FROM THE EDITOR

As the Editor-in-Chief, it is my pleasure to welcome readers to the third volume of the International Journal of Contemporary Business Research (IJCBR), published by NSBM Green University.

The IJCBR seeks to explore, analyze, and disseminate knowledge on the intricate dynamics and evolving complexities of the modern business landscape. This issue particularly exemplifies the convergence of emerging theories and practices from various disciplines. With eight insightful articles, this volume delves into topics ranging from Supply Chain and Circular Economy to Finance and Human Resources Management.

The first study authored by M.M.M. Shaja and J.A.T.A. Jayakody examines customer satisfaction in Sri Lanka's Online Food Delivery Service (OFDS) industry, driven by the rise in internet usage for purchasing goods and services. It assesses satisfaction using the E-S-Qual dimensions: Efficiency, Fulfillment, System Availability, Responsiveness, and Tangibles. Primary data was collected from 205 respondents through an online survey and analyzed using SPSS. Results show that Fulfillment, Responsiveness, and Tangibles significantly affect customer satisfaction, with Responsiveness being the most important. Efficiency and System Availability had no significant impact. The study further highlights the need for improved service quality in the OFDS sector and recommends further research on other variables influencing customer satisfaction.

The second study, written by W.D.G.G. Abhayagunarathna, I. Adihetti and V. S. Arachchi explores the relationship between lean management practices and operational performance in Sri Lanka's apparel industry, emphasizing continuous improvement, waste elimination, leadership support, and supplier involvement. In response to the economic downturn affecting the garment sector, the research identifies the need for effective strategies to maintain competitiveness. Data taken from managerial employees across major apparel companies were analyzed, revealing that continuous improvement, leadership support, and supplier involvement significantly enhance operational performance, while waste elimination does not. The findings suggest a strategic focus on efficiency and quality to meet export goals and address global competition, offering both academic and practical insights into improving operational performance.

Third study done by M. Edirisinghe investigates how customers' perceptions of supply chain transparency affect their purchasing behavior in the apparel industry, a sector often criticized for unethical practices. It aims to fill a research gap by focusing specifically on how customers view transparency and its impact on their buying decisions, as previous studies have mainly examined transparency from a company’s perspective. Key findings of this research reveal that supply chain transparency has a strong, positive effect on customers' purchasing intentions. However, the study suggests that future research should explore other variables that might influence customer behavior, providing a broader understanding of transparency's role in ethical consumption within the apparel industry.

The study conducted by W.M.H.P. Bandara and P.R.C.N. Ariyarathne explores factors influencing consumer acceptance of refurbished smartphones in Sri Lanka, within the context of the circular economy, which emphasizes reusing and recycling resources. Given the limited local awareness of this concept, the researchers conducted eight semi-structured interviews using purposive sampling. Thematic analysis of the data revealed factors related to personal preferences, benefits, obstacles, and risks. The findings showed that while consumers generally prefer new smartphones, they are more inclined to choose refurbished devices over second-hand ones, highlighting a nuanced consumer attitude toward refurbished products.

M. Perera's research study discusses the challenges faced by contemporary organizations and international corporations in uncertain competitive environments and emphasizes the importance of sustainable human resource management (HRM) techniques in fostering motivated employees and improving organizational performance. It investigates the moderating role of line manager support in the impact of sustainable HRM practices on company performance. The study focuses on how line managers perceive sustainable HRM practices and their responsibilities regarding these practices. To ensure validity and reliability, various consistency strategies were employed, and data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 21. The findings support a stakeholder significance concept within the framework of sustainable HRM from the perspective of line managers, leading to the establishment of three hypotheses based on empirical research.

The sixth study by P.M. Wijayawardhana investigates the factors affecting corporate dividend policies in the food, beverage, and tobacco sectors listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) in Sri Lanka. It examines data from 15 companies over ten years (2011-2020) using a quantitative approach and multiple regression analysis. Key findings show that profitability and leverage have a significant positive relationship with dividend per share, while firm size negatively impacts dividends. Further the firm risk too has a negative but insignificant effect on dividends. However, it is shown that the inclusion of tobacco companies broadens the analysis, providing valuable insights for financial managers and guiding investors in making informed decisions about dividends in these interconnected sectors.

This study conducted by D. Bamunukula, P. Vithanage and G. Rangalla examines the impact of accounting information, specifically Earnings per Share (EPS) and Net Asset Value per Share (NAVPS), on the stock market prices of registered plantation companies on the Colombo Stock Exchange in Sri Lanka. By analyzing publicly available financial statements from 2015 to 2022, the research uses regression analysis to explore the relationship between accounting metrics and market prices. Overall findings of the study conclude that both EPS and NAVPS significantly influence the market price per share of Sri Lankan plantation companies, highlighting the importance of accounting information in investment decisions.

The final research study in this volume by M.T. Pathirana and K.T. Vimukthika investigates the influence of micro-influencers on niche market trends and consumer behavior among Generation Z (Gen Z) in Sri Lanka. Through qualitative methods, it highlights important traits of micro-influencers, such as credibility and authenticity, that resonate with Gen Z consumers. The findings reveal that Gen Z tends to trust micro-influencers more than traditional celebrities, appreciating their personal engagement. These influencers effectively promote niche products by leveraging strong relationships with their followers. However, the study also addresses challenges like influencer fatigue and skepticism toward sponsored content. It concludes with recommendations for businesses to prioritize long-term, authentic partnerships with micro-influencers that align with their brand values, and suggests further research into the lasting impact of this marketing strategy.