



**8th Interdisciplinary Conference of Management
Researchers (ICMR 2023)**

*Moving Beyond Conventional Wisdom for an
Uncontrived Economy*

ABSTRACTS

Faculty of Management Studies
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PREFACE

Recognizing the importance of moving beyond conventional wisdom for an uncontrived economy, the 8th Interdisciplinary Conference of Management Researchers (ICMR 2023) was organized by the Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. Two eminent Professors in Management related fields namely, Prof. Nick Ashill and Prof. N. Jayantha Dewasiri attended the conference as keynote speakers to share their insights under the theme of “Moving beyond conventional wisdom for an uncontrived economy”. More than thirty peer-reviewed research papers were presented under six different tracks namely, Finance I, Finance II, General Management, Human Resources Management, Tourism and EcoBusiness Management and Marketing. This conference provided a great opportunity for the researchers, professionals, policymakers, and undergraduates to discuss and share their research findings relating to key global issues in the field of management while providing them with a platform to develop a global network in their disciplines.

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



I am delighted to welcome you to the 8th Interdisciplinary Conference of Management Researchers (ICMR) - from 19th to 20th December 2023 at the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka under the theme of “Moving beyond conventional wisdom for an uncontrived economy.”

Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka is an emerging research university that promotes and facilitates research activities extensively among its staff and students. The initiation of the ICMR in 2016 by the Faculty of Management Studies has played a pivotal role in advancing these research endeavors.

I give my best wishes to all delegates, the Dean of the Faculty of Management Studies, and the organizing committee to make this event a grand success. I admire their commitment and congratulate them on the success of the conference.

I would appreciate all the sponsors for their efforts in encouraging academic research through their sponsorships.

Prof. (Dr.) M. Sunil Shantha
Vice-Chancellor
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



I am delighted to send this message regarding the 8th Interdisciplinary Conference of Management Researchers (8th ICMR) organized by the Research and Publication Unit, Faculty of Management Studies (FMS) of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. The conference is being held in partnership with Emerald Publishing and focuses on the theme of "Moving Beyond Conventional Wisdom for an Uncontrived Economy." This theme is both timely and crucial for Sri Lanka and the world as a whole, especially in the post-pandemic era, where we have all faced challenges in terms of resilience and economic development. Sri Lanka, in particular, finds itself in a more vulnerable situation due to the prevailing economic and political crisis. The conference will provide an excellent platform for researchers, academicians, practitioners, industrialists, and policymakers to share ideas, collaborate, and cooperate in the fields of Management and Social Sciences. The Faculty of Management Studies has been accredited with an "A" grade by the Quality Assurance Council of the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka for all its degree programmes.

As a state university that receives public funds, we are committed to maintaining academic excellence with the motto "Nurturing the Paragon of Virtues". Our faculty is dedicated to fostering a culture of excellent teaching and research and providing high-quality education in a serene and picturesque environment for our students and other stakeholders. We have identified our academic responsibilities by organizing the 8th ICMR, which aims to create a global platform for researchers from different fields to research and disseminate solutions to emerging issues and challenges.

I would like to extend a warm welcome and express my gratitude to all of our keynote speakers, distinguished guests, and academics participating virtually. Your contributions are highly valued and appreciated. I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the researchers who have presented their excellent studies and valuable findings on this research platform. Furthermore, I would like to extend my deep appreciation to the conference chair, secretary, co-chairs, and other members of the organizing committee for their unwavering commitment to ensuring the success of this conference.

Prof. (Dr.) Athula Gnanapala
Dean- Faculty of Management Studies
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR: ICMR 2023



In an era characterized by global interconnectedness and knowledge-driven progress, research conferences have emerged as pivotal events for scholars, scientists, and experts to exchange ideas, collaborate on groundbreaking studies, and push the boundaries of human knowledge. The Interdisciplinary Conference of Management Researchers (ICMR), now in its 8th successful year, hosted by the Faculty of Management Studies at Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, stands as a prominent platform for intellectual discourse and innovation. This conference convenes esteemed researchers, scholars, and practitioners from around the world, fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and paving the way for significant advancements in the realm of management studies. The 8th ICMR, under the theme "Moving Beyond Conventional Wisdom for an Uncontrived Economy," encourages researchers and participants to explore innovative and unconventional ideas in the field of economics and management. It suggests a departure from traditional economic thinking and practices in favor of more organic and authentic approaches to shaping economic systems. The emphasis is on promoting creativity, exploration, and a departure from established norms to foster a more dynamic and uncontrived economic environment. Therefore, it delves into a diverse range of management-related topics, including Finance, Banking & Insurance, Business Management, Creativity & Innovation Management, Eco-business Management, Economics, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management, Human Resource Management, Change Management, International Business and Global Sustainable Practices, Marketing Management, Supply Chain Management, and Tourism & Hospitality Management. This interdisciplinary conference will serve as a platform for fostering collaboration and encouraging the cross-pollination of ideas among scholars and practitioners. By transcending disciplinary boundaries, the Faculty of Management Studies at Sabaragamuwa University aims to set an example for future conferences, inspiring researchers worldwide to embrace interdisciplinary approaches in their pursuit of cutting-edge knowledge in the field of management.

Prof. (Dr.) T.U.I. Peiris
Conference Chair - 8th ICMR
Professor in Finance
Faculty of Management Studies
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE SECRETARY: ICMR 2023



On behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to welcome you to the 8th ICMR 2023 conference. This important academic conference has been held by the Faculty of Management Studies for the past seven years, and this year, we have come together to commemorate our eighth anniversary. It is a prestigious conference of scholars, researchers, and business leaders that could result in the development of new paradigms and has a significant influence on numerous economic sectors. Thank you for your response and the contributions, which span all significant areas of management and exploitation. The conference proceedings and the 8th ICMR 2023 Abstract Book will contain all papers submitted by the deadline.

I would like to thank every author for their amazing work, and the members of the scientific committee in particular for their skillful assessment of the many entries. A number of invited sessions have been planned to expand your knowledge, and on 20th December 2023, a special session on "Industrial forum" and "structural equation modeling" will take place. We are making every effort to ensure that your conference stay at Sabaragamuwa University in Belihuloya, Sri Lanka, is one of the most memorable and that you return from the 8th ICMR 2023 with a wealth of knowledge and as a proud presenter of research. I am delighted to see you, your loved ones, and your friends here once more. I hope you enjoy yourself to the fullest.

I am looking forward to hearing our distinguished keynote speakers: Professor Nick Ashill, School of Marketing and International Business, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, and Prof. Dewasiri N. Jayantha, a professor attached to the Department of Accountancy and Finance, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. Likewise, I want to extend greetings and gratitude to all invited chairs for their extraordinary preparation of the invited sessions, the adversary committee and other committee members in the 8th ICMR 2023. I am excited to see you at the 8th ICMR in 2023.

Dr. L.D. Kalyani
Conference Secretary - 8th ICMR
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Management Studies
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

KEYNOTE SPEECH OF PROFESSOR NICK ASHILL



I am delighted to deliver this keynote address at the 8th Interdisciplinary Conference of Management Researchers (ICMR) at the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. In our world today, we stand on the precipice of unpredictable economic landscapes. The uncontrived economy challenges our traditional notions of stability and demands a new approach—one rooted in resilience. Today, I invite you on a journey to explore the essence of resilience and the indispensable role it plays in navigating the uncertainties of our times. The title of my keynote is “Absorb, Adapt and Transform: Developing Resilience Capabilities in an Uncontrived Economy”.

Imagine a world where change is the only constant, where economic shifts are swift and unforeseeable. This is the world we find ourselves in—an uncontrived economy that demands adaptability and fortitude. Yet, within this turmoil lies an opportunity to thrive, not just survive. Since the millennium, economies have faced disruptions and crises of increasing frequency and severity. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the conflict between Israel and Hamas have precipitated a humanitarian catastrophe with far-reaching social and economic consequences. The economic repercussions of rising costs of energy and food are also intensifying across the globe, with many economies still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, we are witnessing profound technological disruption driven by artificial intelligence and machine learning. All these disruptions are taking place against the backdrop of an ever-present climate crisis, whose effective mitigation will require a global transition to a low-carbon economy. The recent decisions taken at the COP28 summit in Dubai suggest the human displacement and economic costs associated with climate change will become disruptors of historic proportions in their own right.

The impact of each of these disruptions cannot be studied in isolation. We live in an era which is increasingly defined by the interplay of many disruptions with their origins and consequences. So, how should organizations and institutions react and respond to these disruptions? Resilience describes an ability to deal with adversity, withstand shocks, and continuously adapt and accelerate as disruptions and crises arise over time (Raetz et al., 2022). Continuously adapting and accelerating as disruptions occur is very important and highlights that recovery alone is not an adequate goal. Truly resilient organizations not only bounce back but also thrive.

McKinsey research shows that organizations evaluated as more resilient generated greater shareholder value than less resilient peers across the entire life cycle of the major economic shocks of the past two decades (Brende and Sternfels, 2022). Their study of the performance of 1500 global companies during the financial crisis of 2008-2010 revealed that approximately 20 percent of organizations across numerous industry sectors emerged from the downturn ahead of the rest. But more importantly, these organizations converted this small advantage into clearly superior market and financial performance against their peers for the next 10 years. Research evidence does not support the argument that superior performance resulted from long entrenched advantages. The McKinsey research showed that the resilient organizations had not been market leaders before the disruption, and most did not have preexisting businesses that the disruption advantaged. What the 20 percent did have was an ability to react rapidly, early, and decisively to the disruption (Brende and Sternfels, 2022). Through the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, resilient organizations also performed better than non-resilient organizations. Another McKinsey study reported by Brende and Sternfels (2022) found that resilient organizations generated a 10 percent higher shareholder return during the economic downturn of Q4 2019 to Q2 2020 and during the period of economic recovery (Q2 2020–Q3 2021), the differential accelerated to a staggering 50 percent. These findings suggest that resilient organizations could adapt more flexibly in the economic slump and could pivot more rapidly to meet the resurgence in demand post pandemic.

Resilience can be studied at different levels of analysis (Galy et al., 2023). In the management and psychology literature, the concept of resilience at the organizational level has been studied in a wide variety of fields, including organizational psychology (Powley, 2009), supply chain management (Sheffi and Rice, 2005), strategic management (Annarelli and Nonino, 2016), and services marketing (Bolton, 2020; Sok et al., 2021). In all these fields, resilience is related to the capability and ability of an organization and the individual to return to a stable state (which may be a new state of normality) after a disruption. According to dynamic capability theory, organizations need to respond quickly to turbulence and discontinuities to sustain sources of competitive advantage (Teece et al., 1997). The reconfiguration and/or transformation of competencies is a critical capability for organizational adaptation during environmental change.

At the individual level, resilience refers to an individual's ability to adapt effectively and restore equilibrium in the face of severe adversity (Cooke et al., 2019; Galy et al., 2023; Raetze et al., 2021). For example, it is widely acknowledged that frontline employees (FLEs) or service workers play a critical

role in delivering exceptional service and customer retention (Jha et al., 2017). However, they experience external and internal pressures daily, including discerning customers' service excellence demands such as customer incivility (Al-Hawari et al., 2020) and pressures from management, including performance requirements and uncivil supervision (Han, Bonn and Cho, 2016). Not surprisingly, FLEs often suffer from work-related stress. According to the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989), resilience represents a fundamental psychological resource that can facilitate an individual's ability to overcome work related challenges and perform at a higher level (Good et al., 2023). The resources, individual, relational and organizational, available to FLEs represent the primary building blocks of resilience.

How can organizations arrive at a resilient stance to better anticipate change, withstand disruptions, and accelerate into the next reality? Shepherd and Williams (2023) suggest that organizational resilience is grounded in three key actions: prepare, perceive, and propel. Preparing is about investing ahead of disruptions to reduce the magnitude and speed of the impact. This means designing flexibility in products and processes, investing in digital transformation, building buffers, and strengthening supply chain networks. Perceiving is about detecting a disruption quickly and working out an appropriate response. Propelling characterizes the ability to move quickly, ensuring an effective response early in the disruption and pivoting to accelerate out of the disruption faster than other peer organizations. To summarize, organizational resilience is essential for long-term success in an uncontrived economy. Those organizations that can adapt and transform rapidly in the face of uncertainty and change will become market leaders. It is imperative that organizations support agile concepts, empower their teams, encourage adaptive leaders, and invest in talent and corporate culture to build resilience capabilities.

Prof. Nick Ashill
Professor in Marketing
Victoria University of Wellington
New Zealand

KEYNOTE SPEECH OF PROFESSOR N. JAYANTHA DEWASIRI



It is honoured to address you as the keynote speaker at the 8th Interdisciplinary Conference of Management Researchers (ICMR 2023), hosted by the Faculty of Management Studies at Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. The robust response from domestic and international submissions to the call for papers attests to the enthusiasm surrounding this conference's theme. Today, I am delighted to engage with you on a critical topic that resonates with the conference's theme: "Moving Beyond Conventional Wisdom in Management Research through Innovations."

Conventional wisdom, derived from past experiences or prevalent opinions, often shapes our understanding of management research. However, challenging these norms is paramount for progress. For instance, while some argue that paradigmatic differences hinder mixing research methods, pragmatists believe in an overarching paradigm, enabling innovative approaches in management-related research. Hence, it is still possible to make innovations in management-related research challenging traditional wisdom. Innovations in management research involve several key steps, including staying up-to-date with the latest research. There are several ways to make innovations in management-related research, some of which include:

- Collaborate with experts from other fields: Management-related research often involves a range of disciplines, from psychology and neuroscience to sociology and management. Collaborating with experts from different fields can help to generate new insights and approaches to studying management behaviour and cognition.
- Use new research methods and technologies: Most management-related issues are abstract concepts, making them difficult to define and study. Hence, it is suggested that further research methods and technologies, such as triangulation, design thinking, AI integration, and longitudinal studies, be applied as they provide different ways to investigate a particular problem in management-related research. This can involve using new data analysis techniques, experimenting with new study designs, or new technologies such as virtual reality or brain imaging. Technology catalyses advancing research methodologies, enabling more profound insights and comprehensive analysis.

- Focus on diversity and inclusivity: Management-related research should strive to be inclusive and representative of diverse populations. It means considering race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic status in research design and analysis. By taking an inclusive approach, researchers can generate new insights into how human behaviour and cognition vary across different populations.

- Prioritize ethical considerations: Management-related research can significantly impact people's lives, so it's essential to prioritize ethical considerations in all aspects of the research process. This includes obtaining informed consent from study participants, ensuring participant safety and privacy, and avoiding research practices that could harm or exploit vulnerable populations.

Overall, making innovations in management-related research requires a combination of curiosity, creativity, and attention to detail, as well as a commitment to staying current with the latest research and using innovative approaches and technologies to tackle complex questions. I urge you to embrace innovation in your research endeavours, challenging the status quo and striving for groundbreaking discoveries.

Last, I congratulate all the paper presenters and the conference team for a triumphant accomplishment. The delegates will undoubtedly keep fond recollections of the conference with them.

Warm regards,

Prof. N. Jayantha Dewasiri
Professor in Finance
Faculty of Management Studies
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

Table of Contents

PREFACE.....	iii
EDITORIAL BOARD.....	iv
LIST OF REVIEWERS.....	v
CONFERENCE COMMITTEE	vii
ADVISORY BOARD.....	viii
MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR.....	ix
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN.....	x
MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR: ICMR 2023.....	xi
MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE SECRETARY: ICMR 2023	xii
KEYNOTE SPEECH OF PROFESSOR NICK ASHILL.....	xiii
KEYNOTE SPEECH OF PROFESSOR N. JAYANTHA DEWASIRI.....	xvi
FINANCE I.....	1
IMPACT OF INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF LISTED COMPANIES IN SRI LANKA.....	2
<i>Karunaratna, T.M.S.^{1*} and Nuskiya, M.N.F.².....</i>	<i>2</i>
IMPACT OF DIVIDEND POLICY ON FIRM PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM SRI LANKAN LISTED COMPANIES.....	3
<i>Tharsika, K.^{1*} and Thaneshan, G.².....</i>	<i>3</i>
EFFECT OF STRUCTURAL BREAKS ON STOCK MARKET PERFORMANCE DURING COVID - 19 PERIOD IN SRI LANKA	4
<i>Walakumbura, S.H.M.L. ^{1*}, Weerasinghe, W.M.S.P.² and Peiris, T.U.I. ³.....</i>	<i>4</i>
APPLICABILITY OF GEOMETRIC BROWNIAN MOTION AND GEOMETRIC FRACTIONAL BROWNIAN MOTION TO FORECAST SHARE PRICES OF TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES SECTOR IN SRI LANKA.....	5
<i>Athukorala, A.K.K.K.^{1*} and Dissanayake, A.R.².....</i>	<i>5</i>
SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS OF RISK-FREE INTEREST RATE TO OPTIMIZE PORTFOLIO GAIN WITH REFERENCE TO COLOMBO STOCK EXCHANGE.....	6
<i>Amarasinghe, A.P.G.T.S.^{1*}, Ranasinghe, L.P.² and Miuran Dencil, J.A.D.³.....</i>	<i>6</i>
EFFECT OF POLICY CONVERGENCE ON THE TRADE POTENTIAL OF SOUTH ASIA.....	7
<i>Meedum, K. P. D.¹ and Peiris, T.U.I.^{2*}.....</i>	<i>7</i>

MODELLING AND FORECASTING THE SEASONAL VARIATIONS OF APPAREL EXPORTS IN SRI LANKA WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC	8
<i>Upeksha, P.G.S.^{1*}, Jayasundara, D.R.T.², and Mathugama, S.C.³.....</i>	<i>8</i>
FINANCE II	9
IMPACT OF FINANCIAL LITERACY ON FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING OF MICRO SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSME) DURING CRISIS.....	10
<i>Kalaipriya, K.....</i>	<i>10</i>
STOCK RETURNS AND VOLATILITY CROSS-SPILOVER EFFECT BETWEEN SRI LANKA AND ASIAN STOCK MARKETS.....	11
<i>Balasuriya, B.M.K.S.^{1*} and Anuradha, P.A.N.S.A.².....</i>	<i>11</i>
A BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND TAXATION RESEARCH INTERPLAY.....	12
<i>Jeewanthi, H.A.C.....</i>	<i>12</i>
IMPACT OF INTANGIBLE ASSETS AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ANNOUNCEMENTS ON SHAREHOLDERS' WEALTH: EVIDENCE FROM TECHNOLOGY-BASED COMPANIES IN AMERICA	13
<i>Dushyanthi, P.K.T.^{1*} and Dayarathne, D.A.I.¹.....</i>	<i>13</i>
FACTORS AFFECTING MILLENNIAL'S LOYALTY TOWARDS VIRTUAL BANKING: EVIDENCE FROM A STATE UNIVERSITY IN SRI LANKA.....	14
<i>Navodya, D.M.R.^{1*} and Amarasinghe, A.A.M.D.².....</i>	<i>14</i>
AN EVALUATION OF THE UNITED STATES' TRADE BALANCE WITH SELECTED TWO COUNTRIES INCLUDING A DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE ...	15
<i>Visaahan, U.....</i>	<i>15</i>
THE EFFECT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.....	16
<i>Kulasinghe, D.H.D.S.^{1*} and Wijerathna, W.A.I.D.².....</i>	<i>16</i>
GENERAL MANAGEMENT	17
BEHAVIORAL IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SRI LANKA	18
<i>Senevirathna, M.R.N.T.^{1*}, Senarath, T.U.S.², and Manorathne, M.L.I.³.....</i>	<i>18</i>

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION OF THE UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES ON E-LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A STUDY RELATED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA	19
<i>Silva, U.K.I.U.^{1*}, Mahalekamge, W.G.S.² and Shalini, B.H.³.....</i>	<i>19</i>
THE CHALLENGES CONFRONTING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE POST-COVID ERA OF SRI LANKA.....	20
<i>Kappettiya Arachchige, D.K.D.^{1*} Fahim, F.R.² Priyadarshani, G.D.I.³ Dunuwila V.R.⁴ and Kalansuriya, N.⁵.....</i>	<i>20</i>
UNVEILING THE DYNAMIC NEXUS BETWEEN ROLE OF LEADER AND CREATING ORGANIZATION CULTURE FOR SOCIALIZING TO EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN D-SIBS IN SRI LANKA.....	21
<i>Rathnayake, H.D.^{1*} and Herath, D.².....</i>	<i>21</i>
A STUDY ON THE POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES FOR CYCLING AMONG DAILY COMMUTERS IN COLOMBO DISTRICT, SRI LANKA: A WAY FORWARD OF THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN SRI LANKA.....	22
<i>Ranawake, J.^{1*}, Siriwardena, S.².....</i>	<i>22</i>
“THE CATALYSTS OF CHOICE”: FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF SPECIALIZATION AREAS BY MANAGEMENT UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA, SRI LANKA	23
<i>Bandara, G.R.D.C.D.^{1*}, Krithika, L.², Nisansala, M.R.³, Premachandran, Y.B.⁴ and Sukirthan, T.⁵.....</i>	<i>23</i>
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.....	24
THE IMPACT OF WORK ENVIRONMENT ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG MARRIED FEMALE NURSES AT GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS IN SRI LANKA	25
<i>Sellahewa, W.N.^{1*} and Arachchi, R.S.S.W.².....</i>	<i>25</i>
DETERMINANTS ON WORK ENGAGEMENT OF EXECUTIVE LEVEL EMPLOYEES IN APPAREL MANUFACTURING COMPANIES (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LARGE-SCALE APPAREL MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN WESTERN PROVINCE IN SRI LANKA)	26
<i>Salindika, R.P.D.G.P.^{1*} and Kalyani, L.D.².....</i>	<i>26</i>
LOW-TENDENCY OF ADOPTION OF THE CLOUD-BASED HRM SOLUTIONS BY THE MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES IN SRI LANKA.....	27
<i>Perera, Y.....</i>	<i>27</i>

FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE RETENTION AMONG IT SECTOR WORKERS IN SRI LANKA.....	28
<i>Jeewendra, N.M.D.R.^{1*}, Herath, H.M.I.U.P.² and Wijewardene, P.³.....</i>	<i>28</i>
MARKETING.....	29
SMES UTILIZATION OF MARKETING INFORMATION SYSTEMS (MKIS) FOR CASE STUDIES IN DARES SALAAM, TANZANIA (A THEORETICAL REVIEW).....	30
<i>Hodson, D.N.....</i>	<i>30</i>
ADOPTING SMART METERS TECHNOLOGY AMONG DOMESTIC CONSUMERS IN CEYLON ELECTRICITY BOARD.....	31
<i>Gunathilake, M.D.R.M.^{1*} and Amarasinghe, A.A.M.D.².....</i>	<i>31</i>
KEY DETERMINANTS OF FACEBOOK ADVERTISEMENT AVOIDANCE IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY: A STUDY OF WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA.....	32
<i>Bandaranayaka, B.M.A.R.^{1*}, Sajeewanie, L.A.C.² and Buddika, H.A.M.³.....</i>	<i>32</i>
FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMERS' TRADITIONAL RICE PURCHASE INTENTION OF MILLENNIAL CONSUMERS IN SRI LANKA.....	33
<i>Vithanage O.L.,^{1*} Karunarathne P.H.M.S.,² and Sajeewanie, L.A.C.³.....</i>	<i>33</i>
EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY IN STUDENT SERVICES ON STUDENT SATISFACTION AT NON-STATE UNIVERSITIES IN SRI LANKA: A CASE STUDY OF SAEGIS CAMPUS.....	34
<i>Herath, S.P.^{1*} and Jayasinghe, K.A.².....</i>	<i>34</i>
TOURISM AND ECOBUSINESS MANAGEMENT.....	35
A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEES' INTENTION TO IMPLEMENT GREEN PRACTICES: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S BANK IN RATHNAPURA DISTRICT.....	36
<i>Jasinghe, G.K.^{1*} and Kalyani, L.D.².....</i>	<i>36</i>
UNVEILING THE NEXUS: INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SRI LANKA.....	37
<i>Tennakoon, G.A.D.M.^{1*} and Nanayakkara, A.C.².....</i>	<i>37</i>

CAUSES AND CHALLENGES FOR FOOD WASTE MANAGEMENT IN FIVE-STAR HOTELS WITH A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GALLE DISTRICT, SRI LANKA.....38

Sooriaarachchi, N. B.^{1} and Bandara, W. A. L. M.²..... 38*

EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER INVOLVEMENT ON TOURISTS' TRAVEL INTENTIONS: MEDIATING ROLE OF TRAVELER AUTHENTICITY AND DESTINATION IMAGE.....39

Bulumulla, D. S. K.^{1}, Epa, U.I.² and Gamage T. C.³..... 39*

THE IMPACT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON THE EMPLOYEE'S TURNOVER INTENTION (SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HOUSEKEEPING EMPLOYEES IN DAMBULLA).....40

Jayasri, A.M.D.D.^{1} and Chathuranga, R.M.J.² 40*