

EDITORIAL

Perspectives on Governance, Economy, and Social Systems in a Changing World

Shironica P. Karunanayaka

Editor-in-Chief

In a rapidly changing global environment, the interaction between governance, economic systems, and social structures is crucial for fostering resilient and sustainable societies. Globalization, digital transformation, climate pressures, and demographic shifts are redefining how societies govern and distribute resources. These developments place growing demands on governments and institutions, requiring them to respond effectively to complex, interconnected challenges while maintaining transparency and accountability. Sustainable development and long-term stability depend on strong institutions and governance capable of adapting to changing circumstances (UNDP, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

Economic development and social well-being are closely linked to the quality of governance and the inclusiveness of social systems. Policies that promote equitable growth, social protection, and citizen participation strengthen societal resilience and reduce inequality. In many regions, governments are encouraged to adopt collaborative and participatory approaches that integrate economic planning with social and environmental priorities. Such perspectives emphasize the need for governance models that are adaptive, inclusive, and oriented toward sustainable development amid evolving global challenges (UNESCO, 2023; United Nations, 2025). The articles in this issue of Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences (SLJSS) explore how governance, economic strategies, and social systems intersect across urban administration, organizational practices, and individual behaviors, demonstrating

how these interactions foster resilience, inclusion, and sustainability in contemporary society.

Revisiting historical narratives can offer valuable insights into the evolution of governance and social organization. The article “A Forgotten Piece of History: The Story of the First Municipal Council of Colombo, Sri Lanka” by de Silva presents a historical perspective on early urban governance in Colombo. Drawing on historical records, it reveals that a Municipal Council existed in Colombo as early as the sixteenth century under the Portuguese rule, challenging the widely held view that the city’s municipal governance began in 1865. By reconstructing the functions and influence of this early institution, the study illustrates how the colonial administrative system incorporated local governing bodies to manage urban affairs, occasionally influencing broader policy decisions, while primarily serving a small community of Portuguese settlers, thus revealing the unequal social and political dynamics embedded within the colonial governance. Recovering this largely forgotten institutional history not only deepens our understanding of early urban administration in Sri Lanka but also highlights the limited scholarly knowledge about the governance of major urban cities between 1656 and the early nineteenth century.

Today’s dynamic world demands new tools and approaches to navigate complex economic and social systems. The study by Sriyalatha et al., titled “Capturing a Digital Economy Measurement Framework for

*  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1995-8828>



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Sri Lanka,” reviews five international frameworks used to measure the digital economy and proposes a hybrid model combining structural economic analysis with welfare perspectives. This approach provides policymakers with a practical tool to assess both market size and the societal benefits generated by digital activities. The study also outlines a detailed implementation roadmap, identifying responsible agencies, data requirements, and a timeline for integrating digital economy metrics into Sri Lanka’s official statistics. By adapting global best practices to the local context, it demonstrates how evidence-based strategies can guide informed economic and social decision-making in an era of digital transformation.

In a globalized, technology-driven world, career paths for individuals are increasingly complex, requiring adaptability and strategic planning. In their article “Exploring Intercultural Career Mobility Attitudes of Postgraduate Students: A Longitudinal Study on Arab World Migrants,” Verma et al. examine factors influencing the development of intercultural protean career attitudes among postgraduate students who migrated to Arab countries, with a focus on ability-based psychological mechanisms. The study finds significant positive relationships between core self-evaluations (CSEs), perceived employability, career decision self-efficacy (CDSE), and protean career orientations. It offers practical insights for career counselors, who can help individuals navigate dynamic careers by developing CSEs and career-specific self-efficacy, and for organizations, which may benefit from identifying socially embedded employees when stable career orientations are preferred.

Food waste is increasingly recognized as a critical global challenge, contributing significantly to environmental degradation and economic losses. The article “Household Food Waste and Its Relationship with Consumer Demographics and Behaviour: A Case Study from Kegalle District, Sri Lanka” by Kulathunga et al. examines how demographic factors and consumer behaviours influence avoidable and unavoidable household food waste. The study reveals that simple practices such as making shopping lists, planning portions, and storing leftovers can significantly reduce waste, illustrating the intersection of individual behavior, social systems, and resource management. These findings inform policies and interventions that promote responsible consumption, conservation of resources, and cost savings, demonstrating the value of integrated approaches to societal challenges.

Fostering inclusion, fairness, and trust in organizations strengthens social cohesion and institutional resilience. In their conceptual paper “Uniting the Workplace: How Inclusion, Fairness, and Trust Weave Stronger Bonds of Organizational Embeddedness – A Conceptual Exploration,” Malalage et al. examine the interplay between perceived workplace inclusion, interpersonal trust, organizational embeddedness, and workplace fairness through the lenses of social exchange theory and equity theory. The study proposes a conceptual model showing how inclusion influences trust and embeddedness, with fairness perceptions moderating these effects. The model highlights the importance of inclusive work environments in enhancing employee immersion and organizational cohesion. The paper offers theoretical insights and practical recommendations for managers seeking to cultivate trust, fairness, and employee integration.

Collectively, the articles presented in this issue of SLJSS that span across historical, economic, social, and organizational contexts illustrate the dynamic interplay between governance, human behavior, and systemic adaptation. They highlight the importance of evidence-based strategies that integrate individual agency, social systems, and institutional frameworks. Together, they demonstrate that resilient societies and organizations depend on adaptive governance, informed decision-making, and socially attuned policies that respond to the complexities of a rapidly changing world.

We invite scholars to submit contributions in the field of social sciences for our future issues of SLJSS.

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