programs from 2018 to 2023. Results reveal that over 85% of female beneficiaries now engage in income-generating activities, with improved food security, market access, and leadership roles in community decision-making. These interventions not only enhanced adaptive capacity and household income but also contributed to shifting traditional gender norms. The findings highlight the transformative potential of integrated, gender-focused CSA strategies in building resilient rural livelihoods under climate stress.

Keywords: climate-smart agriculture, gender-responsive development, home gardening, rural livelihoods, women's empowerment



Exploring Factors influencing Labour Retention in Large-Scale Construction Projects: A Qualitative Study in Colombo District

Sathuthika, S^a and Mathivathany, S^b

^a*Access Engineering PLC, Sri Lanka*

^b*Department of Project Management, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*

sathurshikasasikumar@gmail.com

Abstract

Labour retention remains a critical challenge in the construction industry, particularly in large-scale projects where workforce stability significantly influences project success. This study explores the factors influencing labour retention in large-scale construction projects within the Colombo District, Sri Lanka, through a qualitative research approach. Colombo District, as the commercial and infrastructural hub of the country, hosts numerous large-scale construction initiatives, making it an ideal context to investigate retention dynamics. Using semi-structured interviews with construction workers, site supervisors, and human resource managers, the study seeks to uncover the underlying reasons for labour turnover and identify key retention drivers such as job characteristics, work environment, compensation, career development opportunities, and organizational commitment. The findings aim to provide rich, contextual insights into the lived experiences and perceptions of construction labourers and management in Colombo, contributing to the development of effective retention strategies tailored to the district's unique socioeconomic and project conditions. This research offers practical implications for construction firms and policymakers to enhance workforce stability, reduce turnover-related costs, and improve overall project performance in Sri Lanka's rapidly evolving construction sector.

Keywords: construction industry, employee turnover, labour retention, large-scale construction projects, workforce stability



The Impact of Effective Project Management Practices on Successful and Sustainable Entrepreneurial Development in the Northern Province

Thirugnanasampanthar, S^a Ajitha, S^b and Sharangi, S^c

^{a, b, c} *Department of Project Management, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*
thiru.snvs@vau.ac.lk

Abstract

Sri Lanka's protracted economic downturn with more profound structural weaknesses in manufacturing, industrialization, entrepreneurial landscape and project governance; sluggish recovery rate, and threatening international political and economic conditions has accentuated the urgent need to revitalize the economy through enhancing the production capabilities of the country through its entrepreneurial possibilities, particularly in underdeveloped regions such as the Northern Province, which contributes a mere 4% to the national GDP. This conceptual paper investigates the impact of effective project management practices on successful and sustainable entrepreneurial development as a means to revitalize economic growth in post-conflict regions. The study is motivated by persistent issues such as youth migration, narcotic drug abuse, low manufacturing output, and diaspora disinvestment, all of which are compounded by ineffective development planning and political uncertainty. By reviewing national and international literature on project management and entrepreneurship, the paper explores how structured project management approaches, such as the Logical Framework Approach (LFA), Theory of Change (ToC), and stakeholder-driven governance, can facilitate local enterprise development, youth engagement, and diaspora-led innovation. The study uses a theoretical framework grounded in project governance, stakeholder theory, and participatory development, proposing that entrepreneurial outcomes in fragile regions are strongly linked to the quality of project design, stakeholder alignment, and adaptive monitoring. Using a conceptual methodology informed by the Research Onion framework, the paper advocates for a mixed-method future empirical study employing SPSS and thematic analysis. Anticipated findings suggest that project-based entrepreneurial strategies can reduce youth emigration, increase local job creation, and build trust among diaspora investors, provided they are managed with transparency, accountability, and community inclusion. The paper concludes with policy recommendations for institutionalizing project management best practices in entrepreneurship programs and calls for stronger integration between political stability, economic development, and local innovation systems in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: diaspora investment, entrepreneurship, Northern province, project management, Sri Lanka, sustainable development,



Assessing Key Success Factors in Community-Based Water Distribution Extension Projects: Evidence from Vavuniya District

Thurkka, T^a and Thirugnanasampanthar, S^b

^{a, b} *Department of Project Management, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*
thurkgathev0818@gmail.com

Abstract

This study explores the critical success factors (CSFs) influencing the outcomes of community-based water projects (CBWPs), with a specific focus on the Vavuniya Distribution Extension Project (VDEP) in Sri Lanka. Employing a cross-sectional design, data were collected from 100 participants using structured questionnaires, complemented by interviews with key stakeholders. Five primary CSFs were identified: technological advancements, community involvement, training and capacity building, leadership attributes, and effective communication. The findings indicate that technological innovations significantly enhanced project efficiency, while strong community involvement promoted ownership and satisfaction. Training and capacity building improved operational capabilities and stakeholder competencies. Conversely, leadership attributes showed a negative influence, highlighting challenges in leadership effectiveness. Transparent and timely communication emerged as a key factor in aligning goals and resolving project-related issues. The study also identified several challenges, including financial limitations, logistical constraints, and occasional community resistance. Strategies such as adaptive planning and strategic resource allocation were essential for overcoming these obstacles. Despite minor delays, the VDEP successfully achieved its objectives, demonstrating the pivotal role of the identified CSFs in project success. The study concludes with practical recommendations to enhance project management, strengthen community engagement, and improve adaptability in similar initiatives. Future research is recommended to investigate additional CSFs, apply longitudinal designs, and adopt mixed-method approaches for a more comprehensive understanding of CBWP dynamics.

Keywords: communication strategies, community-based water projects, community involvement, critical success factors, technological advancements



Performance Management of Human Resources in Project-Based Organisations: Evidence from Non-Governmental Organizations in the Batticaloa District

Keepika, K^a and Thirugnanasampanthar, S^b

^{a, b} *Department of Project Management, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka*
k28keepika@gmail.com

Abstract

Project-Based Organizations increasingly face sustainability and accountability challenges in today's dynamic environment. To address these demands, they require flexible, intelligent, and technically advanced performance management practices that foster continuous improvement, dialogue, and innovation. Stakeholders now prioritize not only productivity and efficiency but also creativity, innovation, and problem-solving capabilities. In response, organizations must continuously refine their performance management strategies to meet evolving expectations. Human resources represent a critical asset for any organization, as they are essential for managing non-human resources and achieving strategic goals. Accordingly, many organizations are adopting robust performance management practices to enhance project performance and ensure long-term sustainability. These practices contribute to completing project activities effectively within the triple constraints of time, cost, and scope. This study aims to examine performance management practices in three selected project-based organizations, focusing on ten interview participants from non-governmental organizations in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. The research investigates how specific performance management practices, such as setting SMART goals, providing feedback, conducting performance reviews, implementing reward systems, managing under-performance, and sustaining high performance, contribute to project success and organisational sustainability. Despite the recognized benefits, the implementation of performance management practices faces several challenges, including limited resource allocation, communication barriers, technological constraints, donor requirements, and organizational sociocultural factors. To overcome these issues, organizations emphasize staff capacity building, competency-based employment, and professional development. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these practices is often constrained by inconsistent funding and fluctuating project timelines. In conclusion, successful performance management in PBOs requires a balanced, context-sensitive approach that aligns human resource management strategies with local realities and the broader goals of humanitarian and developmental initiatives.

Keywords: human resource management, performance management practices, project-based organizations, project success, organizational sustainability