



KIU



4TH MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2025 (MRC 2025)

Proceedings Book III (Management)

Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through
Multidisciplinary Research
25th October 2025

Organized by: KIU, Sri Lanka



Proceedings

The 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025 (MRC 2025)

“Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through Multidisciplinary Research”

25th of October 2025 | Colombo, Sri Lanka

Committee of the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025

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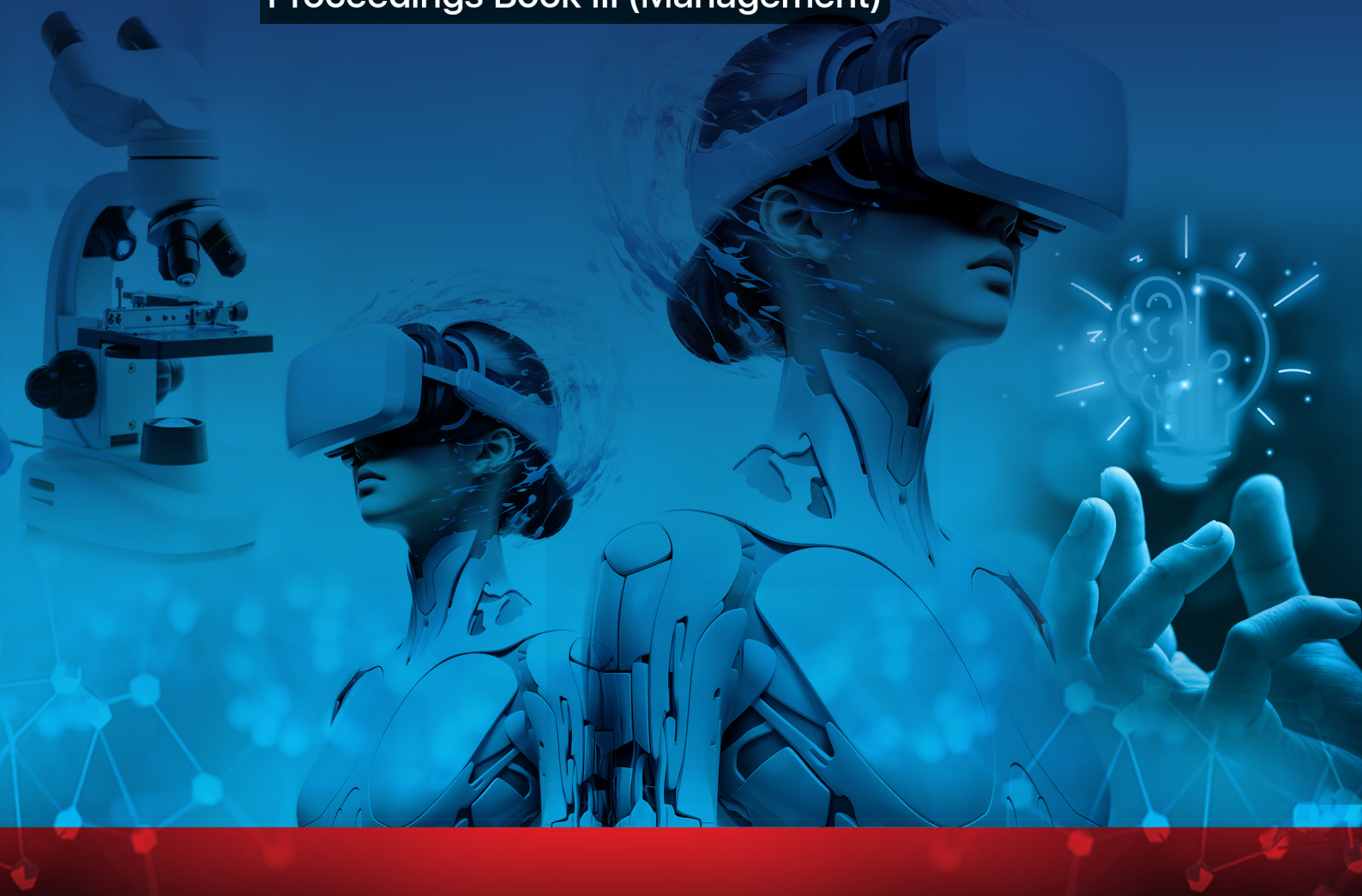


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4TH MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2025 (MRC 2025)

Proceedings Book III (Management)





Message from the President

Dr. Jagath Seneviratne
President, KIU University

Research is the foundation upon which knowledge evolves and societies progress. A university's strength is measured not only by the degrees it awards, but by the questions it dares to ask and the discoveries it brings to the world. At KIU, we consider research an essential pillar of academic growth, one that cultivates critical thinking, nurtures innovation, and empowers individuals to contribute meaningfully to their fields.

In an era defined by rapid technological change and complex global challenges, the value of research becomes even more profound. It provides the tools to understand emerging realities, the evidence to guide decisions, and the insight to shape sustainable futures. Whether in the sciences, humanities, or applied disciplines, rigorous inquiry remains a universal catalyst for advancement.

As an institution committed to academic excellence, KIU continues to encourage work that expands perspectives, challenges assumptions, and strengthens scholarly dialogue. The pursuit of knowledge is a responsibility shared by all who engage in academia, and it is through this collective effort that we elevate the intellectual landscape of our nation.

Research does not merely produce answers, it opens pathways. And it is these pathways that lead us toward deeper understanding, greater innovation, and a more informed society.



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**Message from the Vice Chancellor
and the Chief Advisor
of the
4th Multidisciplinary Research
Conference 2025**

Dr. Sajeewanie Liyana-arachchi

Vice Chancellor, Conference Advisor
Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025
KIU, Sri Lanka



Distinguished Guests, Esteemed Academics, Researchers, and Participants,

It is with great pride and immense pleasure that I warmly welcome you all to the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference (MRC) 2025, organized by KIU Sri Lanka. As the Conference Advisor, it is both an honour and a privilege to inaugurate an event that stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment to advancing knowledge, fostering collaboration, and promoting innovation across disciplines.

The theme of the conference, "Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through Multidisciplinary Research," underscores the vital role of cross-disciplinary collaboration in driving groundbreaking discoveries. By fostering synergies across diverse fields, we aim to inspire transformative ideas and impactful research that transcends traditional boundaries. Over the course of this conference, we will witness an impressive array of research presentations addressing critical global challenges across technology, health sciences, social innovation, and sustainability. I encourage all participants to engage actively, share your perspectives, and maximize the networking opportunities available.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the Conference Chair, the Organizing Committee, and all academic and administrative teams whose dedication, professionalism, and meticulous planning have made this conference a reality. Your collective efforts have ensured that MRC 2025 continues to serve as a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange, critical dialogue, and academic inspiration.

To our distinguished speakers, researchers, and participants, I extend my best wishes for a productive and intellectually enriching conference. May your contributions today inspire new directions in research, ignite innovative thinking, and strengthen our collective pursuit of knowledge for the betterment of society. Thank you for being part of this remarkable academic journey. Together, let us continue to shape a future defined by discovery, collaboration, and transformative impact.

I wish you all a productive, insightful, and inspiring conference.



Message from the Orator

Snr. Prof. Ajantha S. Dharmasiri

Orator

Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025
KIU, Sri Lanka

I am indeed delighted to share my thoughts, when the KIU is organizing its fourth Multi-Disciplinary Research Conference with the apt theme, “Inspiring excellence in innovation through multi-disciplinary research”. It is a significant step taken by a non-state higher education provider to promote research with intellectual richness and industry relevance.

“Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity, not a threat”, so said Steve Jobs. In painfully moving beyond a planetary pandemic, economic resurgence of Sri Lanka has become an increasingly challenging endeavour. Innovation on multiple fronts can play a pivotal role there. The support needed by comprehensive research to take data-driven decisions is felt more than any other time. Such efforts should be made in connection with the rapid technological advances around the globe. Referring to global research with local relevance is the starting point. Conducting local research with global reach is the continuous progression.

As we are aware, management research falls into the broader category of social research. Whilst positive initiatives are being taken, current situation with respect to research in Sri Lanka is far from a satisfactory level. We have an acute gap to bridge with regard to the current and desired levels of engaging in management research, with publishable quality and practical relevance. The significant step of conducting the conferences of this nature needs to be commended in this context.

May I take this opportunity to thank the MRC team for their committed collaboration in vibrantly showcasing the solid research findings. Let me wholeheartedly wish this prestigious event a phenomenal success.



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Message from the Keynote Speaker

Dr. Malmi Kiriwandalage

Keynote speaker

Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025

KIU, Sri Lanka



Dear Esteemed Researchers, Distinguished Guests, and Enthusiastic Students,

It is with immense pleasure and honor that I address you today as the keynote speaker for the Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025, hosted by the prestigious KIU University in Sri Lanka. As a Solar System Ambassador at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and an aspiring astrobiologist, I am particularly thrilled to be part of an event that champions the very essence of exploration and discovery across diverse fields. This conference serves as a vital platform, bringing together brilliant minds from various disciplines to share their insights, present groundbreaking research, and ignite collaborative endeavors. The interdisciplinary nature of our discussions here is paramount, as the most profound breakthroughs often emerge at the intersections of different fields, much like how astrobiology draws upon biology, chemistry, geology, and astronomy to unravel the mysteries of life beyond Earth.

This conference represents an unparalleled learning opportunity. Whether you are presenting your latest findings, attending a stimulating session, or engaging in informal discussions, every interaction here is a chance to expand your horizons. The knowledge exchange facilitated by such gatherings is invaluable, offering fresh perspectives and inspiring new lines of inquiry. Furthermore, the networking opportunities at this event are just as significant. Building connections with fellow researchers, potential mentors, and future collaborators can open doors to exciting new projects and career paths. I strongly encourage everyone to seize these opportunities, engage actively, and forge relationships that will undoubtedly enrich your academic and professional journeys for years to come.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the dedicated team at KIU University for their exceptional efforts in organizing this Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025. The meticulous planning and tireless work involved in bringing together such a diverse and accomplished group of individuals are truly commendable. Your commitment to fostering a vibrant research culture and providing a platform for intellectual exchange is evident, and it is a testament to KIU University's leadership in promoting academic excellence in Sri Lanka. I am confident that this conference will be a resounding success, leading to significant advancements and inspiring the next generation of researchers to push the boundaries of knowledge. Thank you for inviting me to be a part of this remarkable event.



Message from the Conference Chairperson

Prof. Anuradhi S. Hapuarachchi

Conference Chairperson

4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025
KIU, Sri Lanka

It is with immense pride and gratitude that I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all who contributed to the success of the KIU Multidisciplinary Research Conference (MRC) 2025. This conference stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and innovation across diverse academic disciplines.

MRC 2025 was more than an academic gathering it was a celebration of intellectual curiosity and research excellence. The wide spectrum of research presented by scholars from medicine, management, technology, humanities, and beyond, reflects KIU's commitment to fostering a vibrant and inclusive research culture. The participation of international dignitaries further highlighted the global relevance of our efforts.

As Chairperson, I am truly inspired by the dedication of our researchers, students, keynote speakers, and organizing teams. Each presentation, discussion, and interaction added a new layer of insight and opened doors to future exploration.

This conference souvenir captures the spirit and substance of MRC 2025. May it serve as a record of our achievements and a reminder of the collective responsibility we hold to pursue knowledge that drives sustainable development and meaningful impact in society.

Let us continue to challenge boundaries, break silos, and lead with purpose.



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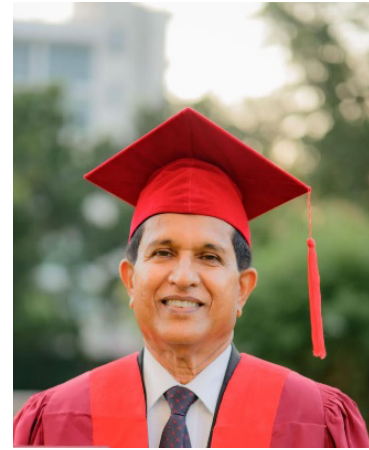
Message from the Conference Co-Chairperson

Dr. Anuradha Thennakoon

Conference Co-Chairperson

4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025

KIU, Sri Lanka



I warmly welcome you to the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference - KIU 2025, the Annual International Conference of KIU. With a record number of participants expected this year, we are delighted to see that these annual conferences are becoming more and more advanced and gain substantial popularity every year.

The theme for this year's conference is "*Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through Multidisciplinary Research*," which I firmly believe to be timely and relevant. I hope that this conference will allow participants a productive discourse not only in managing academic objectives but also in addressing contemporary challenges across various disciplines.

Essentially, the purpose of this conference is to share and exchange valuable information. Through these discussions, different recommendations and solutions can be developed as experts from various fields gather together to examine problems and explore emerging trends in multidisciplinary research.

This conference would not be possible without the generous support of the entire KIU community, our sponsors and well-wishers. I am truly grateful to all organizing committee members, faculty coordinators, session chairs, and volunteers whose dedicated efforts have made this event possible. Most importantly, I thank you, the participants, for enriching this conference by your presence and contributions.

The broad scope of this event provides a unique meeting ground for researchers spanning multiple disciplines. I hope fruitful collaborations will be established while sharing knowledge through meaningful academic exchange. Finally, I extend my best wishes to all participants on their outstanding research contributions and look forward to a successful and enriching conference experience.



Message from the Conference Co-Chairperson

Mr. Akila R. Jayamaha

Conference Co-Chairperson

4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025
KIU, Sri Lanka

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I extend my warmest greetings to all the stakeholders of the Multidisciplinary Research Conference (MRC) 2025, under the theme *“Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through Multidisciplinary Research.”* This conference stands as a vibrant platform that brings together scholars, professionals, and students from diverse fields to exchange ideas, challenge conventions, and chart new directions for the future of research and innovation. In an era where the boundaries between disciplines are rapidly dissolving, the importance of collaborative inquiry cannot be overstated. The challenges that we encounter in terms of health, education, technology, or the environment are inherently interconnected. Addressing them demands not isolated expertise, but the synergy of multidisciplinary perspectives.

As we reflect upon the conference theme, it is fitting to a motto lived by Florence Nightingale: *“It is better to die in the surf, heralding the way to a new world, than stand idly on the shore.”* These words capture the essence of courage, purpose, and transformative vision that have defined the nursing profession since its inception. Today, as healthcare evolves amidst global challenges, the nursing community continues to “stand in the surf,” facing waves of complexity with resilience and compassion. Whether in patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, or health systems research, nurses remain at the forefront of progress bridging science and humanity. Your contributions not only heal individuals but also reshape the very fabric of health and wellbeing in society.

Through your research, innovation, and dedication, you herald the way toward a “new world” one grounded in scientific integrity, ethical practice, and interdisciplinary collaboration. I encourage each of you to use this conference as a springboard to share your discoveries, to question boldly, and to connect meaningfully with peers across disciplines. The insights born here will ripple far beyond the conference halls into hospitals, classrooms, laboratories, and communities across Sri Lanka and beyond. May this gathering ignite in all of us a renewed commitment to excellence. Together, let us continue to innovate, inspire, and lead undaunted by the surf, united in our mission to shape a better, healthier, and more sustainable world.

With my sincere appreciation to the organizing committee, presenters, and participants, I wish MRC 2025 every success. May it be a beacon of inspiration for all who dare to move beyond the shore.



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Message from the Conference Co-Chairperson

Ms. Nadeeka Ranadeva
Conference Co-Chairperson
4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025
KIU, Sri Lanka



Dear Esteemed Participants,

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I welcome you to the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025 organized by KIU. The theme of this year, "*Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through Multidisciplinary Research*," reflects our shared commitment to fostering collaboration and creativity across diverse fields to address the emerging challenges of our world.

In an age where knowledge transcends disciplinary boundaries, this conference provides an ideal platform for scholars, researchers, and professionals to share insights and explore solutions that contribute meaningfully to both national and global development. I am particularly proud of the growing strength of research in the health sciences and the dedication of our academic community in driving evidence-based innovation and sustainable practices.

As we gather to exchange ideas and present research findings, I encourage all participants to engage deeply, question curiously, and collaborate widely. Together, we can nurture a culture of critical inquiry and knowledge creation that shapes a better future.

On behalf of the organizing committee, I extend my sincere appreciation to all presenters, reviewers, and contributors for their commitment. May this conference ignite new partnerships, inspire fresh perspectives, and strengthen the spirit of multidisciplinary scholarship.

Wishing you a successful and enriching conference experience!



Message from the Conference Co-Chairperson

Ms. Thakshila Dushyanthi

Conference Co-Chairperson

4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025

KIU, Sri Lanka

Dear Esteemed Participants,

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I warmly welcome all participants of the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference (MRC) 2025, organized by KIU. This year's theme, "Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through Multidisciplinary Research," reflects our shared dedication to fostering collaboration, creativity, and idea exchange across disciplines to tackle the complex challenges of today's world. In today's dynamic environment, where knowledge evolves rapidly and societal issues are increasingly interconnected, multidisciplinary research has become a foundation of meaningful progress. This conference provides an ideal platform for academics, researchers, and professionals from diverse fields to share their insights, discuss innovative solutions, and foster a culture of research that transcends disciplinary boundaries.

As we gather here to celebrate intellectual diversity, I encourage all participants to engage actively in scholarly discussions, exchange constructive feedback, and build lasting collaborations that extend beyond this event. Such collective efforts not only enhance the quality of academic inquiry but also contribute to national and global development. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all distinguished speakers, presenters, reviewers, and organizing committee members for their valuable contributions. May this conference inspire innovation, collaboration, and a renewed passion for advancing multidisciplinary research.

Wishing you all a productive and inspiring conference experience!



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Message from the Conference Co-Chairperson

Mr. L. M. Dilantha Deva Adithiya
Conference Co-Chairperson
4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025
KIU, Sri Lanka



Dear Esteemed Participants,

It is with great pleasure and honour that I warmly welcome you to the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference (MRC) 2025 of KIU University. This year's theme, "Inspiring Excellence in Innovation through Multidisciplinary Research," celebrates our shared vision of advancing creativity, critical inquiry, and cross-disciplinary collaboration in the pursuit of academic and societal progress.

This year's session, bringing together the fields of Information Technology, Law, and Behavioural Sciences, embodies the very essence of multidisciplinary integration. It highlights how technology, legal frameworks, and human behaviour intersect to shape modern societies and drive meaningful innovation. By exploring this intersection, we aim to inspire novel approaches, strengthen research linkages, and create pathways for impactful, evidence-based solutions.

The Multidisciplinary Research Conference serves as a dynamic platform for scholars, professionals, and students to exchange knowledge, share research insights, and engage in constructive dialogue that transcends conventional academic boundaries. Through thought-provoking keynote addresses, research presentations, and discussions, this event fosters an environment of intellectual curiosity and collaborative excellence. As we convene today, I encourage each participant to embrace this opportunity to connect, learn, and innovate together. It is through such collaborations that we nurture a culture of academic excellence and contribute to sustainable development in our respective disciplines and beyond.

On behalf of the organising committee, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all speakers, presenters, reviewers, and participants for their invaluable contributions to making this conference a success. Let us continue to inspire excellence and innovation through the spirit of multidisciplinary research.

Wishing you all a fruitful and inspiring conference experience!



Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Priyanganie Senanayake

Editor-in-Chief

Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025

KIU, Sri Lanka

It is with great pleasure that I present the proceedings of abstracts for the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025, KIU Campus, Sri Lanka, centered on the theme “Inspiring Excellence through Innovation and Multidisciplinary Research.” This compilation reflects the outstanding intellectual contributions of researchers, practitioners, and scholars who are driving knowledge and innovation across diverse fields.

Our focus on multidisciplinary research tracks, Nursing, Biomedical Science, Management, Language & Education, Computer science & Engineering, and Law highlights the importance of collaboration across disciplines to address complex challenges in health, science, society and organizational practice. The abstracts included herein showcase cutting edge research, innovative methodologies, and practical insights that have the potential to transform their respective fields.

I commend all authors for their dedication, creativity, and rigorous scholarship. Their work not only advances academic inquiry but also inspires the broader community to pursue excellence through innovation. I am confident that the ideas and findings presented in this collection will spark fruitful discussions, collaborations, and future research initiatives.

On behalf of the editorial board, I extend my gratitude to all contributors, reviewers, and organizers who made this compilation possible. It is our hope that these proceedings will serve as a valuable resource and a source of inspiration for scholars, practitioners, and students alike.



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Thanking Note from the Conference Secretary

Ms. Chamathi Pinnawala

Conference Secretary
Multidisciplinary Research Conference – 2025
KIU, Sri Lanka



It is with immense pleasure and gratitude that I thank all esteemed contributors to the 4th Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025 for making this event a remarkable success. This milestone event has brought together researchers, academicians, and practitioners from Nursing, Health and Multidisciplinary Sciences, and Management to share knowledge, foster innovation, and advance scholarly discourse.

I extend my deepest appreciation to Senior Professor Ajantha Dharmasiri, Former Director and Chairman of the Board of Management, Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, for his inspiring oration. I am grateful to Dr. Malmi Kiriwandalage, Solar System Ambassador from NASA, USA, for her enlightening keynote address.

My profound gratitude goes to Dr. Jagath Seneviratne, President of KIU, for his visionary leadership, and to Dr. Sajeewanie Liyana-Arachchi, Vice Chancellor of KIU and Chief Advisor of MRC, for her strategic guidance.

Special recognition is due to Professor Anuradhi S. Hapuarachchi, Conference Chairperson, for her exemplary leadership. I extend my sincere appreciation to our Co-Chairpersons—Dr. Anuradha Tennakoon, Mr. Akila R. Jayamaha, Mr. Dilantha Deva-Adithya, Ms. Nadeeka Ranadewa, and Ms. Thakshila Dushyanthi for their collaborative efforts. I sincerely thank Professor Priyanganie Senanayake, Editor-in-Chief, for her meticulous oversight in curating these proceedings.

My heartfelt appreciation extends to our Technical Session Chairpersons—Professor S.S.P. Warnakulasuriya, Professor Dunusinghe G. Dharmarathne, Dr. Dineshani Hettiarachchi, and Dr. Dinithi Deva Adithya—for facilitating enriching discussions and maintaining academic excellence. I am grateful to KIU management, Deans, Heads of Departments, academic and non-academic staff, expert reviewers, the Co-Secretaries, the organizing committee, and our dedicated students for their invaluable support and tireless commitment.

To all contributing authors and participants, thank you for your intellectual contributions. I look forward to the continued growth of this platform as a catalyst for interdisciplinary research and innovation.

Schedule of the Technical Session - Management - Accounting

Oral Presentations		
SN	Abstract ID	Title and Author/s of the Abstract
OP 1	AB 003	Urban Management and Finance: Evolving Scope and Contemporary Challenges <i>Thadani P.B.^{1*}, Misra K.²</i>
OP 2	AB 150	Impact of Political Stability on Financial Market in South Korea <i>Maduwanthi D.M.L.^{1*}, Dushyanthi P.K.T.¹</i>
OP 3	AB 151	Digital Financial Literacy on Financial Behavior Among Management Undergraduates of Non-State Universities in Sri Lanka <i>Ananda Rooban C.^{1*}, Wijerathna W. A. I. D.¹</i>
OP 4	AB 156	Impact of Characteristics of Accounting Software on Business Performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) In Kandy District, Sri Lanka <i>Wedisinghe N.J.^{1*}, Wijerathna W. A. I. D.¹</i>
OP 5	AB 179	Impact of Working Capital Management on Profitability of Manufacturing Companies Listed in Colombo Stock Exchange <i>Malshan A.E.N.^{1*}, Sewwandi A.B.C.¹, Fernando J.¹</i>
OP 6	AB 187	The Impact of Behavioral Biases on Credit Card Debt among Corporate Sector Employees in the Colombo District <i>Rodrigo S.M.S.^{1*}, Sewwandi A.B.C.¹, Fernando J.¹</i>
OP 7	AB 002	Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Financial Advisors' Performance: Evidence from Urban India <i>Thadani P.B.^{1*}, Mukherjee S.²</i>

Schedule of the Technical Session - Management - Accounting

Poster Presentations		
SN	Abstract ID	Title and Author/s of the Abstract
PP 1	AB 149	<p>The Influence of Financial Literacy on Cryptocurrency Investment Among Sri Lankan Millennials</p> <p><i>Devindi S.A.D.R.K.¹, Liyanage B.L.D.H.V.^{2*}, Herath H.M.N.P.¹</i></p>
PP 2	AB 169	<p>Impact of cryptocurrency on traditional bank performance in Sri Lanka: Evidence from Public Listed Banks in Sri Lanka</p> <p><i>Sewwandi L. A. S.^{1*}, Sewwandi A. B. C.¹, Fernando J.¹</i></p>
PP 3	AB 171	<p>The Effectiveness of Cost Accounting in Manufacturing Listed Companies in Sri Lanka</p> <p><i>Madhushani K.P.A.^{1*}, Sewwandi A.B.C.¹, Fernando J.¹</i></p>
PP 4	AB 172	<p>Impact of Macroeconomic Factors on Stock Market Performance in Sri Lanka</p> <p><i>Manchanayake M.A.M.S.^{1*}, Sewwandi A.B.C.¹, Fernando J.¹</i></p>
PP 5	AB 173	<p>Impact of Recent Tax Reforms on Corporate Profitability in Sri Lanka: Focusing on VAT and Corporate Income Tax (CIT) Changes</p> <p><i>Gamage A.G.S.V.N.^{1*}, Sewwandi A.B.C.¹, Fernando J.¹</i></p>
PP 6	AB 180	<p>The Relationship Between Board Composition and Bank Performance special reference to Licensed Commercial Banks in Sri Lanka</p> <p><i>Perera K.M.M.^{1*}, Sewwandi A.B.C.¹, Fernando J.¹</i></p>



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Multidisciplinary Research Conference 2025

Proceedings MRC 2025 - Book III



**Oral Presentations
Management - Accounting**

OP 01 AB003

Urban Management and Finance: Evolving Scope and Contemporary Challenges

Thadani P.B.^{1*}, Misra K.²

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² School of Human Settlements, Dean of Human Settlements, XIM University, Bhubaneswar, India

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Introduction: Urban management has evolved from a narrow, plan-implementation function into a multi-scalar discipline integrating governance, infrastructure provisioning, and fiscal strategy. This paper traces the intellectual and institutional trajectory of urban management from the 1970s to the present, emphasizing urban finance as the central axis linking planning priorities to service delivery and sustainability.

Objective: To examine the historical evolution and contemporary challenges of urban management and finance in India, highlighting conceptual development, governance shifts, and financial strategies shaping urban service delivery.

Methodology: A semi-systematic literature review (2018–2025) was conducted using PRISMA-adapted guidelines. Inclusion criteria comprised peer-reviewed studies and policy reports on urban finance, fiscal decentralization, and governance reforms in Indian cities; grey literature and non-urban studies were excluded. Over 120 studies were screened, with 65 selected for detailed analysis. A conceptual mapping framework traced shifts in terminology, fiscal instruments, and governance paradigms.

Results: Findings reveal a shift from municipal-centric finance to a multi-actor ecosystem involving state agencies, parastatals, SPVs, and PPPs. Despite innovations such as PPPs, land-value capture, and municipal bonds expanding financing options, benefits remain uneven due to weak fiscal capacity, regulatory ambiguity, and fragmented institutions—particularly in the Global South. Recent literature (e.g., Denis & Florentin 2024; Aly & Dimitrijevic 2022; Ni'mah et al. 2021) highlights lifecycle costing, green infrastructure financing, and participatory budgeting as emerging priorities, but uptake is constrained by gaps in local creditworthiness, asset-management practices, and transparency norms.

Conclusion: The study underscores the dual role of urban finance as lens and leverage reshaping governance structures, influencing strategic land use, and determining inclusiveness and resilience of infrastructure investment. Compared with earlier scholarships that treated finance as ancillary to planning, our synthesis demonstrates fiscal tools increasingly drive spatial choices, competitive positioning, and equity outcomes. Cities aiming for inclusive, climate-resilient growth must align decentralization mandates with credible fiscal devolution, adopt lifecycle-oriented budgeting, and mainstream digital transparency in municipal accounts. Strengthening financial stewardship within urban management is thus both a technical imperative and a governance reform essential to achieving SDG 11 and building future-ready urban systems.

Keywords: financial management, urban governance, urban management issues, urban managerialism

OP 02 AB150

Impact of Political Stability on Financial Market in South Korea

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Introduction: Political stability is widely recognized as a key determinant of financial market resilience. South Korea, as a globally integrated economy, has faced both domestic political challenges and external geopolitical risks, particularly with North Korea, that significantly affect its trade flows, currency value, and investor sentiment. This study examines the dynamic relationship between political stability and South Korea's financial market, with a focus on both short- and long-term impacts.

Objective: The study investigates the influence of political stability on four major financial dimensions: trade balance, currency stability, investor confidence, and geopolitical risks, covering the period 2010–2024. Investor confidence was operationalized using foreign investment inflows and stock market trading volume.

Methodology: A quantitative research design was employed under the positivist paradigm, utilizing secondary time-series data from international and national databases. Political stability indices, KRW/USD exchange rates, foreign investment flows, and trade balance figures were analysed using the Vector Error Correction Model (VECM) in EViews, supplemented with stationarity, cointegration, impulse response, and variance decomposition tests.

Results: Johansen cointegration confirmed a long-run equilibrium among variables. VECM findings indicated that political stability positively influences trade balance and currency stability, while geopolitical risks exert downward pressure on investor confidence. Impulse response analysis showed persistent effects of stability shocks on currency resilience and investor sentiment. Variance decomposition further revealed that political stability accounts for substantial variation across financial indicators over time.

Conclusion: Political stability is a critical driver of South Korea's financial market performance. Grounded in political economy and geopolitical risk theory, the study highlights how enhanced governance stability and reduced regional tensions can strengthen investor confidence, support balanced trade, and safeguard currency stability. These findings carry significant implications for policymakers, investors, and international stakeholders seeking to mitigate financial risks in politically sensitive environments.

Keywords: financial market, geopolitical risks, investor confidence, political stability, trade balance

OP 03 AB151

Digital Financial Literacy on Financial Behavior Among Management Undergraduates of Non-State Universities in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Due to the significant advancements in technology and digital transformation, the role of financial and digital literacy in empowering individuals has become acknowledged more and more. It is crucial for undergraduates to understand and knowing more knowledge about digital finance can help to manage better financial behavior. Therefore, this study provides a clear understanding of how digital financial literacy influences the financial behavior of undergraduates and helps them to make smarter financial decisions in today's digital world.

Objectives: To examine the impact of digital financial literacy on financial behavior among management undergraduates of non-state universities in Sri Lanka.

Methods: The research model was developed by using digital financial literacy as the independent variable and financial behavior as the dependent variable. A structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale was employed to measure the four dimensions of Digital Financial Literacy: awareness, skills and knowledge, usage, attitude. Data were collected from 225 undergraduates out of a population of approximately 5430 and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis.

Results: The regression results showed that financial behavior is significantly influenced by digital financial awareness, digital financial skills and knowledge, and digital financial usage, having the p-value less than 0.05. However, digital financial attitude ($p = 0.113$) was found to have no significant impact on financial behavior.

Conclusion: This study concludes that digital financial literacy has a strong impact on the financial behavior of management undergraduates in non-state universities. The findings revealed that digital financial awareness, skills and knowledge, and digital financial usage had positively impact on student's financial behavior, while digital financial attitude doesn't show a significant impact. Digital Financial Literacy provides implications for universities and policymakers to design targeted educational and training programs to enhance undergraduates' finances effectively in today's digital world.

Keywords: digital financial literacy, financial behavior, management undergraduates

OP 04 AB156

Impact Of Characteristics of Accounting Software on Business Performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Kandy District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: The use of accounting software has become an important to SMEs in Sri Lanka in order to manage finances, enhance efficiency and survive the competition. This research analyses the impact of the characteristics of accounting software on business performance of SMEs.

Objectives: To examine the impact of characteristics of accounting software on business performance with special reference to SMEs in the Kandy District.

Methods: A quantitative research technique was use to find the impact of the characteristics of the accounting software on the SME performance in the Kandy District. The source of data used 150 sample SMEs, these data were gathered via structured questionnaires posed to the managers and the accounting staff. The descriptive statistics, correlation and regression based analysis were used in analysing the software characteristics ease of use, reliability, efficiency and data quality.

Results: Results shows that there was a positive correlation between characteristics of accounting software and business performance of SMEs. Regression outcome verified that about 85.0% of the variation in business performance at 0.05 level of significance. The results set out to state that ease of use, reliability, efficiency and data quality contributed to financial management and decision-making of SMEs in the Kandy District to a considerable way. Past research also indicated that use of accounting software enhanced performance that is in line with the given results.

Conclusion: The results show that the features of accounting software have a positive impact on the performance of SME business with financial performance, including profitability and efficiency, as well as non-financial performance, including decision making and transparency. The regression model has a good explanatory power since R² is .850, meaning that software is a contributor to performance & competitiveness of SMEs can enhanced further by providing user training and promoting operation of advanced systems in the dynamic markets.

Keywords: accounting software, business performance, data quality, reliability, SMEs

OP 05 AB179

Impact of Working Capital Management on Profitability of Manufacturing Companies Listed in Colombo Stock Exchange

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Introduction: Working Capital Management is essential to a company's operational effectiveness and financial stability, especially in manufacturing organizations where profitability and liquidity are tightly interlinked. A company's longterm profitability and short-term solvency are determined by how well its working capital components such as inventory, payables, receivables, and cash conversion cycle are managed.

Objectives: Examining the impact of working capital management on the profitability of manufacturing firms listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange is the main goal of this research.

Methodology: The study makes use of secondary data gathered over a five-year period from the annual reports of particular listed manufacturing companies. Inventory Days, Accounts Receivable Days, Accounts Payable Days, Cash Conversion Cycle are important variables that measure WCM, and the profitability indicator are Gross Operating Profit, Return on Assets. To determine the type and strength of the relationship between WCM and profitability, correlation and regression analysis are used.

Results: The results show a strong correlation between profitability and working capital components. Shorter inventory periods and effective receivables management have a positive correlation with business profitability, while extended payment periods to suppliers negatively affect firm performance. This suggests that delaying payable although improving short-term liquidity may harm supplier relationships, disrupt supply chains, and increase hidden costs, ultimately reducing profitability. The significance of the Cash Conversion Cycle as a thorough indicator of WCM efficiency is highlighted by the strong correlation it exhibits with profitability.

Conclusion: The study emphasizes that optimizing WCM is crucial for improving profitability in manufacturing companies. It advises managers to balance liquidity and profitability by maintaining optimal inventory levels, implementing effective credit policies for quicker receivables collection, and managing payables carefully to maintain supplier trust and control costs. Additionally, aligning these practices with industry benchmarks will enhance financial performance and competitiveness.

Key words: cash conversion cycle, colombo stock exchange, manufacturing companies, profitability, working capital management

OP 06 AB187

The Impact of Behavioral Biases on Credit Card Debt among Corporate Sector Employees in the Colombo District

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Introduction: Classical economic theory assumes rational financial decision-making, yet behavioral finance reveals that individuals often deviate from rationality due to cognitive biases and emotional tendencies. In Sri Lanka's corporate sector, rapid credit card penetration has raised concerns about unsustainable debt accumulation. Yet, no study has jointly examined the combined impact of behavioral biases in this context. This study addresses this gap and provides locally grounded evidence to inform behavioral interventions and financial education initiatives.

Objective: To examine the impact of behavioral biases such as loss aversion, forecasting error, present bias, and mental accounting on credit card debt among corporate sector employees in the Colombo District.

Methodology: As of August 2024, Sri Lanka recorded over 1.5 million active credit cards with Rs. 150.6 billion in outstanding balances, underscoring the need for this research. A target population of 122,111 corporate employees across banking, finance, telecommunications, education, and other sectors was considered. A sample of 384 respondents was selected using Krejcie and Morgan's table. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed online (Google Forms via WhatsApp and Facebook groups) and in person. Behavioral biases were measured using validated Likert-scale items. Data were analysed using SPSS v.25 with descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple regression.

Results: Regression analysis revealed that behavioral biases significantly predict credit card debt ($R^2 = 0.801$, $F = 376.000$, $p < .001$). Mental Accounting had the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.398$, $p < .001$), followed by Loss Aversion ($\beta = 0.282$, $p < .001$), Present Bias ($\beta = 0.154$, $p = .010$), and Forecasting Error ($\beta = 0.122$, $p = .033$). Overall, biases collectively explained 80.1% of variance in debt, confirming their substantial influence.

Conclusion: Findings offer practical implications for multiple stakeholders. Employers can embed financial literacy into workplace wellness programs. Financial institutions can design repayment schemes, such as automated installment plans, to mitigate present bias. Policymakers can enhance disclosure standards to reduce forecasting errors. Behaviorally informed interventions are essential to promote financial resilience in Sri Lanka's corporate workforce. Since the study focuses only on corporate employees in Colombo and relies on self-reported, cross-sectional data, examining only a few behavioral biases. Future research could broaden the scope by including employees from other districts, exploring cultural influences, and considering factors like digital payment habits to better understand credit card debt.

Keywords: behavioral biases, credit card debt, corporate sector employees

OP 07 AB002

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Financial Advisors' Performance: Evidence from Urban India

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Introduction: Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a strategic differentiator in workforce effectiveness, with recent studies affirming its importance in leadership, HR strategy, and digital adaptation (Lubega, 2025; Chen, 2025; Ruiz-Villavicencio et al., 2025). In financial services, especially in urban India's fast-evolving advisory market, EI influences trust, client engagement, and performance outcomes (Ranjan, 2025). Historically rooted in Stoic philosophy and early psychology (Thorndike, 1920; Wechsler, 1927; Gardner, 1983), EI evolved through Mayer and Salovey's ability-based approach and Bar-On's mixed model, but this study uses Goleman's five-component framework of its strong focus on workplace and leadership performance, making it highly suited to advisory services.

Objective: The study examines the role of Goleman's five-component EI model self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills in shaping advisors' client portfolio capacity, digital adoption, and demographic patterns.

Methodology: A quantitative, cross-sectional design was employed. Data from 110 certified or experienced urban financial advisors were collected through a validated 15-item Likert-scale EI instrument. Statistical techniques included ANOVA, chi-square tests, t-tests, correlations, and binary logistic regression to explore relationships between EI scores, demographic characteristics, portfolio size, and technology adoption.

Results: Higher EI scores strongly predict superior performance outcomes. Advisors in the top EI category managed significantly larger client portfolios ($\chi^2(9, N=110)=20.31, p=.010$) and were more likely to adopt digital platforms (Cox & Snell $R^2=0.36, p=.039$). Gender-based differences revealed female advisors (Mean=0.69, SD=0.11) outperformed males (Mean=0.62, SD=0.12, $p=.033$), while age negatively correlated with EI ($r=-0.27, p=.005$). Self-awareness and empathy were the most influential EI components predicting portfolio size ($F(4,105)=3.22, p=.015$).

Conclusion: Findings reinforce existing literature linking EI to leadership, adaptability, and relational outcomes (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001; Weisinger, 2004) while adding evidence from financial advising, a high-pressure, client-centric sector. This research highlights EI's role in enhancing trust, portfolio growth, and tech-readiness, providing actionable insights for HRM policies, advisor recruitment, and emotional skills training. By integrating behavioral finance with HR strategy, it extends EI scholarships in emerging market contexts.

Keywords: behavioral finance, digital adoption, emotional intelligence, financial advisors, human resource management



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**Poster Presentations
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PP 01 AB149

The Influence of Financial Literacy on Cryptocurrency Investment Among Sri Lankan Millennials

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Introduction: This explores the effect of financial literacy on cryptocurrency investment behavior of millennials in Sri Lanka, focusing on skill, knowledge, attitude, and behavior. This research aims to examine how different components of financial literacy shape the investment decisions in burgeoning cryptocurrency markets.

Objective: The objective of this study is to investigate how four components of financial literacy; financial skills, knowledge, attitudes and behavior influence the cryptocurrency investment behavior of millennials in Sri Lanka.

Methodology: This study surveyed 389 Sri Lankan millennials using a 31-item questionnaire adapted from prior studies and measured on a five-point Likert scale, covering financial literacy, cryptocurrency investment behavior, and demographics. Financial literacy was operationalized across four dimensions financial knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior while investment behavior was assessed through ease of use, income impact, prior experience, and utility perceptions. Potential confounding factors such as age, gender, education, income, and prior cryptocurrency exposure were also considered. Data was analyzed in SPSS using descriptive statistics, and multiple regression to examine the relationship between financial literacy and cryptocurrency investment behavior.

Results: The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between all dimensions of financial literacy and cryptocurrency investment behavior among Sri Lankan millennials. Among the components of financial literacy, financial skills emerged as the most significant predictor. The regression model explained 99.1% of the variance in cryptocurrency investment behavior through financial literacy components.

Conclusion: The study concludes that financial literacy significantly influences cryptocurrency investment behavior of Sri Lankan millennials with financial skills showing the strongest impact. Hence, findings underscore the need for targeted financial literacy programs aimed at enhancing the millennials understanding of cryptocurrencies. Furthermore, other factors influencing cryptocurrency investments may include risk tolerance and digital security awareness, which could be further studied in future research.

Keywords: cryptocurrency investment, financial attitudes, financial behavior, financial literacy, millennials

PP 02 AB169

Impact of Cryptocurrency on Traditional Bank Performance in Sri Lanka: Evidence from Public Listed banks in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Cryptocurrencies and Digital currencies are transforming the financial system by enabling fast bondless and low cost transactional outside traditional banks. While they create opportunities for innovation and financial inclusion, they also challenge bank profitability and liquidity. Cryptocurrencies built on blockchain technology transactions without a third-party intermediary.

Objective: To examine the impact of cryptocurrency on traditional bank performance in Sri Lanka in listed banks in Colombo Stock Exchange.

Methods: This study follows quantitative technique is used to assess impact of cryptocurrency. The performance indicators are Loan to Deposit ratio, Net Interest Margin and Debt to Equity ratio were selected as dependent variables, with cryptocurrency adaptation as the independent variable. The sample size was considered as 11 public listed banks in Sri Lanka. In this study, secondary data were collected from 2020-2024 bank annual reports. The collected data has been analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test, Hausman Test and normality tests.

Results: The findings identified the Loan to Deposit ratio (LDR) has significant positive impact on cryptocurrency adaptation, highlighting the role of liquidity management in influencing digital currency usage. However, both Net Interest Margin (NIM) and Debt to Equity Ratio (DE) ratios have no statistically significant impact. Model R-squared value of 0.38, that the 38% of variables impacted on bank performance.

Conclusion: The liquidity management strategies of Sri Lankan banks play important role in cryptocurrency but Although Adoption is still low due to regulatory issues and limited awareness. Findings indicated that the cryptocurrency positive impact on bank performance.

Keywords: cryptocurrency, debt to equity ratio, loan to deposit ratio, net interest margin

PP 03 AB171

The Effectiveness of Cost Accounting in Manufacturing Listed Companies in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: In the competitive landscape of Sri Lanka's manufacturing sector, optimizing cost management is crucial for sustainability and growth. While Cost Accounting (CA) is recognized as a vital tool for this purpose, its specific effectiveness within Sri Lankan listed manufacturing companies remains an under-researched area. This study investigates the impact of specific cost accounting practices on the financial performance and managerial decision-making processes of these firms.

Objectives: The primary objective is to evaluate the impact of key cost accounting practices, namely activity-based costing (ABC), standard cost-volume-profit (CVP) analysis on the financial performance of manufacturing companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE). A secondary objective is to assess how these practices inform strategic managerial decisions.

Methods: A quantitative research design was employed. Data was collected via a structured questionnaire administered to 80 managerial and executive-level personnel in CSE-listed manufacturing firms. The questionnaire measured the extent of use and perceived effectiveness of specific CA practices on a Likert scale. Financial performance was gauged using self-reported metrics on profitability and cost efficiency. Data was analyzed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis.

Results: The regression analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the adoption of cost accounting practices and financial performance ($p < 0.05$). The model indicates that these practices explain 26.2% ($R^2 = 0.262$) of the variance in financial performance. Among the practices studied, activity-based costing and standard costing demonstrated the strongest correlation with improved cost control and profitability. The remaining variance underscores the influence of other factors such as market conditions, macroeconomic policies, and organizational leadership.

Conclusion: The study concludes that targeted cost accounting practices, particularly ABC and standard costing, are effective in enhancing the financial outcomes of Sri Lanka's listed manufacturers. For managers, the findings underscore the importance of investing in training and robust CA system implementation. For policymakers, the study suggests that fostering initiatives that promote the adoption of advanced cost management techniques can strengthen the competitiveness of the national manufacturing sector. Future research should incorporate external factors to build a more comprehensive model.

Keywords: Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), cost accounting, financial performance, managerial decision-making, manufacturing companies

PP 04 AB172

Impact of Macroeconomic Factors on Stock Market Performance in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Stock exchanges of emerging nations are highly susceptible to macroeconomic performance. In the context of contemporary economic instability in Sri Lanka, this study examines the influence of key macroeconomic drivers on stock market performance in order to inform intelligent investment and policy choices.

Objectives: To examine the impact of inflation rate, interest rate, exchange rate and GDP growth on the stock market performance in Sri Lanka.

Methods: The study adopts a quantitative research approach with secondary data covering the period from 2019 to 2023. The All-Share Price Index of the Colombo Stock Exchange is taken as a proxy for stock market performance, while macroeconomic variables are inflation rate, interest rate, exchange rate, and GDP growth rate. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis to determine the effect of these variables on stock market performance.

Results: Regression analysis shows inflation (coefficient = -0.160 , p-value = 0.016) and interest rate (coefficient = 1.277 , p-value = 0.000) are statistically significant determinants of the stock market. Interest rate has a positive impact on the All-Share Price Index, and inflation has a negative impact. Exchange rate (p-value = 0.093) and GDP growth (p-value = 0.417) are not statistically significant during the study period yet exchange rate movement reflects potential volatility effects and GDP growth exerts a positive but non-significant directional influence.

Conclusion: The findings indicate that inflation and interest rate play a significant role in the Sri Lankan stock market, with inflation exerting a negative effect and interest rate exerting a positive effect. Although GDP growth shows a positive direction, it is not statistically relevant. Exchange rate volatility may also affect investor confidence but did not document any significant influence during the sample period. These results are of great value to policymakers and investors in decision-making under consideration of macroeconomic conditions.

Keywords: All Share Price Index (ASPI), macroeconomic factors, stock market performance, inflation, interest rate

PP 05 AB173

Impact of Recent Tax Reforms on Corporate Profitability in Sri Lanka: Focusing on VAT and Corporate Income Tax (CIT) Changes

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Introduction: Taxation plays a critical role in shaping corporate performance by influencing investment decisions, resource allocation, and profitability. In Sri Lanka, recent reforms in Corporate Income Tax (CIT) and Value Added Tax (VAT) have raised concerns regarding their impact for firms, particularly public listed companies (PLCs), which are critical contributors to economic growth, employment, and capital formation. Understanding these effects are essential for both policymakers and corporate managers seeking to optimize economic outcomes and firm performance.

Objectives: To examine the impact of recent tax reforms on corporate profitability in Sri Lanka by analyzing the effect of statutory CIT rates, while Effective Tax Rate (ETR) serve as a supporting variable capturing the actual tax burden, and effect of the VAT rates, with firm size and industry type considered as control variable.

Methods: A quantitative research approach, analyzing 50 PLCs across manufacturing, retail/wholesale, and service sectors over the period 2019/2020–2023/2024 using secondary data. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression models were employed to assess the relationship among CIT, VAT, ETR, and profitability, controlling firm size and industry type. Two regression models were examined: one with statutory CIT and VAT rates, and a second, ETR alongside VAT to reflect the actual tax burden. Data analysis was conducted using E-Views software.

Results: The Statistical analysis confirmed that Statutory CIT rates alone do not significantly impact corporate profitability, but when considering the ETR, which reflects the actual tax burden, a strong negative significant effect observed across ROA, ROE, and NPM ($p < 0.05$). Also, VAT reforms showed a positive significant impact on profitability. This outcome indicate that PLC firms effectively mitigate the impact of VAT through strategic mechanisms, such as transferring tax costs to consumers via pricing adjustments and reclaiming input VAT credits, thereby minimizing direct profit erosions.

Conclusion: The study shows that a firm's actual tax burden (ETR), rather than the statutory CIT rate, is the key factor influencing corporate profitability. Firms can enhance performance through strategic tax planning, cost management, and efficient VAT handling, while policymakers should implement balanced CIT and VAT reforms that sustain revenue without harming competitiveness. The analysis is limited to 50 PLCs over five years, which may restrict generalizability but provides actionable sector-specific insights.

Keywords: corporate income tax, effective tax rate, net profit margin, return on assets, value-added tax rate

PP 06 AB180

The Relationship Between Board Composition and Bank Performance, with special reference to Licensed Commercial Banks in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Corporate governance structure is important for regulatory compliance for a company. A well-designed governance structure ensures long-term sustainability in a highly regulated and competitive environment. Several researchers around the world have conducted various studies on corporate and banking governance. This study is important for all interested parties to understand the relationship between the banking sector and board composition.

Objectives: This study aim to evaluate the impact of board composition on the performance and profitability of licensed commercial banks in Sri Lanka.

Methods: The sample of this study is 24 banks licensed by the Central Bank. In this quantitative study conducted using secondary data. Specifically, the study examines how board size, CEO duality, and non-executive directors affect ROA and ROE. Data was collected from the annual reports of the Colombo Stock Exchange and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka from 2019 to 2024. The collected data was analyzed through descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression analysis using E Views software.

Results: The findings reveal that the model has a very low explanatory power ($R^2 < 0.05$), indicating the presence of omitted or unobserved variables influencing bank performance. Board Size, CEO duality, and the proportion of non-executive directors showed no statistically significant relationship with ROE or ROA ($R^2 = 0.0053$). This implies that other factors such as board experience, ownership concentration, regulatory compliance, and risk management culture may have greater influence, offering insights to enhance governance and control frameworks.

Conclusion: The findings indicate limited statistical significance, which emphasizes the importance of contextual and control variables over structural measures. Future research should examine how qualitative dimensions such as leadership behavior, strategic alignment, and regulatory environment interact with board composition to influence performance outcomes. This approach can provide rich insights and practical guidance for strengthening corporate governance in the Sri Lankan banking sector.

Keywords: board composition, bank performance, licensed commercial banks

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**Oral Presentations
Management – Human Resource**

OP 01 AB033

The Impact of Career Development Opportunities on Employee Organizational Commitment: A Study in a Sri Lankan Private Sector Organization

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Introduction: Employee organizational commitment is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in improving productivity, reducing turnover and also sustaining competitiveness. However, limited empirical studies in developing country contexts have examined how specific dimensions of career development shape employee commitment. This study investigates the influence of three career development dimensions as training and skill development, promotional opportunities, and career counseling on employee organizational commitment.

Objectives: The main objective of this study is to investigate the impact of career development opportunities specifically training and skill development, promotional opportunities, and career counseling on employee organizational commitment. The study also aims to determine which of these three dimensions has the strongest influence on organizational commitment.

Methodology: A quantitative research design through a standard questionnaire was applied to a medium-sized organization employees. The sample consisted of 150 employees selected through stratified random sampling. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analysis were used to test the data and explore relationships among career development dimensions and organizational commitment.

Results: The findings of the study indicate significant positive relationship between career development opportunities and employee organizational commitment ($r = .58, p < .001$). The regression analysis revealed that career development opportunities explained 43% of the variance in organizational commitment. Among the three dimensions, promotional opportunities had the strongest influence on organizational commitment ($\beta = .39, p < .001$), followed by training and skill development ($\beta = .28, p < .001$). Career counseling also had a positive effect, though it was smaller in comparison ($\beta = .12, p = .041$).

Conclusion: This study concludes that career development prospects are core motivators of organizational commitment and contribute to organizational behavior and HRM literature through the assertion that opportunities for promotion are most important in regard to employee commitment.

Keywords: career development, guidance, formal training, organizational commitment, promotions

OP 02 AB049

Bridging Sri Lanka's Maritime Strategy Vacuum

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Introduction: As a small island nation situated at a key maritime crossroads in the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka's maritime security is vital for its national security and economic growth. However, despite confronting both traditional and non-traditional threats, such as power rivalries and transnational crimes, Sri Lanka lacks a comprehensive maritime strategy and policy. Fragmented responses from various stakeholders emphasise the gap between strategic ambitions and actual capabilities.

Objective: This study investigates the consequences of the absence of a coherent maritime strategy on Sri Lanka's maritime development and security. It aims to identify capability gaps, examine institutional shortcomings and educational inefficiencies in maritime studies, analyse recent strategic proposals, and recommend practical steps for formulating an effective national maritime security strategy.

Methodology: This qualitative study employs both descriptive and analytical methodologies to examine the differences in maritime strategy development. It is grounded in comprehensive desk research that systematically examines a variety of official documents, policy statements, and strategic submissions. The sources include an extensive range of materials such as scholarly books, peer-reviewed journals, analytical articles, and pertinent audio and video content. This multifaceted approach ensures a well-rounded examination of the current state of maritime strategy and its implications.

Results: The findings of this research reveal a significant and concerning gap between the nation's strategic objectives and the resources allocated to achieve them. This disparity is further compounded by inadequate interagency coordination, which leads to fragmented efforts and inefficiencies. Additionally, the study identifies a troubling trend in academic circles, where insufficient discourse on maritime strategy hinders the development of innovative strategic thinking and comprehensive policy formulation. To address these challenges, the research advocates for the establishment of a dedicated maritime strategic thinking center. This center would focus on the development and implementation of a robust maritime strategy that aligns with the nation's broader strategic vision. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the critical need to elevate maritime strategy to a position of priority within national policy frameworks, recognizing its essential role in shaping the country's future security interests.

Conclusion: Sri Lanka requires a comprehensive maritime security strategy to safeguard its waters and foster sustainable development. This strategy should outline interests and threats, enhance interagency coordination, build educational capacity, and strengthen regional partnerships to improve resilience and strategic autonomy in the Indian Ocean.

Keywords: maritime strategy, maritime security, power rivalry, small state, transnational crimes

The Impact of Employer Branding through Social Media on Employee Attractiveness Among University Graduates in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Employer branding through social media has become a critical factor in shaping how attractive organizations appear to potential employees, particularly among graduates entering the job market. While social media provides a transparent and interactive platform for organizations to communicate values and opportunities, the specific dimensions that influence employer attractiveness in the Sri Lankan graduate context remain underexplored.

Objectives: This study aimed to examine the impact of impact of four key employer branding dimensions, *perceived organizational culture*, *career growth opportunities*, *social media engagement*, and *corporate reputation* on employer attractiveness among university graduates in the Colombo District between 2021 and 2025.

Methodology: A quantitative, cross-sectional design was employed under the positivist paradigm. Data were collected from 384 graduates using a structured Google Form questionnaire. Stratified random sampling ensured proportional representation from public and private universities. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS, including Pearson correlation and multiple regression, with results reported at the 95% confidence level.

Results: The analysis revealed statistically significant positive relationships between all four employer branding dimensions—perceived organizational culture, career growth opportunities, social media engagement, and corporate reputation—and employer attractiveness ($p < 0.05$). Corporate reputation demonstrated the strongest influence, followed by perceived organizational culture, career growth opportunities, and social media engagement. However, other potential determinants such as salary expectations and internship opportunities were not covered in this study. Additionally, the effect of individual social media platforms was not separately examined.

Conclusion: The study confirms that employer branding communicated via social media significantly enhances employer attractiveness among graduates in Sri Lanka. Specifically, *corporate reputation*, *organizational culture*, *career growth opportunities*, and *social media engagement* act as key drivers. Organizations aiming to attract top graduate talent should prioritize transparent, values-driven, and interactive social media strategies. Future research should expand to include compensation-related factors and explore the relative influence of different social media platforms.

Keywords: employer branding, employer attractiveness, social media, university graduates, corporate reputation, Sri Lanka

OP 04 AB141

**Exploring the Impact of STARA
(Smart Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Algorithms)
Awareness on Perceived Job Security:
The Mediating Role of Learning Motivation in Private Banks
in the Colombo District**

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Introduction: The rapid advancement of Smart technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Algorithms (STARA) is transforming the banking sector, affecting job roles, required skills, and employees' perceptions of job security. As automation advances, employees' awareness of STARA becomes increasingly critical in shaping their perceptions of job security. Learning motivation plays a mediating role by enabling employees to adapt to these technological changes. This study explores the influence of STARA awareness on perceived job security, with learning motivation as a mediator, in private banks in the Colombo District.

Objectives: To study the impact of STARA awareness on perceived job security through learning motivation of employees in private banks in the Colombo district.

Methods: A quantitative approach was adopted to assess the relationships between STARA awareness, learning motivation, and perceived job security among employees of 11 private licensed commercial banks in the Colombo District. The study population comprised over 6,000 employees, from which a sample of 384 was selected based on feasibility. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire using validated scales. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and mediation testing using the PROCESS macro in SPSS.

Results: The findings revealed a significant impact of STARA awareness on perceived job security ($p < 0.001$, 95% CI [0.1586, 0.3065]). Learning motivation partially mediated this relationship, with a significant indirect effect (95% bootstrap CI [0.0935, 0.2245]). The normal theory test ($p < 0.001$) further confirmed the mediation effect. Measurement instruments demonstrated strong reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.80$) and validity, confirming the robustness of the results. These findings suggest that enhancing STARA awareness and fostering learning motivation are vital to improving employees' job security perceptions in the banking sector.

Conclusion: STARA awareness and learning motivation significantly enhance employees' perceived job security in Sri Lanka's banking sector. HR leaders can support this by offering reskilling programs, providing learning incentives, and redesigning job roles. Linking these practices to global digital transformation trends highlights their relevance for managing technological change and maintaining workforce confidence.

Keywords: learning motivation, perceived job security, private banks. STARA awareness

OP 05 AB142

Impact of Organizational Factors on Adoption of HR Analytics in Selected Large-Scale Apparel Companies in Western Province, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Human Resources Analytics (HRA) phenomenon is crucial for data-driven decision making in organizations, while its adoption in Sri Lanka's apparel sector remains low. Therefore, understanding the factors impacting HRA adoption can explore implementation strategies within the industry.

Objective: To examine the level of impact of internal and external factors namely: Performance Expectancy (PE), Effort Expectancy (EE), Social Influence (SI), and Facilitating Conditions (FC) on the Adoption of Human Resources Analytics in Selected Large-Scale Apparel Companies in Western Province, Sri Lanka.

Methodology: The study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design utilizing survey data collected from HR professionals working in three large-scale apparel firms in Western Province. The firms: MAS Holdings, Brandix, and Hirdaramani were selected as they are dominant players in Sri Lankan apparel sector. The unit of analysis for the study was individual HR professional. A sample of 127 HR professionals was drawn from a population of 200 HR professionals using the Simple Random Sampling technique. The data collected were analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis.

Results: All four variables significantly impact the HRA adoption, and the P-value of each variable is less than 0.05. Social Influence emerged as the strongest predictor with a 0.373 β value.

Conclusion: Findings highlight the necessity of senior management support, peer influence, and supportive organizational environment to build confidence in analytics-driven HR decisions. Compared with evidence from other developing economies, similar patterns of social and managerial influence are apparent, suggesting that Sri Lankan apparel can benefit from best practices in analytics training elsewhere. Managers should invest in peer learning initiatives, capacity building, and infrastructure to foster HRA adoption. Limitations include the study's cross-sectional design, and the study focus on a single region and sector, which may affect generalizability. Future research could extend the analysis to other sectors and regions to strengthen comparative insights.

Keywords: *Effort Expectancy, Facilitating Conditions, HRA Adoption, Performance Expectancy, Social Influence*

OP 06 AB146

The Mediating Role of HR Analytics Adoption in the Relationship Between Contextual Factors and Talent Management Outcomes: A Study of SLASSCOM-Registered IT/BPM Companies in the Western Province, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Human Resource Analytics (HRA) is a key value-driver in HRM, yet research offers limited insights into its sector-specific application. This study addresses this gap by examining how HRA can be leveraged in the Information Technology (IT)/ Business Process Management (BPM) sector to tackle talent shortages and align workforce supply with demand.

Objective: To examine the role of HRA Adoption in Linking Contextual Factors to the effectiveness of Talent Management Outcomes of SLASSCOM-registered IT/BPM Companies in the Western Province.

Methodology: Grounded in a positivist philosophy, this study employed a descriptive-correlational quantitative design with an explanatory purpose. The conceptual framework was grounded in the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework, Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory, and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) Model. Primary data were collected via a standard questionnaire from 98 HR professionals in SLASSCOM-registered IT/BPM companies in the Western Province, using simple random sampling. Data was analyzed through descriptive statistics and regression techniques with the SPSS PROCESS macro.

Results: Regression analysis revealed that HR Analytics Adoption partially mediates the relationship between contextual factors (Tool Availability, Data Availability, Analytical Competencies of HR Personnel, Top Management Commitment, and Social Influence) and talent management outcomes. Direct path analysis further indicated that these factors independently exert a significant positive influence on talent management outcomes, with Tool Availability showing the strongest influence and Analytical Competencies of HR Personnel the weakest.

Conclusion: This study establishes HR analytics as a theoretical lens for developing targeted, evidence-based HRM strategies that enhance workforce capabilities, organizational agility, and long-term sustainability. Practically, IT/BPM firms can leverage investments in tools, data, capabilities, leadership, and networks to operationalize HR analytics for workforce planning, skills development, and retention strategies that mitigate talent gaps and strengthen global competitiveness.

Keywords: contextual factors, HR analytics adoption, IT/BPM companies, SLASSCOM-registered, talent management outcomes

The Impact of AI-Powered Resume Screening on Recruitment Efficiency in Sri Lanka's IT Sector: A Study Based on Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: This research examines recruitment efficiency as influenced by AI-powered resume screening tools in the Sri Lankan IT industry. Even though AI-based service makes the processing faster and more precise, they generate inefficiencies as well, as the technology lowers the engagement of the applicants, like the inability to reply to the job interview because of the necessity to submit a video, negatively impacting the efficiency of the recruitment process.

Objectives: This research discusses the effectiveness of AI functionalities to understand the efficiency of the recruitments in Sri Lankan IT firms, especially the following functionalities: resume parsing accuracy, candidate matching algorithms, and bias detection and reduction. The study also reveals what features play the most crucial role in enhancing the recruitment outcomes.

Methodology: The research design was a quantitative research design, where the data were gathered from 80 HR professionals of IT companies located in the Colombo District using a purposive sampling method. The justification of the purposive sampling method was to select the HR professionals who have used AI technology initially in the recruitment procedures in order to have the data that captures informed views that may be oriented towards the study goals on recruitment efficiency. The sampling frame included HR executives, recruitment officers, and hiring managers of medium to large IT companies operating in recruitment based on AI to ensure relevant and informed responses. Likert-scale parameters were employed as part of the measurement of variables; the scales were validated. SPSS was used for descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation, reliability and validity testing, and multiple regression analysis.

Results: This minute revealed strong correlations among the AI variables and recruitment efficiency ($R = 0.868$, $R^2 = 0.753$, $p < 0.001$). The bias detection ($\beta = 0.467$, $p = 0.000$), resume parsing accuracy ($\beta = 0.289$, $p = 0.003$), and algorithm to match candidates ($\beta = 0.203$, $p = 0.040$) showed the biggest impact. These findings highlight that AI technologies can improve recruitment efficiency when implemented properly.

Conclusion: The use of AI-screening tools positively influences the efficiency of the recruitment processes, yet they are designed in a user-inclusive manner. The present study makes an addition to the scholarship by filling the theoretical gap with the results focus on the fact that AI resources, including resume screening systems, candidate ranking programs, and bias-reduction applications, increase recruiter efficiency, promote better decisions, and allow HR specialists to choose candidates through evidence-based practice when used constructively.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, candidate matching, recruitment efficiency, resume screening

OP 08 AB210

Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention of Hotel Employees: The Moderating Role of Economic Crisis in Anuradhapura District

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Introduction: The hospitality sector is a fast-growing global industry that contributes significantly to economic development and employment. Employee satisfaction is essential for ensuring service quality and organizational stability. However, turnover intention among hotel employees can disrupt operations and reduce profitability, particularly during economic crises that create financial and job-related uncertainty. This study uniquely examines the moderating effect of the economic crisis on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention in the Sri Lankan hospitality context.

Objectives: The study aimed to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention among hotel employees in the Anuradhapura District and to assess how the economic crisis moderates this relationship. It also ought to identify which factors of job satisfaction most strongly relate to employee retention.

Methodology: A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 120 employees representing frontline, supervisory, and support staff from twelve star-rated hotels in the Anuradhapura District. Data was collected using a standardized questionnaire adapted from previous research ensuring high reliability. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and moderation analyses were performed using SPSS v.22.

Results: The results showed significant positive relationships between job satisfaction and pay ($r = .731, p < .001$), benefits ($r = .425, p < .001$), coworker relationships ($r = .699, p < .001$), working conditions ($r = .269, p = .003$), and task significance ($r = .679, p < .001$), while autonomy ($r = .038, p = .684$) was not significant. Job satisfaction had a significant negative relationship with turnover intention ($r = -.320, p < .001$). The economic crisis significantly moderated this relationship ($\beta = -1.1776, t = -6.4658, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [-1.5383, -.8169]$), indicating that low job satisfaction increased turnover intention during crisis conditions. These findings align with prior studies but reveal stronger relationships in the Sri Lankan context.

Conclusion: Improving job satisfaction is vital to retain skilled hotel employees, especially during economic crises. Competitive pay, supportive work environments, and meaningful tasks are recommended. The study provides valuable insights for hotel managers and policymakers, contributing to understanding employee behavior under crisis conditions.

Keywords: economic crisis, hospitality industry, hotel employees, job satisfaction, turnover intention



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**Poster Presentations
Management – Human Resource**

PP01 AB118

Impact of Human Resource Information System (HRIS) Adoption on Employee Job Performance with Special Reference to the Private Sector Banks of Western Province in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: The rapid advancement of workplace technology and the growing need for efficiency and data-driven HR decision-making have made Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS) vital for modern organizations. In Sri Lanka's private banking sector, HRIS supports efficiency, compliance, and employee. This study explores how HRIS adoption affects employee job performance, offering both theoretical and practical insights into digital HR transformation within the banking context.

Objectives: The study aims to investigate the relationship between HRIS adoption and employee job performance, guided by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT).

Methodology: A quantitative research design was employed. Data was collected from 174 employees, selected using a simple random sampling method from a population of 318 employees across several private sector banks. Primary data were gathered through a structured questionnaire developed from validated UTAUT constructs. Statistical analysis using SPSS included descriptive statistics, reliability and validity testing (Cronbach's Alpha and Factor Analysis), correlation, and multiple regression analysis to examine the significance and strength of relationships among variables and ensure the robustness of the research model.

Results: Findings revealed that Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, and Facilitating Conditions have a significant positive relationship with employee job performance, while Social Influence showed no significant effect. Facilitating Conditions was identified as the strongest predictor, underscoring the importance of system support, resource availability, and technical assistance. The regression model confirmed that these predictors collectively explain a substantial proportion of the variance in job performance at the 0.05 significance level.

Conclusion: The study concludes that enhancing HRIS infrastructure, improving system usability, and providing sufficient training and support can significantly improve employee job performance in Sri Lanka's private banking sector. The findings validate the UTAUT model in this context and guide HR professionals and policymakers toward more effective digital HR strategies. Future research may include organizational culture and system quality to broaden understanding of HRIS-driven performance.

Keywords: employee job performance, facilitating conditions, Human Resource Information System (HRIS), UTAUT, private banking sector

PP 02 AB120

Impact of Organizational Reputation on Applicant Reactions Among Undergraduate Students in Selected Private Universities in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Organizational reputation has a strong impact on job seekers' perceptions, particularly among undergraduates entering Sri Lanka's competitive labor market. This study investigates how corporate social responsibility, online reviews of employers, organizational trust, and perceived prestige all influence applicant reactions of final-year management undergraduates at selected private universities in the Colombo District.

Objective: To investigate the impact of organizational reputation—consisting of corporate social responsibility, online employer reviews, organizational trust, and perceived prestige—on applicant reactions among undergraduate students in selected private universities in the Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

Methodology: A positivist, quantitative approach was applied. The target population consisted of 2,300 final-year management undergraduates, and a stratified random sample of 322 students completed a structured questionnaire. Data was analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple linear regression analyses to determine the relative influence of each predictor.

Results: All four dimensions of organizational reputation had a significant positive effect on application intentions. Online employer reviews emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.285$), followed by organizational trust ($\beta = 0.262$), perceived prestige ($\beta = 0.254$), and CSR ($\beta = 0.106$). The results highlight that transparent digital employer branding and credibility strongly enhance students' willingness to apply.

Conclusion: The study concludes that a favorable organizational reputation driven by CSR engagement, trustworthy practices, positive online reviews, and perceived prestige significantly influences undergraduates' intentions to apply and attitudes toward potential employers. Organizations should therefore strengthen reputation-building strategies to attract high-quality applicants within competitive educational and employment settings.

Keywords: applicant reactions, corporate social responsibility, online employer reviews, organization reputation, organizational trust, perceived prestige

PP 03 AB127

Impact of Stress Management on Performance of Production Executives in Selected Large-Scale Apparel Industry Companies in the Western Province of Sri Lanka

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Introduction: In Sri Lanka, the apparel industry is important to the country's economy. There are key production executives with responsibility for managing production processes, product quality, deadlines, and teams. The research examines the impact of stress management efficiency on the job performance of production executives and provides recommendations for enhancing employee physical, mental, and organizational well-being.

Methodology: A quantitative design was utilized with a structured questionnaire administered to 163 production executives drawn via simple random sampling from large-scale apparel firms. Stress management (workload management, role conflict management, and role ambiguity management) was explored as the independent variable. Job performance was explored as a dependent variable. The data were analyzed using descriptive, correlational, and multiple regression tests utilizing SPSS.

Results: Stress management had a statistically significant positive impact on employee performance. Stress management has the strongest positive effect on performance ($\beta = 0.330$, $R^2 = 0.547$).

Conclusion: Organizations should implement structured stress management programs that include training and are designed to help employee well-being, productivity, and competitive advantage.

Keywords: apparel industry, job performance, role ambiguity management, role conflict management, stress management, workload management

PP 04 AB148

AI Capabilities and Organizational Performance: The Mediating Role of Organizational Impact in Sri Lanka's Apparel Industry

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Introduction: The Sri Lankan apparel industry, a central driver of exports and employment, is increasingly shaped by Artificial Intelligence (AI). While global research highlights AI's transformative role, empirical studies from emerging economies remain limited. This study contributes by examining how AI capabilities, such as process automation, cognitive insight, and cognitive engagement, affect organizational performance, with organizational impact considered as a mediating factor.

Objective: To investigate the direct and indirect effects of AI capabilities on organizational performance through the mediation of organizational impact in apparel industry firms.

Methodology: This quantitative study applied a deductive approach. Data were collected from 155 employees of AI-integrated apparel companies using a structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. Statistical analysis was conducted with SPSS, employing regression and mediation testing through PROCESS Macro Model 4. Reliability and validity tests were performed before hypothesis testing.

Results: The analysis showed that AI capabilities significantly enhance organizational performance ($\beta = 0.1841$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.342$). Mediation results indicated that process automation ($\beta = 0.2123$, $p < 0.001$) and cognitive engagement ($\beta = 0.1768$, $p < 0.01$) positively mediated the relationship, while cognitive insight negatively mediated it ($\beta = -0.0975$, $p < 0.05$). Partial mediation confirms that AI dimensions contribute differently, with automation the strongest positive factor and insight the weakest.

Conclusion: The findings suggest that AI adoption enhances efficiency and innovation when strategically implemented. Practical strategies include prioritizing automation in operational processes, preparing employees for AI-enabled engagement, and integrating human judgment alongside AI-generated insights. Managers should also incorporate ethical considerations and sustainability practices into AI initiatives. By highlighting the differentiated mediating effects, this study advances theoretical understanding through the Resource-Based View while offering actionable guidance for Sri Lankan apparel firms navigating digital transformation.

Keywords: AI capabilities, apparel industry, cognitive engagement, organizational impact, organizational performance, process automation

PP 05 AB152

The Impact of Technology Preferences on Career Decision-Making among Generation Z Management Undergraduates: with Special Reference to a Selected Private University in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Generation Z, widely recognized as the first generation of true digital natives, increasingly depends on technology for shaping critical aspects of their lives, particularly career-related decisions. In Sri Lanka, addressing the gap between higher education outcomes, employment preferences, and employer expectations requires a deeper understanding of how technological preferences influence students' professional decision-making.

Objective: To identify the impact of technology preferences on career decision-making among Generation Z management undergraduates at a selected private university in Sri Lanka.

Methodology: This study implemented a quantitative approach to evaluate the impact of technology preferences on career decision-making among Generation Z. A sample of 215 undergraduate students from a population of 485 were considered, using a simple random sampling technique to ensure that each student in the target population had an equal chance of being selected. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, using a Google Form. With the use of SPSS software, the collected data was examined using regression analysis, coefficient and descriptive statistics.

Results: Findings revealed that all three independent variables had a statically significant positive effect on career decision-making: Technology Self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.291$, $p < 0.05$), Perceived Usefulness of Technology ($\beta = 0.385$, $p < 0.05$) and Digital Career Platforms ($\beta = 0.264$, $p < 0.05$). Collectively, the model accounted for 78.2% of the variance in career decision-making behavior.

Conclusion: The study highlights the critical role of technology in shaping Generation Z's career decisions, emphasizing the importance of integrating digital tools into higher education and career counseling practices. Practical implementations include the need for universities, career counselors, and policymakers to adopt technology-driven career guidance strategies and enhance digital platforms to better align with the expectations of digitally native undergraduates, while also supporting undergraduates in confident, digital-era career planning.

Keywords: career decision-making, digital career platforms, generation z, perceived usefulness of technology, technology self-efficacy

PP 06 AB186

The Effect of Employee Recognition Programs on Retention of Sales Staff in Selected Supermarkets in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Employee retention is a major challenge in the retail sector because of high turnover. This study examines the effect of employee recognition programs on the retention of sales staff in the Kaduwela area of Colombo District, Sri Lanka. Both monetary and non-monetary recognition are considered key HR practices for improving retention.

Objective: To examine the effect of monetary and non-monetary recognition programs on the retention of sales staff in selected supermarkets in the Kaduwela area, Colombo District, Sri Lanka.

Methodology: A quantitative approach was used. Structured questionnaires were administered to 85 sales staff from selected supermarkets in the Kaduwela area using cluster sampling. The study tested two independent variables monetary recognition (pay benefits, insurance, promotion policies) and non-monetary recognition (appreciation, decision-making opportunities, employee-of-the-month awards, career growth) and their effect on employee retention.

Results: Monetary recognition had a positive and significant impact on employee retention ($B = 0.455$, $p = 0.006$). Non-monetary recognition also had a strong, positive, and highly significant effect ($B = 0.367$, $p < 0.001$). Standardized Beta values show that non-monetary recognition ($\beta = 0.568$) has a stronger influence on retention than monetary recognition ($\beta = 0.391$).

Conclusion: Well-designed recognition programs significantly improve employee satisfaction, loyalty, and retention. Practical recommendations are provided for HR managers to implement structured, fair, and consistent recognition strategies. The study was limited to supermarkets in Colombo District, so results may not generalize to other sectors or regions. Future research could extend to other industries, include other regions of Sri Lanka. This study contributes to the Sri Lankan context by offering empirical evidence that non-monetary recognition is particularly important for motivating and retaining supermarket staff.

Keywords: employee recognition, employee retention, human resource management, monetary recognition, non-monetary recognition, supermarkets

Schedule of the Technical Session – Management - Marketing

Oral Presentations		
SN	Abstract ID	Title and Author/s of the Abstract
OP 1	AB 012	The Impact of Green Supply Chain Management Practices on the Organizational Performance of Supermarkets in the Western Province of Sri Lanka <i>Thasmi M.[*], Sudath M.A.</i>
OP 2	AB 037	The Impact of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Innovation Capability on Firm Performance <i>Pulogitha G., Pretheeba P.[*]</i>
OP 3	AB 066	Successful Factors and Influencing Mechanism of the Digital Transformation in Batticaloa District <i>Pratheesh N.[*], Ithayaraj A.</i>
OP 4	AB 077	Factors Influencing Informal Microenterprise Growth in Bangladesh: A Qualitative Study <i>Khan S.M.^{1*}, Alam M.N.¹, Masroor I.², Nabi M.N.U.²</i>
OP 5	AB 090	Exploring the Impact of AI Literacy on Sustainable Purchasing Decisions among Generation Z in Colombo District <i>Hewa Jayasinghe U.V.^{1*}, Gunarathne A.A.D.², Liyana-Arachchi S.³</i>
OP 6	AB 112	An Analysis of Retailer Perceptions and Brand Recognition Challenges of Mapro Products in Mumbai's FMCG Market <i>Tripathi M.^{1*}, Iyer S.²</i>
OP 7	AB 213	The Green Advertising on Social Media Affects Consumer Intention to Purchase Organic Foods: The Mediating Role of Environmental Attitude <i>Limansa H.A.M.^{1*}, Karuanarathne P.H.M.S²</i>

Schedule of the Technical Session – Management - Marketing

Poster Presentations		
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**Oral Presentations
Management - Marketing**

OP01 AB012

The Impact of Green Supply Chain Management Practices on the Organizational Performance of Supermarkets in the Western Province of Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Growing environmental concerns compel businesses to adopt sustainable practices in their supply chains. Supermarkets, as key players in retail, face increasing pressure to align operations with green initiatives to ensure long-term competitiveness.

Objectives: This study examines the impact of Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) practices, green purchasing, eco-friendly packaging, waste management, supplier collaboration, and energy management on the organizational performance of supermarkets in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. GSCM was evaluated in terms of both financial and non-financial outcomes. While non-financial improvements such as reputation, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder trust are realized more immediately, these benefits contribute significantly to long-term financial performance, positioning GSCM as a strategic driver of sustainable organizational success.

Methodology: A quantitative research approach was employed through a structured questionnaire administered to 300 employees selected via simple random sampling from major supermarket chains, namely Cargills, Keells, and LAUGFS. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis with SPSS v.22.

Results: Findings revealed that all five GSCM practices significantly and positively affect organizational performance. Energy management and green purchasing demonstrated the strongest influence. The results validated the relevance of the Resource-Based View and Stakeholder Theory in the sustainability context.

Conclusion: The study emphasizes that supermarkets can enhance operational and organizational performance by adopting comprehensive GSCM practices. Policymakers and managers should strengthen regulatory support and infrastructure to facilitate broader implementation of environmentally responsible strategies within Sri Lanka's retail sector.

Keywords: green supply chain management, organizational performance, sustainability, supermarkets, Sri Lanka

OP02 AB037

The Impact of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Innovation Capability on Firm Performance

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Introduction: The future of the organization depends on the satisfaction customers derive from the organization and the quality of the customer relationships it maintains. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is widely acknowledged as a powerful tool for fostering innovation and gaining a competitive advantage. Today, many businesses, including banks, insurance companies, and other service providers, need to understand the importance and utility of CRM to attract new customers and retain existing ones, thereby boosting loyalty.

Objective: This research investigates the relationship and impact of customer relationship management practices and innovation capability on the firm performance of banking employees in the Batticaloa district.

Methodology: This research study relies on data from 240 employees working in selected state and private banks in Batticaloa District. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, yielding responses from 212 employees. The stratified sampling method was utilized. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis to achieve the objectives.

Results: The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is 0.793 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant and strong positive relationship between CRM practices and firm performance. The correlation coefficient (r) is 0.720 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a strong relationship between innovation capability and firm performance, thereby providing a competitive advantage that enhances the firm's performance. Regression analysis also validates the positive relationship between the selected variables.

Conclusion: These results reinforce the view that developing close relationships with customers enhances a firm's ability to innovate. It will help businesses focus on an appealing value proposition to attract various stakeholders.

Keywords: customer relationship management, firm performance, innovation capability, competitive advantage

OP03 AB066

Successful Factors and Influencing Mechanism of the Digital Transformation in Batticaloa District

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Introduction: Digital transformation is crucial for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to remain competitive, but they face distinct challenges like limited resources and capabilities compared to larger firms.

Objectives: This study aims to provide empirical insights on the key factors and mechanisms influencing successful digital transformation in SMEs, focusing on the Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka. By examining the interplay between technological, organizational, and environmental factors, the research develops an integrated framework to guide SMEs through different stages of their digitization journey.

Methodology: The study exploits a cross-sectional method and accompanies with quantitative research approach. Primary data as well as secondary data had been utilized in this study. The interval 5-point Likert scale was used in the structured questionnaire which was used as the method of data collection. The data were obtained from 300 owner-managers of SMEs in Batticaloa to assess levels of digital transformation alongside associated factors like IT infrastructure, management capabilities, government support, partnerships, digital strategy, and top management involvement using convenience sampling method. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS 25.0 analysis. The data were measured using correlation and regression analyses identified the relationships and impacts of these variables.

Results: The findings revealed strong positive correlations between the independent variables and digital transformation as the dependent variable. The correlation coefficient values were 0.905, 0.890, and 0.899 between Environmental Factors, Technological factors, organizational factors, and digital transformations respectively at the significant level ($p = 0.000$). Regression results showed environmental, technological, and organizational factors jointly explained 83.1% of variation in digital transformation levels.

Conclusion: The research contributes an empirically-validated framework clarifying how technological capabilities, environmental conditions, and internal strategy/leadership jointly drive SME digitization through iterative stages. The insights can enhance SMEs' strategic approach and resource allocation for competitive digital transformation.

Keywords: digital strategy, digital transformation, environmental factors, organizational factors, technological factors,

Factors Influencing Informal Microenterprise Growth in Bangladesh: A Qualitative Study

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Introduction: An informal microenterprise is defined as a small-scale business, typically employing fewer than 10 people, that operates outside the formal regulatory framework. Informal microenterprises constitute the backbone of the economy of Bangladesh. Yet, their growth dynamics remain poorly understood, overshadowed by a research preference for quantitative metrics over the subtle ‘*lived reality*’ of entrepreneurs. This study addresses this gap by conducting a concentrated qualitative investigation to reveal the interplay of individual agency, resources, and the socio-cultural embeddedness.

Objectives: The objective of this study is to develop a view of the entrepreneurial capabilities, dynamics of resources, and socio-cultural circumstances in which it operates have on the growth of the Bangladeshi informal microenterprises.

Methodology: The study was carried out by using in-depth interviews with 21 informal microenterprise owners across different parts of Bangladesh. These open-ended interviews were subjected to the methods of the thematic content analysis of the qualitative data with the purpose of extracting common themes and tendencies in relation to the growth of the microenterprise.

Results: In our analysis, we found three themes, which are closely related to the understanding of microenterprise development: a. beyond basic skills, entrepreneurs displayed important adaptive resilience – the capacity to change the business model in response to a shock such as inflation or family emergency; b. financial capital was usually acquired in complex, trust-based relationships, rather than in formal loans whereas social capital served as a ‘*safety net*’ and a ‘*springboard*’, offering emotional support as well as essential market information; c. even though supportive family networks were a major asset, society imposed strong expectations and gender roles.

Conclusion: This study concludes that the growth of informal microenterprises in Bangladesh is driven by a combination of the entrepreneur's personal resilience, their access to financial resources, and the strength of their social networks. Our qualitative approach reveals that these factors are deeply intertwined; for instance, strong social connections often serve as a primary means to secure financial capital and navigate crises. For policymakers and development practitioners, these findings implicate that support programs must move beyond solely providing microloans.

Keywords: entrepreneurial competencies, informal microenterprises, qualitative research, social capital, thematic content analysis

OP05 AB090

Exploring the Impact of AI Literacy on Sustainable Purchasing Decisions among Generation Z in Colombo District

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Introduction: AI is transforming consumer decision making through data-driven recommendations that shape attitudes and purchasing behavior. Generation Z, recognized for its advanced AI literacy and sustainable-orientations, offers a valuable context to examine how technological understanding influences sustainable purchasing. AI literacy is the ability to understand, evaluate, and engage ethically within AI systems. This study examines Colombo's Generation Z, who show strong sustainable awareness but an attitude-behavioral gap, to explore how AI literacy can transform sustainable intentions into sustainable purchasing actions.

Objective: To examine the effect of AI literacy on the sustainable purchasing behavior of Generation Z in Colombo and to explore how enhanced AI literacy supports sustainable purchasing behavior.

Methodology: The quantitative research approach was utilized employing primary data collected through a systematic online questionnaire distributed to 384 purposively selected Generation Z respondents in Colombo. AI literacy was conceptualized through four dimensions: AI exposure, AI accuracy, attitude toward AI, and AI-induced ethical concern. The data were analyzed utilizing SPSS to conduct regression analysis examining the effect of AI literacy on sustainable purchasing behavior.

Results: The findings disclosed a significant positive effect of AI literacy on sustainable purchasing behavior ($\beta = 1.036$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that higher AI literacy strengthens consumers' ability to critically assess, ethically, interpret, and act upon AI-generated sustainable-oriented information. This implies that AI-literate consumers exhibit greater assurance in engaging with AI-powered sustainable-oriented recommendations.

Conclusions: The study emphasizes the development of AI-powered sustainability marketing and educational initiatives that strengthen digital competence, trust, and ethical transparency. Theoretically, it extends TPB model by positioning AI literacy as a predictor of sustainable decision-making and clarifying its role in reducing the attitude-behavior gap. Practically, it guides marketers to craft AI-driven sustainability strategies that enhance trust, sustainable-oriented purchasing, and ethical engagement among digitally informed Gen Z consumers in developing economies.

Keywords: AI literacy, digital competence, generation z, sustainable purchasing

OP06 AB 112

An Analysis of Retailer Perceptions and Brand Recognition Challenges of Mapro Products in Mumbai's FMCG Market

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Introduction: The Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry is one of the most dynamic and fast-growing global sectors, known for high-volume, low-cost products catering to everyday needs. While developed nations focus on sustainability and health-conscious options, developing countries prioritize value-for-money products. Mapro, a legacy Indian brand rooted in innovation and quality, began in Panchgani producing jams and has evolved into a diversified FMCG player. Its portfolio includes jams, fruit chews, syrups, crushes, squashes, chocolates, snacks, and dessert toppings catering to all age groups. Mapro differentiates itself through real fruit pulp-based ingredients and high product quality. However, it faces strong competition from major players such as Hindustan Unilever (HUL), Perfetti Van Melle, and Hershey's.

Objectives: To understand retailers' buying behaviour towards selected Mapro products and explore reasons for their low popularity in the Andheri region of Mumbai.

Methodology: The study examines the above objectives using purposive sampling as it involves selecting retailers as respondents with specific knowledge relevant to the research question, ensuring data directly aligns with study objectives. The data was collected through questionnaires and personal interactions and analytical tools included One-Way ANOVA, correlation, and regression analysis.

Results: The One-Way ANOVA revealed no significant difference in average expenditure across retail outlet types ($p = 0.0795 > 0.05$) and no significant effect of business experience on expenditure ($p = 0.8848 > 0.05$). A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.529$) was found between customer demand and perception. The regression analysis indicated a significant positive impact of customer perception on demand ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$), with an R^2 value of 0.280, meaning 28% of the variation in demand is explained by perception, while other factors also have an impact on the same.

Conclusion: Despite its 60-year legacy, Mapro has struggled to strengthen its retail presence in Andheri. About 74% of retailers reported not stocking its products due to low customer demand, minimal promotional activities, and unfavourable profit margins amid stiff competition. Additionally, distribution challenges, including delayed deliveries, poor replacement policies, and missed order fulfilments, have weakened retailer trust, limiting Mapro's market penetration in the region.

Keywords: brand recognition, buying behaviour, customer perception, fast moving consumer goods, retailers

OP07 AB 213

The Green Advertising on Social Media Affects Consumer Intention to Purchase Organic Foods: The Mediating Role of Environmental Attitude

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Introduction: With the increased global focus on environmental sustainability, Sri Lankan consumers are growing more aware of their purchasing practices, particularly with relation to organic food. Social media plays a crucial role in spreading green advertising messages that impact sustainable purchasing behavior as environmental awareness and digital engagement grow. This study provides insights unique to Sri Lanka by examining the influence of such ads on consumers' intentions to make green purchases in the organic food industry.

Objective: This study's primary goal is to investigate how customers' intentions to buy organic food in Colombo, Sri Lanka, are influenced by green advertising on social media platforms. In addition to this research, the author investigates the mediating role of environmental attitude and ascertains how it affects consumers' receptiveness to green advertising messages.

Methodology: A positivist research philosophy and deductive approach were employed. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among organic food consumers in the Colombo district using purposive sampling. Based on Morgan's sample determination table, 384 respondents were selected. Analytical techniques included reliability and validity assessment, descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis, along with mediation testing using the process macro (Model 4) in SPSS to evaluate the direct and indirect effects among variables.

Result: The results show that consumer purchasing intention and green advertising are positively correlated. Results showed that customers' intentions to make green purchases are positively influenced by green advertising. Additional earlier studies verified that consumers' intentions to make green purchases are positively impacted by green advertising.

Conclusion: These results demonstrate how important well-designed green advertising is in changing consumers' perceptions of the environment and promoting sustainable buying practices, especially on social media. By expanding the theoretical application of Signaling Theory and the Stimulus-Organism-Response paradigm, this work contributes to the growing body of literature on green marketing communication. Additionally, it offers useful information to legislators who want to promote ecologically conscious consumer behavior in digital spaces and marketers who want to increase the effectiveness of their messages.

Key Words: green advertising, organic food, purchase intention, social media



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**Poster Presentations
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PP01 AB005

The Effect of Pull Factors on Travel Motivation: A Study among Foreign Tourists in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: The tourism industry significantly contributes to national economies by supporting income generation and development. Understanding the travel motivations of foreign tourists visiting Sri Lanka is essential to identifying the factors that attract and influence their travel decisions.

Objective: This study aims to examine the influence of pull factors, specifically natural beauty, cultural heritage, hospitality, and recreational opportunities, on the travel motivation of foreign tourists.

Methodology: A deductive, survey-based approach was adopted. A structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms collected data from 200 foreign tourists visiting major destinations in Sri Lanka, selected through simple random sampling. Reliability and validity were confirmed using Cronbach's alpha and content validity assessment. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted using SPSS to examine relationships between pull factors and travel motivation.

Results: Findings indicate that natural attractions, cultural heritage, hospitality, and recreational opportunities significantly influence travel motivation, with natural attractions such as beaches, mountains, and wildlife exerting the strongest effect. Sixty percent of respondents expressed willingness to revisit, and Ella was the most preferred destination, highlighting the importance of scenic and cultural resources in motivating travel.

Conclusion: Pull factors substantially shape travel motivation, with natural attractions being the most influential. Enhancing destination assets, improving hospitality, developing infrastructure, and promoting sustainable tourism can strengthen Sri Lanka's competitiveness. The study contributes evidence-based insights for destination management, marketing strategies, and long-term tourism planning.

Keywords: foreign tourists, pull factors, travel motivation

Influence of Social Media and Technology on Youth Buying Behavior in India – A Pavlovian Perspective

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Introduction: The rapid digitization of Indian society has significantly transformed consumer behavior, especially among the youth. Social media platforms and emerging technologies serve as powerful stimuli, shaping preferences and driving purchasing decisions. This study explores youth buying behavior in India through the lens of Pavlovian theory, focusing on how stimulus-response-reinforcement mechanisms lead to habit formation and altered consumption patterns. The growing penetration of internet access, digital consumer habits, and online advertising alongside disparities in education and regional differences between urban and rural India calls for a deeper understanding of these shifting behavioral patterns.

Objective: This study aims to investigate how social media and technology serve as stimuli influencing the buying behavior of Indian youth, and to analyze this behavior through the lens of the Pavlovian behavioral learning framework.

Methodology: The study employs a mixed-method research design, integrating quantitative surveys with semi-structured qualitative interviews to examine the impact of social media on consumer behavior. It includes over 500 respondents aged 18–30 from both urban and rural regions of India, segmented by gender, education level, and internet usage patterns. Data collection tools include structured questionnaires featuring Likert-scale items and focus group discussions, targeting key independent variables such as social media exposure, frequency of digital advertising, and educational background, along with behavioral dimensions like purchase behavior, brand recall, emotional triggers, and conditioned habitual responses.

Results: Aligned with Pavlovian behavioral theory, repeated exposure to social media advertisements and influencer-driven content on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp tends to act as a stimulus that conditions Indian youth to associate specific brands with positive emotions resulting in stronger brand recall and an increased likelihood of purchase.

Conclusion: The study reveals that India's digital transformation significantly influences youth consumer behavior. Social media and online advertising function as powerful stimuli that, through repeated exposure, condition young consumers to develop habitual purchasing patterns. Using Pavlovian theory, the findings demonstrate how digital marketing content triggers consistent stimulus-response cycles enhancing brand recall and reinforcing buying behavior over time.

Keywords: digital consumerism, pavlovian theory, stimulus-response mechanism, urban-rural divide, youth buying behavior

PP03 AB028

Packaging Strategies and Consumer Response in Ayurveda Sector: Evidence from Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Ayurveda, the ancient “Science of Life”, has been practiced for 5000 years and remains a trusted healthcare system. With rising global and local demand for Ayurveda products, packaging has become a crucial factor shaping consumer behavior. Beyond protection, it serves as a medium for branding, information, cultural identity and sustainability. Effective packaging must reflect traditional Ayurveda values while appealing to modern consumer expectations and sustainable design principles

Objective: This review explores how Ayurveda product packaging influences consumer buying behavior and identifies opportunities to enhance packaging practices within Sri Lankan context.

Methodology: A systemic qualitative literature review was conducted to ensure analytical rigor and transparency. Academic database including Google scholar, PubMed and Research Gate were searched for literature published between 2010 and 2024 using key words Ayurveda, Product packaging, consumer behavior, sustainability and branding. Peer reviewed journals, government publications and case studies focusing on Ayurveda or herbal product packaging and its effect on consumer behavior were included. Non English publications and irrelevant studies were excluded. Thematic synthesis was applied to identify major dimensions such as design, eco friendliness, material safety, labelling, convenience and smart technologies. Comparative insights were drawn between Sri Lankan and International Ayurveda packaging practices.

Results: Packaging strongly influences consumer trust, perception and purchase intention. Cultural relevance, aesthetic appeal and sustainability emerged as key determinants. International brands increasingly adopt eco-friendly and smart packaging, while Sri Lankan brands face constraints in innovation, cost and access to sustainable materials.

Conclusion: Ayurveda packaging should evolve into strategic communication and engagement tool. Balancing cultural authenticity with innovation and sustainability can strengthen competitiveness. Future research should focus on regional consumer preferences and the practical adoption of smart, eco-friendly packaging designs.

Keywords: ayurveda packaging, consumer behavior, smart packaging, sustainability

PP04 AB029

Review on Analysis of Factors Influence Customers' Purchase Intention towards Organic Cosmetic Care Products in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Cosmetic use dates back to ancient civilizations where natural ingredients were used for beauty and health benefits. With industrialization, synthetic cosmetics gained popularity but raised concerns over their harmful effects, leading to renewed consumer interest in organic alternatives. Organic cosmetics, made from naturally sourced ingredients free of harmful chemicals, are considered safer for both users and the environment.

Objective: The study aims to examine factors influencing the purchase intention of organic cosmetic care products, focusing on consumer attitudes, knowledge, health consciousness, social influence, and past experiences.

Methodology: This research is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour and Social Learning Theory to examine consumer behaviour. Moreover, many scholarly works are being referred for this research. This study reviews existing literature to analyze relationships among consumer attitudes, knowledge of organic cosmetics, perceived health benefits, social influence, and prior experiences. These relationships were used to develop a conceptual model explaining purchase intention.

Results: Findings indicate that consumer attitude is the most influential factor driving purchase intention, largely shaped by beliefs in product safety, natural composition, and environmental friendliness. Greater knowledge of organic ingredients and awareness of synthetic cosmetics' harmful effects build consumer trust and encourage purchasing. Health consciousness significantly motivates the preference for chemical-free options.

Conclusion: Purchase intention toward organic cosmetics is primarily driven by positive attitudes, knowledge, health awareness, social support, and favorable past experiences. The growing preference for organic products reflects increasing concern for personal well-being, effectiveness, and eco-friendliness. To expand the market, brands should focus on consumer education, product quality, and building lasting trust through positive consumer experiences.

Keywords: organic cosmetic products, perceived health benefits, purchase intention, social influence

PP05 AB030

Determinants of Purchase Intention and Strategies for Promoting Organic Greenhouse Products in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: The rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and growing concerns about food safety have intensified the demand for healthier alternatives. Organic greenhouse products (OGPs), cultivated without synthetic inputs under controlled conditions, are a promising option. Yet, their acceptance in Sri Lanka remains limited due to cultural, structural, and economic challenges.

Objective: This study examines the determinants of consumer purchase intention for OGPs in Sri Lanka, focusing on health concerns, awareness, price, cultural values, peer influence, and government commitment. It also proposes strategies to enhance consumer acceptance and strengthen market development.

Methodology: A quantitative design was employed using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. Data were gathered from 384 respondents in Galle, Matara, and Hambantota districts through stratified sampling. Statistical analyses examined relationships between six independent variables and purchase intention.

Results: Findings revealed that health concerns ($\beta = 0.421$, $p < 0.01$), consumer awareness ($\beta = 0.367$, $p < 0.05$), cultural values ($\beta = 0.298$, $p < 0.05$), and peer influence ($\beta = 0.284$, $p < 0.05$) positively influenced purchase intention. Barriers included high prices ($\beta = -0.312$, $p < 0.05$), weak trust in certification, and inadequate policy support. Urban and educated respondents reported higher intention than rural consumers.

Conclusion: The study demonstrates that purchase intention for OGPs can be strengthened through awareness programs, pricing strategies, certification reforms, and supportive government initiatives. Leveraging cultural values and peer influence is essential to building consumer trust. These findings imply that promoting OGPs can reduce NCD risks, enhance consumer health, and support sustainable agriculture in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: consumer behavior, health concerns, organic greenhouse products, purchase intention, sustainability

PP06 AB064

Comparative Analysis of UI/UX Impact on Mobile Banking and E-commerce Apps among Different Generations in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Although there is a significant increase in the mobile platform adaptation by both young and old age groups, there is little research done on the effects of generational differences on user experience in Sri Lanka.

Objectives: The research focused on examining the differences in user interface and user experience preferences among Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z, in order to provide insights for designing more inclusive and user-centered digital products.

Methodology: The understanding of user preferences was achieved in a mixed methods approach based on surveys, interviews, and focus groups. To make sure that it was clear and reliable, a pilot test was carried out. The acquired evidence was cleaned and processed by means of statistical and thematic procedures. The evaluation of usability was also performed on chosen banking applications and e-commerce applications using heuristic evaluation.

Results: The results show that the generation X consumers place importance on the easy to use interface, reliability, and security with the use of biometrics, user-friendly navigation and minimalistic design. Millennials are fast in communications, user-friendly, and secure purchases, and tend to choose convenience and expediency. Generation Z favors personalized, visually engaging, and responsive experiences that prioritize aesthetics and performance.

Conclusion: The results are used to develop the mobile solutions supporting the needs and patterns of each generation to streamline digital experience, ensuring the digital services and solutions are more convenient, interactive, and important to people in the expanding digital financial services and e-commerce environment of Sri Lanka

Keywords: cross-generational, user experience, user interface, mobile banking, e-commerce

PP07 AB065

Effect of Social Media Usage on Effective Adaptations to Promotions in Agricultural Marketing: Study on Green Chili Cultivators in North Western Province, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Social media has become a vital instrument in the changing field of agricultural marketing for smallholder farmers looking to improve consumer connection, market access, and promotional efficacy. This study is based on Sri Lanka's North Western Province, which makes up a significant portion of the nation's green chili production. The research focuses on major factors related to technology access, engagement with buyers, content sharing, usage frequency and promotional effectiveness.

Objectives: This study aimed to study the effect of the extent of social media usage for adaptations to promotions in agricultural marketing.

Methodology: A structured questionnaire was given to a sample of 320 green chili farmers selected through stratified random sampling as part of a quantitative research method. Data was analyzed using SPSS software, incorporating descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Results: Findings revealed that social media usage positively influences marketing performance, particularly through higher sales turnover, increased customer reach, and more frequent repeat orders. Among the predictors, the frequency of social media usage showed the strongest positive effect on effective promotional adaptations ($\beta = 0.423$, $p < 0.05$), while access to technology and engagement with buyers also made meaningful contributions.

Conclusion: The study concludes that social media serves as a powerful enabler for smallholder farmers to overcome traditional market barriers, improve branding, and strengthen direct communication with consumers. However, challenges such as limited digital literacy and internet access remain critical barriers. Consistent with similar studies in South Asia, this research highlights the need for digital literacy training, better ICT infrastructure and guidance on content strategy to help farmers maximize the benefits of social media in agricultural marketing.

Keywords: adaptation to promotions, agricultural marketing, green chili cultivators, social media usage

PP08 AB110

Factors influencing Generation Z Website Behavioral Intention to use Chatbot for Customer Service in the Fashion Industry with special reference to Colombo District Sri Lanka

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Introduction: The rapid digitalization of the clothing retail sector has increased the adoption of AI-powered chatbots to enhance customer service efficiency. However, in Sri Lanka, limited research has examined how Generation Z consumers digital natives and major e-commerce users perceive and intend to use chatbots. Existing studies mostly focus on Western or regional markets, leaving an empirical gap regarding localized behavioral drivers in developing economies.

Objective: This study aims to identify the factors influencing Generation Z's behavioral intention to use chatbots for customer service in Sri Lanka's clothing sector.

Methodology: A quantitative research design was adopted using a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected from 403 Generation Z respondents in the Colombo District via an online questionnaire. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS 21.0, including reliability, correlation, and multiple regression tests. Model assumptions such as linearity, multicollinearity, and normality were verified before regression.

Results: The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 116.415$, $p < 0.001$) with an Adjusted R^2 of 0.365, indicating that 36.5% of the variance in behavioral intention was explained by the predictors. Perceived Ease of Use ($\beta = 0.329$, $p < 0.001$) and Trust ($\beta = 0.383$, $p < 0.001$) significantly influenced behavioral intention, while Perceived Usefulness was excluded due to multicollinearity ($r = 1.000$). Effect size interpretation suggests a moderate model fit.

Conclusion: The study reveals a practical and empirical gap between organizational readiness to deploy chatbots and consumer willingness to engage. Strengthening interface simplicity and data transparency is vital for effective AI integration in Sri Lanka's clothing e-commerce sector.

Keywords: behavioral intention, chatbots, customer service, generation z

PP09 AB123

Visual Merchandising on Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior of Electronic Retail Customers in Sri Lanka

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Introduction: In Sri Lanka's competitive retail landscape, consumer behavior is shifting rapidly, with visual merchandising emerging as a key marketing strategy. Particularly in the electronics sector where product differentiation is minimal, retailers increasingly leverage visual elements such as window displays, store layouts, and signage to influence impulse purchasing. Despite its global recognition, the influence of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behavior remains underexplored in the Sri Lankan electronics retail context.

Objective: To examine the impact of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behavior in the electronic item's outlets in Sri Lanka.

Methodology: In the deductive method approach, primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire based on five predictors related to visual merchandising such as window display, merchandising display, store layout/ organization, signage/graphics and shelf display on consumer impulse buying behavior as the outcome of the study. A sample of 384 consumers from electronic items outlets was selected using convenience sampling. The collected data were subjected to correlation and regression analyses to empirically examine the strength and significance of the relationships between visual merchandising dimensions and consumer impulse buying behavior.

Results: The collected data were subjected to correlation and regression analyses to empirically assess not only the strength and significance of the relationships but also the magnitude of the impact of each visual merchandising dimension on consumer impulse buying behavior. The regression model was employed to determine how variations in window displays, merchandising displays, store layout, signage, and shelf displays influence changes in consumers' impulse purchasing tendencies. Among them, merchandising display and store layout had the strongest influence.

Conclusion: The regression analysis confirmed that all five dimensions which are window display, merchandising display, store layout and organization, signage/graphics, and shelf display significantly influence consumers' unplanned purchasing decisions, with merchandising display and store layout exerting the strongest effects. These findings indicate that well-planned visual merchandising strategies can effectively stimulate customers' emotional responses and encourage spontaneous purchases. Therefore, retailers should pay careful attention to designing appealing displays, optimizing store layouts, and ensuring clear signage to enhance consumers' impulse buying tendencies and overall in-store experience.

Keywords: consumer behavior, impulse buying, merchandising display, store layout, visual merchandising,

PP10 AB158

Impact of Factors on Consumer Purchase Intention Towards Organic Vegetables - A Study of Generation Z in Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: This research examines the elements affecting the purchase intention of Generation Z consumers regarding organic vegetables in the Colombo District, Sri Lanka. Due to increasing worries regarding health, environmental sustainability, and food safety, the intake of organic products has become globally important. However, limited research exists on how these factors shape Gen Z's purchase decisions within developing nations.

Objective: To examine the Impact of Factors on Consumer Purchase Intention Towards Organic Vegetables, A Study of Generation Z In Colombo District, Sri Lanka

Methodology: A quantitative research framework was utilized within a positivist philosophy, using a deductive method grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior. Data were gathered from 384 Generation Z participants via a structured online survey employing a five-point Likert scale. The research analyzed six independent factors Consumer Trust, Health Consciousness, Food Safety Concern, Price Sensitivity, Perceived Quality, and Consumer Knowledge in Impact to the dependent variable, Purchase Intention. Data were examined with SPSS 27, utilizing descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analyses to evaluate six hypotheses

Results: The findings indicated that Trust, Health Consciousness, Food Safety Concern, Perceived Quality, and Consumer Knowledge have a significant positive effect on purchase intention, While Price Sensitivity exhibits a notable negative influence Health Consciousness and Perceived Quality emerged as the strongest predictors.

Conclusion: The research indicates that Generation Z's intention to buy organic vegetables is mainly influenced by trust, perceived quality, and health awareness, while price continues to be a significant obstacle. The results offer important perspectives for marketers, producers, and policymakers to encourage organic consumption and create effective marketing strategies aimed at health- and sustainability-aware youth in Sri Lanka

Keywords: consumer trust, food safety concern, health consciousness, perceived quality, price sensitivity.

PP11 AB201

The Impact of the White Ocean Strategy on Customer Engagement in the Hotel Industry with Reference to Central Province of Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Customer engagement is a crucial factor in determining organizational success, especially in hotels. Hotels particularly face challenges in maintaining long-term relationships with customers. Therefore, they are mainly focusing on implementing the White Ocean Strategy (WOS) to attract customers. WOS refers to a business strategy concept that focuses on developing value ethically, sustainably, and abundantly for all stakeholders, instead of competing in saturated markets. Compared to the Red Ocean strategy and the Blue Ocean strategy, WOS emphasises stakeholder harmony and inclusivity. By connecting ethical practices and sustainability, it offers an effective way for hotels to strengthen their relationships with customers. In comparison to the Red Ocean strategy (which emphasises competition) and the Blue Ocean strategy (which emphasises innovation), the White Ocean strategy demonstrates a new dimension by integrating ethical innovation and sustainability to benefit stakeholders.

Objectives: This study aims to investigate the impact of the White Ocean Strategy (WOS) on customer engagement in hotels in the Central Province of Sri Lanka.

Methodology: The study adopted a quantitative approach. The population included hotel customers in the Central Province. Since the total population is unknown; a sample size here is 384 respondents was used. Data were gathered from hotel customers to measure their views on WOS and engagement behaviors. Data collection was conducted both physically and online. The dependent variable, customer engagement was examined in terms of revisits, word of mouth, and participation. To measure the strength and direction of the connection between WOS and customer engagement, correlation and regression analyses were used as statistical tools.

Results: The findings indicate a positive impact between WOS and all dimensions of customer engagement including willingness to revisit, recommend, and participate in hotel activities. These indicate that if customers perceive hotels as ethical and socially responsible, they are likely to engage, recommend, and maintain long-term relationships with the hotel.

Conclusion: The study contributes theoretically by exploring the application of WOS in a hotel context and demonstrating the importance of customer engagement. For practitioners, the findings emphasis that investing in ethical and sustainable practices can transform customer engagement into a long-term competitive advantage.

Keywords: central province, customer engagement, hotel industry, white ocean strategy

PP12 AB209

Language and Communication Barriers in Tourism: Service Providers' Preparedness for Chinese Tourists in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Chinese tourists are an increasingly important market for Sri Lanka, particularly in heritage destinations such as Anuradhapura. Their limited English proficiency poses communication challenges for service providers, affecting service quality, tourist satisfaction, and engagement. Previous studies have highlighted general language barriers in tourism, but the preparedness of service providers in Sri Lanka remains underexplored.

Objective: This study explored the language and communication barriers faced by service providers when interacting with Chinese tourists and identify strategies and recommendations to improve service delivery.

Methodology: A qualitative approach was adopted using semi-structured interviews with 15 service providers in Anuradhapura, including hotel staff, restaurant workers, tour operators, museum personnel, heritage guides, information center officers, and transport providers. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed through content analysis, involving open coding, and axial coding to identify recurring patterns and insights.

Results: The analysis highlighted pervasive language barriers affecting check-in, food ordering, payments, heritage interpretation, and transport guidance. Service providers relied on informal strategies to overcome these challenges, such as gestures, translation apps, visual aids, and collaboration with group leaders. There was a clear lack of institutional preparedness, including limited bilingual resources, absence of Mandarin-speaking staff, and no formal training programs. These communication difficulties negatively influenced tourist satisfaction, leading to frustration, service errors, missed cultural experiences, and reduced engagement. Participants emphasized the importance of practical solutions, including basic Mandarin training for staff, bilingual menus and signage, technology-assisted communication, and support from tourism authorities.

Conclusion: Service providers in Anuradhapura face significant communication challenges when serving Chinese tourists. Current coping strategies are informal and insufficient. Implementing structured language training, bilingual resources, technology use, and policy support is essential to improve service quality, enhance tourist satisfaction, and strengthen Sri Lanka's position as a competitive heritage tourism destination.

Keywords: Chinese tourists, communication barriers, coping strategies, heritage tourism, service providers

PP13 AB211

Assessing the Role of Leisure Activities in Enhancing Guest Experience in Boutique Hotels: A Study of Ella, Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Leisure activities in boutique hotels play a significant role in shaping guest satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty. While the hospitality sector in Sri Lanka has grown rapidly, the specific contribution of leisure activities in enhancing guest experiences in boutique hotels remains underexplored, particularly in emerging tourist destinations such as Ella.

Objectives: This study aimed to explore how leisure activities influence guest experience in boutique hotels in Ella, Sri Lanka.

Methodology: A qualitative research design was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 16 participants, including six hotel guests, four hotel staff, four local community members, and two industry experts. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns, insights, and suggestions regarding leisure activities and their impact on guest experience.

Results: Thematic analysis revealed six main themes. Cultural immersion through traditional arts, culinary experiences, and cultural performances allowed guests to connect deeply with local heritage. Wellness and relaxation activities, such as yoga and spa services, enhanced mental and physical well-being. Adventure and experiential activities, including trekking and interactive challenges, provided excitement and novelty, creating memorable experiences. Personalized guest engagement through customized packages and interactive experiences strengthened emotional connections and encouraged repeat visits. Community and economic integration, achieved by collaborating with local guides, artisans, and sustainable practices, benefited both guests and the local community. Innovation and novelty through unique and seasonal experiences kept guests engaged and promoted continuous interest in boutique hotel offerings.

Conclusion: Well-designed leisure activities in boutique hotels in Ella enhance guest satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty while promoting cultural exchange and supporting the local community. Boutique hotels can further improve guest experiences by offering personalized activity packages, integrating local culture and wellness programs, and regularly introducing innovative and adventure-based experiences. Collaborating with local artisans and guides ensures authenticity and sustainable economic benefits. Future research could quantify guest satisfaction and examine the broader economic impact of leisure activities on the destination.

Keywords: boutique hotels, guest experience, leisure activities

PP14 AB220

Impact of Content Marketing on Camping Destination Choice with relevance to Uva Province of Sri Lanka

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Introduction: Digital media platforms and social media strategies have become powerful tools for influencing consumer behavior in tourism. Among these, content marketing plays a vital role in shaping travelers' perceptions and destination preferences. However, its influence on camping destination choice in Sri Lanka remains underexplored, particularly in the Uva Province, which is emerging as a popular region for adventure and eco-based tourism.

Objectives: This study aims to examine the impact of content marketing on consumers' camping destination choice in the Uva Province of Sri Lanka, focusing on the mediating roles of destination image and online trust.

Methodology: A quantitative cross - sectional design was adopted. The target population consisted of customers of registered camping gear rental businesses who visited camping destinations in Uva province between 2023 and 2025. Using simple random sampling, 220 respondents were selected. Data were collected through a self - administered questionnaire covering demographics, content marketing, camping destination choice, destination image, and online trust. Analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via IBM SPSS 25 and SmartPLS 3.

Results: The analysis using PLS-SEM revealed that content marketing significantly influenced both camping destination choice ($\beta = 0.261$, $p < 0.001$) and destination image ($\beta = 0.811$, $p < 0.001$). Destination image also had a strong positive impact on destination choice ($\beta = 0.654$, $p < 0.001$) and mediated the relationship between content marketing and camping destination choice ($\beta = 0.531$, $p < 0.001$). Although content marketing positively affected online trust ($\beta = 0.676$, $p < 0.001$), online trust neither significantly influenced destination choice ($p = 0.371$) nor mediated the relationship ($p = 0.383$). These findings confirm that destination image plays a key mediating role, while online trust remains insignificant in shaping camping destination decision in this context.

Conclusion: The study demonstrates that content marketing, particularly when combined with a strong destination image, effectively influences camping destination choice in the Uva Province. Camping site owners, gear rental businesses, and travel content creators are encouraged to use high-quality blogs, videos, and social media posts to highlight the unique experiences and attractions of their destinations. Emphasizing an appealing destination image through authentic content and visitor testimonials can enhance consumer engagement and visitation. Maintaining transparency and credibility online, even though online trust was not a significant mediator, can further strengthen consumer confidence and promote positive word-of-mouth.

Keywords: camping destination choice, content marketing, destination image, online trust, tourism marketing



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