



BCIS Emerging Scholars Symposium
'Empowering Thinkers of Tomorrow'

ABSTRACTS

7TH EMERGING SCHOLARS SYMPOSIUM 2024

*'International Relations
in the Digital Age'*

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Message from the Executive Director

The Seventh Emerging Scholars Symposium is taking place at a point in time where understanding politics and international relations is critical to making sense of the changes taking place in Sri Lanka and the rest of the world. At this juncture, the theme of this year's symposium – International relations in the Digital Age – is particularly relevant. Digitalization has altered how we relate to each other at a personal, community, national and international level. It has changed our communication patterns and transformed our access to information; it has affected the way we fight wars and the way we negotiate peace; it has led to greater surveillance and tightened controls, but it has also expanded our freedoms.

To paraphrase Frederik S Dunn's initial description of international relations (Dunn 1948)¹ digitalization has altered the way relations take place across national boundaries, and increased the visibility of a range of autonomous groups that exist in the world system. It has stimulated us to question the conventional concepts of governance and diplomacy, and added a digital dimension to our studies of security, economics and trade. Digitalization has facilitated the reach of corporate actors and stimulated their growth into transnational powers. It has created opportunities for civic movements hitherto marginalized in policy debate (women, indigenous peoples, migrants, etc) to enter the international arena and added a non-state dimension to our study of international relations.

As a long-standing educational establishment that has been engaging in the study and teaching of International relations since 1974, we are pleased that in this our 50th Anniversary Year, forty four young Emerging Scholars sent in abstracts and twenty four were selected to develop final papers on areas ranging from Foreign Policy, Digital Diplomacy and Digital Governance, to Cyber Security, Artificial Intelligence, Social Media and Armed Conflict, and E-Commerce and Digitalization of International Trade. Twenty full papers were submitted for the Symposium this year. We expect their insights to propel the BCIS firmly into our next half century of knowledge production and sharing.

This is my first year as the Executive Director of BCIS, and I am proud to be part of an important tradition that has been supporting young researchers continuously over the last seven years. My congratulations to all the scholars for their courage and their commitment, and my thanks to my colleagues, our governance bodies and our resource persons for making this event possible.

Ms. Priyanthi Fernando

¹ Dunn, Frederick S. "The Scope of International Relations." *World Politics*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1948, pp. 142–46. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009164>. Accessed 4 Sept. 2024.

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The Impact of Digital Governance for Diplomatic Effectiveness: A Case Study of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digitization of global diplomacy, requiring nations to adopt digital governance strategies to maintain international relations and consular services. This study explores the impact of digital governance on Sri Lanka's diplomatic effectiveness from 2020 to 2023, focusing on the challenges and opportunities it presents. The central research problem revolves around understanding how digital governance influences the efficacy of Sri Lanka's diplomatic services, with a focus on both the challenges and opportunities this integration presents. The objectives of this research are threefold: first, to assess the impact of digital governance on the efficiency and effectiveness of Sri Lanka's diplomatic communication and consular services; second, to identify and analyze the primary challenges in implementing digital governance in diplomatic contexts; and third, to explore the opportunities that digital governance creates for Sri Lanka's diplomatic services, particularly in enhancing crisis management, economic diplomacy, and public diplomacy.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative data. Case studies, interviews with diplomatic personnel, and analysis of digital diplomatic platforms provide a comprehensive understanding of how digital governance impacts Sri Lanka's diplomatic effectiveness. Key challenges identified include cybersecurity threats, as evidenced by the cyber-attacks on Sri Lankan government websites in 2020, infrastructure limitations affecting rural areas with unreliable internet connections, and data privacy concerns similar to the 2010 WikiLeaks controversy. The digital divide poses a significant challenge, with diplomats in technologically less advanced regions struggling to use digital tools effectively. Traditional diplomatic practices often resist adopting new technologies, complicating the integration of digital governance. Additionally, regulatory and compliance issues, such as alignment with international data protection standards, present obstacles. Integration challenges arise when merging new digital platforms with existing legacy systems, and information overload can overwhelm diplomats, hindering effective decision-making. Despite these challenges, digital governance offers significant opportunities for enhancing Sri Lanka's diplomatic effectiveness. The adoption of virtual consular services, digital crisis management tools, and online platforms for economic and public diplomacy have proven beneficial. For example, virtual consular services during the pandemic improved accessibility and responsiveness, while digital platforms facilitated the repatriation of stranded citizens and maintained trade relations through virtual meetings and online trade fairs. Addressing the challenges of digital governance in diplomacy requires strategic investments in technology, robust cybersecurity measures, and continuous training for diplomats. Developing comprehensive policies and frameworks to support digital diplomacy is essential for leveraging digital tools effectively. This research provides valuable insights into the integration of digital governance in foreign policy, emphasizing the importance of resilience and adaptability in diplomatic strategies.

Keywords: *Digital Governance, Diplomatic Effectiveness, Sri Lanka, COVID-19, Foreign Policy*

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The Rise of Digital Diplomacy and its Legal Implications in the Digital Age

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Abstract

Given the rapid growth of new digital technologies such as social media, big data, and artificial intelligence, many countries are adapting their diplomatic practices and associated policy frameworks accordingly, which is known as digital diplomacy. It enhances communication and facilitates the delivery of diplomatic services between countries efficiently and cost-effectively. Despite major technological advancements within the scope of diplomacy in the modern day, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 (VCDR) has sustained itself as the principal international instrument of diplomacy. The VCDR was drafted for an analogue world years ago and must now be interpreted to address unique challenges within the contemporary digital world. A research problem arises as to whether VCDR is compatible with the use of digital technologies and associated diplomatic practices to achieve diplomatic purposes and manage diplomatic relations between countries.

The main objectives of this paper are to understand the interrelation between the law and digital diplomacy and ascertain a comprehensive understanding of how diplomatic relations fit in the digital age from a legal perspective. This paper examines the legal implications of digital diplomacy by analyzing the existing international legal standards in the context of the VCDR to understand the ramifications of digital diplomacy in modern times. A qualitative approach is used to determine the influence of digitalization upon diplomacy based on VCDR as the primary source, which is the key international convention on diplomacy, and secondary sources including textbooks, journal articles, commentaries, dissertations, websites, newspaper and blog articles.

The shift to digital diplomacy has created new legal challenges such as issues of cybersecurity, data privacy, the regulation of digital content and more. Mainly, it influences certain aspects of diplomatic privileges and immunities under the VCDR, including the inviolability of hardware and digital assets, databases and electronic documents, diplomatic communication through digital platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, use of wireless facilities by diplomatic missions. This paper argues that the VCDR is not on par with the modern advancements of digital technologies and is vulnerable to misuse of diplomatic relations in terms of diplomatic privileges and immunities.

The legal implications of digital diplomacy are multifaceted and complex. The ultimate goal of foreign policy is to strike a balance between transparency and confidentiality while maintaining the legality of diplomatic practices. Understanding the impact of digital technologies on diplomacy and corresponding legal frameworks is crucial for the diplomats to successfully maintain diplomatic relations. Accordingly, this paper offers insights to address legal complexities arising in the realm of digital diplomacy and to improve the development of digital foreign policy making.

Keywords: *Digital Diplomacy, Diplomatic Relations, Digital Technologies, VCDR*

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Digital Diplomacy of India and Sri Lanka: A Comparative Study and the Way Forward for Sri Lanka

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Abstract

A new form of diplomacy different from the traditional mode of diplomacy has emerged with the advent of revolutionary innovations in Information Communication Technologies. Digital diplomacy is an emerging trend with multiple dimensions and being dynamic, it evolves with the multitude of events happening in the world. India has been actively engaged in the digital economy since 2010 with its first tweet to evacuate 18,000 Indian citizens from Libya during the civil war. Sri Lanka uses X (formerly twitter) as the main medium of digital diplomacy. When compared with India, Sri Lanka has not developed very advanced digital diplomacy to pursue its interests.

Academic literature serves as the source of data for this research and helped the author to formulate the arguments. A multitude of scholarly sources and websites provided this paper with a range of information about digital diplomacy, Indian digital diplomacy, Sri Lankan digital diplomacy, and the comparison of these two countries, to find new ways for the development of digital diplomacy in Sri Lanka.

The overall findings of the study suggest that India has well-established its digital diplomacy in various sectors, including tourism and trade. It has created an E-Governance program in tourism and feasible implementation strategies. India's digital economy is expected to touch \$1 trillion by the year 2025. It is anticipated that India would be a \$10 trillion economy by 2030 and half of it would be the digital economy. Moreover, India uses social media as an important platform to announce new foreign policy measures and initiatives and monitor public opinion. The Consular Services Management System (MADAD) of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India is an example of an initiative whereby it resolves the problems of Indians overseas. Furthermore, India has digital collaborations with other countries such as Finland, Vietnam, Africa, Kenya, etc. To counter disinformation, India has official mechanisms, such as PTB India, MIB, MyGov, etc. When compared with India, Sri Lanka is still at the initial stage in digital diplomacy, using X Pages of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, Sri Lanka has introduced some initiatives: Cinnamon's "Bring a friend home", "Sri Lanka's Electronic Travel Authorization Website" and "Contact Sri Lanka". The analysis of the data revealed that unlike the past, digital communication and diplomacy among the countries has gathered a rapid momentum. India is far more advanced than Sri Lanka, having opened up digital platforms to a significant degree, creating a domestic and diplomatic space for almost everyone to engage in dialogues.

The research concludes that digital diplomacy is of paramount importance and India has a well-established mechanism to deal with the digital diplomacy to install its soft power. On the other hand, Sri Lanka is at the initial stage of digital diplomacy. Therefore, Sri Lanka could adopt the mechanisms implemented in India, to advance its digital diplomacy as a developing country.

Keywords: *Digital Diplomacy, disinformation, E-Governance*

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Evaluating the Efficacy of Digitalized Policy Formulation in Enhancing Sri Lankan Diplomacy

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Abstract

As foreign nations adopt advanced digital strategies to formulate and execute their diplomatic policies, it becomes imperative for Sri Lanka to evaluate its position in this evolving landscape while battling through all the other political struggles as a nation. The objectives of this paper are to analyze the current digital diplomacy practices in Sri Lanka while identifying how fellow nations have used digitalized policy formulation to enhance their diplomacy. The study revisits how Sri Lanka can include those digitalized policy formulation practices to enrich Sri Lankan diplomacy. This study is qualitative research based on the secondary data, referring to comparative case studies of Estonia and Singapore.

The benchmarks that Estonia and Singapore have set in digitalized policymaking and diplomacy have been facilitated through highly advanced e-governance systems and strong measures of cybersecurity to boost their international standing. Estonian e-Governance System—X-Road—interlinks institutions for the free flow of data and the e-Residency arrangement, which gives hassle-free business operations across the world, especially in the EU region, thus securing international economic ties. Similarly, Singapore strategically applies digital diplomacy with the public through the Smart Nation initiative, data-driven policy formulation, and high standards of maintained cybersecurity by the Cyber Security Agency. These practices keep both nations effective in interacting with the global community, hence their influence and Cooperation Projection. The findings show that Estonia and Singapore as pioneers in digital diplomacy, have leveraged their robust e-governance infrastructures and advanced cybersecurity measures to foster international relations.

Conversely, Sri Lanka still presents at an embryonic level of integrating digital tools into its diplomacy framework. Even though it has started the process of adopting social media for public engagement and initiated e-governance reforms, it is far from the comprehensive digital strategies and advanced infrastructures of Estonia and Singapore. Accordingly, in Sri Lanka, digital diplomacy remains very limited due to the lack of integration of cutting-edge technologies together with inchoate policy frameworks. Underpinned by a strong ICT infrastructure, strengthened cybersecurity, and a coherent digital strategy—at heart, a protracted train of diplomats and policymakers—will be supportive for Sri Lanka to enhance its global-level diplomatic presence. Inspired by the best practices of countries like Estonia and Singapore, there is a potential for Sri Lanka to enforce the process of digital diplomacy and navigate the international environment effectively.

In conclusion, While Sri Lanka has started digital diplomacy, there is vast room for improvement. Drawing lessons from highly digitalized policy formulation and having very strong cybersecurity in Estonia and Singapore, Sri Lanka should invest in better ICT infrastructure and the formulation of explicit digital strategies. By aligning itself with the latest innovations and strengthening its digital literacy programs, Sri Lanka will only become increasingly more effective and present in its diplomacy worldwide.

Keywords: *Digital diplomacy, digitalized policy formation, Sri Lanka, e-governance systems, policy formulations.*

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The Rise of the Machines: National Security Redefined by AI and Unmanned Systems

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Abstract

The global security landscape is undergoing a radical change. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and unmanned systems is no longer science fiction. It's a reality reshaping national security policies. This research delves into the evolving dynamics of this technological revolution, focusing on the strategic responses of the United States, China, and Israel. These advancements are a double-edged sword. AI and unmanned systems promise unparalleled efficiency and precision while also posing unprecedented challenges. Traditional security paradigms are eroding, requiring countries to confront the legal and ethical implications of weaponized AI and autonomous warfare.

This research embarks on a comparative analysis, dissecting how Israel, China, and the United States are adapting their security frameworks in the era of artificial intelligence and unmanned systems. This study will investigate their legislative approaches, delve into the technological integration strategies, and unpack the ethical dilemmas surrounding AI in a defensive setting. This study looks into a multi-pronged approach, drawing upon government documents, Experts opinion, International Humanitarian Law and insights from ICRC and IHL experts to provide a comprehensive and balanced picture.

The research uncovered an intriguing tale. While all three nations have made significant progress in combining AI and unmanned systems, their methodologies differ substantially. The United States promotes strong legal frameworks, China prioritizes fast deployment, and Israel strikes a balance between innovation and severe security regulations, reflecting the intricacies of its geopolitical environment. The risk of an AI-driven weapons race looms large, stressing the critical need for international regulatory standards. This study suggests that the strategic use of AI and unmanned systems is causing a firestorm of ethical and legal concerns, rather than just altering military plans. As this research navigates this particular circumstance, international communication and collaboration are critical for establishing norms and procedures that prevent violence and safeguard peace across the world.

The integration of AI alongside unmanned systems is more than a technological advancement; it is a game changer in terms of national security. This study provides important insights into how leading nations are dealing with the evolving issue. Understanding their tactics and the challenges they encounter enables policymakers and defence strategists to more effectively prepare for the future of global security. In terms of regulatory principles and concepts, this research will include the perspectives of ICRC and IHL experts to balance the national defence point of view. The addition of this element will culminate in a more balanced and comprehensive analysis of the regulatory landscape.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Unmanned Systems, National Security, Policy, Ethics.*

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Cyber Power: A Threat or Benefit to National Security

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Due to numerous challenges in the digital age, states tend to strengthen its cyber security in order to protect state sovereignty and also to achieve national interest goals. In the present world, cyber war is considered as one of the most serious challenges to security. In contrast, cyber power is utilized by many state and non-state actors to expand their influence in the international arena. Every war, whether it causes a physical force or digital effect, is a tragedy; therefore, it is essential to identify actual consequences of cyber power.

Power is often described as the ability to influence others and control results to its own advantage. Cyber power is primarily used as a strategic tool to protect national interests in the modern world. Yet, it is doubtful whether it always provide fruitful outcomes. Does integration of cyber capabilities pose a threat or benefit to the national security? This work seeks to answer this question by analysing the emerging role of cyber power in international conflicts. The aim of this study is to identify the actual impact of cyber power on national security. Cyber power is always focused on competition and security, and it promotes offensive over defensive security. As well, it makes a considerable challenge to the balance of power in the international system so that, the practise of cyber power clearly disrupts the status quo. Therefore, the realist perspectives have been used in order to examine the influence of cyber power and state behaviour in cyberspace. To address the key research objectives, the author uses qualitative methods and secondary sources. The methods such as published articles and reports provide a clear understanding about the current situation of the study area.

Neorealist school of thought explains that international system is anarchy, therefore many states tend to gather more power to build an authoritative face in the present world. These security tensions have convinced political leaders that self-help is the best option as international actors are not prepared to cooperate due to the difficulty of finding a common interest. Hence, many states identify cyber power as a successful approach to enhance their power along with establishing national security. In this study, author argues that there are both negative and positive consequences of using cyber power as a strategy to strengthen national security. For, even though it has numerous benefits simultaneously it challenges the national security of a state in several respects. In this study examines whether cyber power provides more benefits rather than being a threat.

States fear to sacrifice their choices as they have a suspicion that others will not do the same. In this situation, decision-makers tempt to think that other actors might not understand their situation same way. This security-dilemma has encouraged state actors to use strategic tools such as cyber capabilities with an eye to emerge as a more powerful actor. Utilizing cyber power as a strategy is not an irrational practice, yet it is essential to identify its actual consequences before applying it

Keywords: *Cyber Power, National Security, Cyber Security*

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Cyber Warfare and International Relations: Strengthening Sri Lanka's Legislative Framework against Emerging Digital Threats

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The emergence of information technology, particularly the widespread use of the internet, has fundamentally changed the nature of international relations and security. What started off as an incredible invention that connected people and ideas beyond national boundaries has developed into a dual-edged weapon that presents global benefits as well as shortcomings. States, non-state actors, and individuals now engage in cyber conflicts ranging from extortion and disruption to espionage and sabotage as a result of the digital revolution. These conflicts provide unique issues that require careful analysis, going beyond conventional ideas of combat and diplomacy. Not only that, but also digital technologies have exposed nations to unprecedented cyber security threats, with Sri Lanka being no exception. Sri Lanka, being a developing country, faces notable challenges in safeguarding its critical infrastructure, state operations, and private sector organizations against highly sophisticated cyber threats.

Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team Coordination Centre reports that IT literacy and digital literacy rates in Sri Lanka are 28.3% and 38.7%, respectively. Further, Sri Lanka was ranked 72 among the 193 member countries of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in the Global Cyber Security Index (GCI), receiving an overall performance rating of "Maturing." In this context, Sri Lanka is confronted with numerous cyber threats due to its evolving digital landscape. The existing cybersecurity laws and policies are insufficient to address the complexities of modern cyber-attacks. Despite some foundational legislation, such as the Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007 and the Electronic Transactions Act No. 19 of 2006, these laws have significant gaps. They fail to adequately address advanced cyber threats. Hence, this study aims to identify these legislative gaps and propose necessary reforms to improve Sri Lanka's national cybersecurity framework. This research also intends to identify how cyber threats have shaped the landscape of international relations, to examine various cyber threats faced by Sri Lanka, examine the existing cybersecurity laws and policies, identify legal gaps and vulnerabilities, and propose necessary legal and policy changes. A comparative analysis with Denmark, renowned as the world's most digitally secure country by the Global Cyber Strategies Index, is conducted to highlight both strengths and vulnerabilities within Sri Lanka's national security framework. When considering the methodology, this research employs qualitative analyses from secondary sources, drawing from Sri Lankan and Danish law and policy, local and international case studies, and existing literature from books, journal articles, and websites. The study also considers data from the Sri Lanka Computer Emergency Readiness Team Coordination Centre. In conclusion, this research recommends that Sri Lanka needs a national cyber security policy aligned with global standards and thereby enhancing resilience against evolving cyber warfare.

Keywords: Sri Lanka, National Security, Legislative Framework, Cyber Security, Cyber Warfare

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The Impact of Digital Governance in Developing Countries: A Case of Low Digital Literacy in Rural Sectors in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

In Sri Lanka, the effective use of global inclusive implementation can be seen across various sectors. Efforts are being made by the global inclusion process to increase the development process of regional countries through new technologies. But the difficulties arising in addressing the long-term goals of these inclusive programs are intensified because of geographical, social, economic, and political factors do not operate at a macro level. Although the principles of digital governance use methods to facilitate governance through global technical facilities, people with low digital literacy, especially the middle-aged people and above in rural areas, are facing significant challenges. They often have limited digital literacy, lack of access to digital devices and the Internet, and may be resistant to adopting new technologies. Within this scenario the research problem is: What are the challenges that middle-aged people who have low digital literacy have faced when they get access to digital governance?

Digital governance has the potential to significantly improve service delivery and citizen engagement. However, according to the Sri Lankan Department of Census and Statistics, in 2017, only 21% of rural and estate households owned a desktop computer or laptop, compared to nearly 40% in urban areas. Within such context, a global issue exacerbated by low-quality equipment and skills, is causing a digital divide between the young and the middle-aged people and above creating a generational gap, particularly in developing countries like Sri Lanka. Especially, this has caused social exclusion due to the inability of rural middle-aged people and above to participate in the digital revolution. Therefore, the primary objective of this study was to explore the effects of digital governance on the middle-aged population with low digital literacy in rural sectors. Specific objectives focused on understanding the challenges this demographic group faces in accessing and using digital government services. This research is also conducted to examine the broader implications for global inclusion and equity in international governance promoted by global frameworks such as the UNDP and UNHCR Global Collaboration Framework for Inclusion and Solutions (2023-2025).

This research accommodates qualitative methods. Participant observation and interviews (including sample and key informants) were used as primary data collection methods. As the study area, Monaragala district of Uva province was selected and as the sample 30 people in the age group of 45-55 years (considered the gender equality) were selected in this district. Also, case studies, annual reports and websites were used as secondary data. Thematic and coding were used in data analysis, while tables and bar graphs were used for data presentation.

In conclusion, low digital literacy and limited access to technology hinder the middle-aged people in rural areas from benefiting from digital governance. Challenges include technical barriers, knowledge gaps, psychological resistance, and socioeconomic factors. Targeted interventions are needed to improve digital literacy, ensure equitable government services, and foster social inclusion.

Keywords: *Low Digital Literacy, Digital Governance, Rural Community, Inclusivity and Exclusivity*

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Sri Lanka's Strategic Global Positioning and Responses to the Platformization of the Tourism Sector: Policy Making or Myopia?

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Abstract

This research paper aims to assess whether Sri Lanka's carefully curated strategic positioning is at risk because of its potential policy myopia, reflected at a macro level by the restructured bond deal. At a micro level, questions have arisen in this research paper about the unaddressed gap of the National Tourism Policy concerning the national security risks posed by the platformization-driven, increasing informalization of tourist accommodation service providers. Sri Lanka has preserved a delicate balancing act in its nonaligned foreign policy, navigating the complex dynamics of great-power rivalry whilst advancing its own strategic interests. The forefront accorded to strategic autonomy has seen Sri Lanka walk the fine line between neutrality and economic cooperation - a stance adopted by most South Asian governments. This realist approach to the nation's international relations has allowed Sri Lanka to maintain its relationships with major powers like India, China, and the United States in the pursuit of self-preservation and national security.

Sri Lanka's restructured deal with bondholders, purported to be macro-linked, aren't state-contingent instruments in actuality. There is a very real possibility that Sri Lanka could relapse into debt distress post-IMF program after 2028. Debt payments after 2027 aren't linked to real GDP growth, tourism inflows, or the price of Sri Lanka's oil imports. Sri Lanka's utilization of digital platforms to promote tourism through its cultural heritage is a form of soft power diplomacy and is a key driver of its international competitiveness. However, there is stunted growth in the sector due to internal and external challenges (the 2019 Easter Sunday attack, Covid-19 border closures, the 2022 economic and political instability, indicators of global economic recession and impacts of climate change). The upsurge of digital platforms in Sri Lanka's tourism sector has underscored the need to re-evaluate the country's National Tourism Policy, and its capacity to address the evolving landscape, including addressing sustainability, security and non-standard forms of employment. This becomes of particular relevance in the context of foreign policy, given that tourism is a significant contributor to the top service exports, and as a corollary an economic pillar in foreign exchange earnings. In an analysis of the reconciliation of the gap from policy making to functioning monitoring systems and risk management, the author takes a qualitative approach, with reference to secondary sources. It is concluded that the current framework is inadequate, and a revision with special consideration of the gig economy is necessary.

Keywords: *National Tourism Policy, International Monetary Fund, Platformization*

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Elections in the Digital Age: How the United States is Dealing with Fake News

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Abstract

Democracy in the United States (US) since 2016 has faced scrutiny for the spread of disinformation during election periods. Both the Trump and Clinton campaigns were stakeholders at a time when disinformation triumphed over the mainstream media aided by the Russian Interference in the 2016 election. The trend continued in the 2020 election escalated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the meta-narrative of wide spread voter fraud which inspired the events of the January 6th Insurrection. Both these elections have revealed the vulnerabilities of the US electoral process to the challenges of the digital age resulting in undermining of government institutions by the citizens. Being one of the most robust and prominent democracies in the world the US has failed to address and contain the threat posed by information in the Digital Age and that has been a deciding factor in shaping the recent US elections.

The objective of this study is to provide a comparative analysis of the US elections in 2016 and 2020 by addressing the research questions of the how the spread of disinformation during campaigns and post campaigns occurred, who the enabling parties were, what were the main points of contentions and how the existing institutional mechanisms failed to contain the spread of disinformation. The research methodology will employ both content and discourse analysis of mainly quantitative and qualitative data based off secondary sources such as open-source research papers, academic articles, social media posts, newspaper articles, public statements, press statements, litigation and court documents etc.

The discussion would be set in the parameters of comparing the US institutional response in 2016 and 2020 to dealing with foreign interferences, lack of enforceable mechanisms, legal background and oversight, existence of regulation of mainstream and social media including the review of 'Big tech' companies by analysing three or more of the abovementioned sources per each election. The paper identifies the lack of regulatory institutions within the US governance mechanism when responding to disinformation as the key reason for the increasing trend of disinformation during election periods. Moreover, it argues that the existing institutional mechanisms such as congressional oversight through Senate Judiciary Committee, Cyberspace Solarium Commission (CSC) and the Disinformation Governance Board under the Department of Homeland Security were unsuccessful in containing the threat of disinformation due to certain institutional and technical inadequacies within their systems. Thus, the paper proposes the implementation of a more coherent responsive system focused on countering disinformation which will also ensure public confidence in the elections.

In conclusion, the increasing prevalence of disinformation campaigns during the recent elections in the US is due to the lack of sufficient dedicated institutions to address disinformation and further due to the established institutional mechanisms failing to meet the threat posed by disinformation and other emerging threats of the digital age. This demands the necessity to establish regulatory bodies both domestically and internationally to institutionally mechanize prevention practices and counter verification systems to prevent the globalization of disinformation in mass scale for the survival of democracies worldwide.

Keywords: *Disinformation, Fake news, US elections, Trump Presidency, Social Media, Russia*

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Digitalization and AI for the Protection of Migrants: Making the Indian Ocean Region Safe for Migrant Workers

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Abstract

Illegal and irregular migration across the Indian Ocean has been a persistent issue affecting the region, which has snowballed into a threat of a transnational scale entangling itself with other non-traditional security threats issues such as piracy and illegal fishing. The Indian Ocean region serves as a prime location for migrant worker trafficking, leading to labor exploitation and human rights violations, a phenomenon further which has been further complicated due to the advent of digital age, introducing new dynamics and complexities to the migration process. The objectives of this research are threefold; to assess the current use of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in migration management in the Indian Ocean Region; to identify gaps and challenges in utilizing these technologies; and to propose a framework for implementing AI-powered solutions to make the region safer for migrant workers.

This article seeks to explore the ways in which the digital age has contributed to the proliferation of illegal and irregular migration in the context of the Indian Ocean region, highlighting the concerns and implications for migrant rights with a specific emphasis on unscrupulous recruitment practices facilitating labor exploitation and human trafficking. To address this challenge, the research delves into the theoretical framework pertaining to non-traditional security threats and will adopt a multidisciplinary approach, combining legal analysis with insights from international relations, human rights, and migration studies. The interplay of digital technologies and migration dynamics reveals a complex scenario where opportunities for better communication and information access coexist with the perils associated with illegal and irregular migration; with unscrupulous recruitment practices and human trafficking posing significant risks to potential migrants. In this context, digital platforms have become a double-edged sword. On one hand whilst the digital age, with its advanced communication tools and social media platforms, has made it easier for potential migrants to connect with recruitment agencies, it has also raised significant concerns about privacy, agency, and the potential for exploitation at the hand of criminal networks. In this respect illegitimate agencies and traffickers have sought to exploit these same platforms to lure migrants with false promises of high-paying jobs and safe travel, which often lead to exploitation, abuse, and even human trafficking. This has been further compounded due to the digital divide internally within states situated in the Indian Ocean and lack of effective regional mechanisms to enhance migration management. In conclusion, addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and collaborative regional approach in the use of digital technologies and AI that maximizes the safety of digital tools and platforms minimizing the risk for regular migration. Interventions should necessarily include smarter use of new technology such as AI and the establishment of digital migration management platforms encompassing of digital trail systems which can minimize the exploitation of migrant workers by traffickers and the like and ensure that migration in the digital age is safe and informed.

Keywords: *Indian ocean region, illegal migration, human trafficking, artificial intelligence, digital management platforms*

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Leveraging China's Technical Expertise in Tianjin Port for Sri Lanka's Port Development: Analysing Strategic Partnerships in the Digital Era

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Globalization has impacted the elevation of competition between ports worldwide and technology has radically transformed all sectors including the ports and shipping industry. This study focuses on how Sri Lanka can leverage the technical expertise of the Tianjin Port of China through strategic partnerships, to transform the Port of Colombo. The Colombo Port is the primary container port of Sri Lanka and one of the busiest, rapidly growing container ports in the South Asian region. The port can facilitate services to the class of primary cargo ships and owing to the strategic position of Sri Lanka, vessels that dock at the Colombo Port benefit from the access to key regions, including the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia. In this regard, considering the strategic positioning the transformation of Colombo Port into a 'Mega-Hub' that is equipped with the newest technology would be an advantage for the country in earning profits and achieving sustainability. A mega hub is characterized by its significant cargo handling capacity, advanced infrastructure, strategic geographical location, and role in facilitating efficient, large-scale distribution of goods. However, Sri Lanka faces significant challenges in achieving this goal. The port development is lagging behind due to several reasons such as lack of technology, environmental issues, socioeconomic problems, and political factors. Among these, technology can be considered as a key factor in port transformation. In this regard, Tianjin Port in China can be taken as a good example for Sri Lanka to realize its vision of transforming the Colombo Port into a 'mega hub' equipped with the latest technology. Tianjin port is the seventh largest port that uses the latest technologies such as autonomous driving, 5G, cloud computing, and intelligent twins. By using these technologies, Tianjin port has succeeded in reducing its costs by thirty percent and the energy consumption is less than seventeen percent. As a result, Tianjin Port not only has succeeded in earning more profits but also succeeded in becoming more sustainable. Against this backdrop, this paper aims to seek answers on how Sri Lanka can leverage the technical expertise of the Tianjin Port of China through strategic partnerships? What are the challenges faced by Sri Lanka in applying these technologies to the Colombo Port? And what are the benefits that Sri Lanka can obtain from adopting these latest technologies at Colombo Port? The findings of the study point out that the partnerships with China focused on technology transfer, infrastructure development, and capacity building would enhance the quality of the functions of Colombo Port. Further, the joint ventures and knowledge sharing initiatives can ensure the sustainable growth of the port, benefiting both economically and strategically in the digital era. This study uses a qualitative method of analysis and utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected through structured interviews done with the officers at Sri Lanka Ports Authority and officials from Tianjin Port Development Holdings Ltd. The secondary data for the study is collected through journals, newspapers, research papers, and other publications.

Keywords: *Smart Ports, China, Tianjin Port, Sri Lanka*

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Geopolitical Implications of the Digital Silk Road: Vietnam's Response and Lessons for Sri Lanka

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In the 21st century, marked by the rapid development of technological advancements, the race for digital supremacy has intensified, becoming a critical element of global power dynamics. Recognizing the critical importance of digital infrastructure and its transformative capabilities, nations are fiercely vying for technological supremacy to gain a strategic edge and exert global influence over their competitors. This competition spans several key areas, including 5G networks, artificial intelligence (AI), and cybersecurity, all of which promise significant economic growth and enhanced national security. Aligning with these global developments, the People's Republic of China (PRC) introduced a pivotal initiative as part of its ambitious and much larger Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): the 'Digital Silk Road' (DSR). Initially launched in 2015, the core objective of the DSR is to extend China's influence by enhancing digital connectivity, building political influence with other nations, advancing China's economic interests globally, and shaping international digital norms and standards in its favour.

This paper seeks to understand Vietnam's response to China's DSR, with a focus on the period from 2018 onwards, when Vietnam began diversifying its technological investments and introduced new digital infrastructure legislation. This period coincides with the intensification of the tech war between the United States (U.S.) and China, further complicating Vietnam's strategic decisions. Analysing Vietnam's cautious yet strategic engagement with the DSR through the lens of neorealism, the paper explores how Vietnam navigates the anarchic international system, balancing power to safeguard its sovereignty and mitigate risks associated with over-dependence on Chinese technology. As a fulcrum state actively pursued by great powers, Vietnam's actions reflect the complexities and geopolitical considerations of smaller states in navigating complex international relations while safeguarding their sovereignty and advancing their national interests. These challenges are mirrored in Sri Lanka's own geopolitical situation, particularly given its strategic location in the Indian Ocean. Against this backdrop, this paper aims to achieve five key objectives.

This paper employs qualitative methods, supplemented by quantitative data where necessary, to analyse Vietnam's response to China's DSR initiative from 2018 onwards. The first objective of this paper is to analyse Vietnam's response to China's DSR initiative during the period from 2018 onwards. The second objective is to examine the strategic motivations behind Vietnam's cautious engagement with the DSR in the context of the US-China tech war. The third objective is to assess the geopolitical implications of Vietnam's approach to the DSR, particularly in light of its technological diversification and digital infrastructure legislation. The fourth objective is to explore lessons that Sri Lanka can learn from Vietnam's experience in navigating geopolitical complexities in the digital sphere. The fifth objective is to highlight how Vietnam's selectively cautious approach can guide Sri Lanka in managing its own relations with great power, ensuring that it balances the opportunities for economic development with the aspiration to achieve geopolitical autonomy in the digital sphere.

This study aims to highlight how Vietnam's strategic approach to China's DSR offers vital lessons for Sri Lanka. By balancing economic growth with sovereignty, Vietnam provides a blueprint for smaller states to navigate global power dynamics and assert their influence in the digital arena.

Keywords: *Digital Silk Road, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Geopolitics*

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The Role of Social Media in Shaping Armed Conflicts: A Case Study on Israel-Palestine

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Abstract

As the 21st century is an age of digitalization, this article is an examination of the transformative nature of social media on global conflicts, emphasizing its dual role in mitigating and exacerbating these conflicts. Social media platforms play a pivotal role in shaping the dynamics of modern conflicts, acting as a tool for both mobilization and a mode for misinformation.

This study attempts to explore the multifaceted effects of social media on Armed conflicts, with an in-depth examination of real-world scenario of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Utilizing a qualitative approach, this paper analyses the ways in which social media has facilitated the rapid dissemination of information and its ability to foster revolutionary movements beyond territorial boundaries. Basic data for the research is collected from the secondary sources which is a critical evaluation of secondary sources.

This research demonstrates that the impact of social media can be either positive, enhancing peace and sustainability during conflicts, or negative, being a tool for spreading misinformation, and disinformation leading to the escalation of conflicts. In conflict scenarios like in Israel-Palestine, social media serves as an instrumental role in both humanitarian efforts and the spread of misinformation. While those platforms have been used to coordinate evacuation efforts and disseminate information about aid, they have also been sources of controversial narratives that intensify divisions and escalate hostilities. In addition, this paper examines the current research on the psychological impact of social media on populations in conflict zones. In which, constant exposure to graphic images, provocative content, and online harassment can lead to increased stress, and trauma among individuals. Expert opinion identified in this paper state that this psychological effect can further amplify the existing tensions and contribute to the cycle of violence in conflict-affected areas. Further, this provides insights about the influence of freedom of speech on shaping armed conflicts. While it empowers the free exchange of ideas and the enhancement of unheard voices, it also creates challenges such as the spread of hate speech and disinformation. Essentially the Balance of the right to free speech and prevent harm and violence is a must in conflict setting.

This article will conclude that the dual role of social media in both reducing and intensifying conflicts reinforce the complexity of its influence. It is the responsibility of the policymakers to direct the better impacts of digitization on conflicts dynamics, by utilizing its benefits and addressing its challenges. On the other hand, it the responsibility of the individuals to utilize social media harnessing its positive impacts.

Keywords: *Social Media, Armed Conflicts, Digitalization, Israel-Palestine Conflict*

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The Sri Lankan Public Perception of the Israel-Palestine Conflict: The Role of Social Media and Its Implications for Foreign Policy Coherence

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In the digital age, social media platforms have become pivotal in shaping public opinion and influencing perceptions of global conflicts. The enduring Israeli-Palestinian conflict has entered a new phase of narrative-shaping with the emergence of social media. The research presented here addresses the critical intersection of digital media, public opinion, and foreign policy in the modern era. Understanding how social media shapes public perceptions and its implications for policy clarity is essential for a country like Sri Lanka. This study investigates how the use and misuse of social media information shapes public perceptions of Sri Lanka's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict, examining the implications for the clarity and coherence of the country's foreign policy. Given Sri Lanka's official position as a non-aligned nation, this research explores the potential dissonance between public sentiment and government policy, particularly in the context of social media's role in amplifying diverse and often conflicting narratives.

The research employs a qualitative methodology, including content analysis of social media posts on platforms like Facebook, Twitter (X), and Instagram. The data collection spans a timeline of key events in the Israel-Palestine conflict, focusing on how Sri Lankans engage with these events online. Additionally, the study incorporates a critical analysis of official government statements and relevant journal articles to assess how well public perceptions align with the government's diplomatic objectives.

Grounded in the theoretical framework of Social Constructivism, this study proposes that while social media does not dictate what people think, it significantly influences what they think about. This is particularly relevant in the context of Sri Lanka, where social media-driven narratives have the potential to blur the country's official neutral stance, leading to public confusion and a fragmented understanding of foreign policy.

The findings reveal a significant divergence between the public's pro-Palestinian sentiments, driven by emotional narratives and historical sympathies, and the Sri Lankan government's neutral position, which aims to maintain balanced relations with both Israel and Palestine. This disparity highlights the challenges of maintaining a clear and coherent foreign policy in an era of pervasive social media influence.

Key Words: *Social media, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, public perception, foreign policy.*

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Digital Cultural Diplomacy in Conflict Zones and Promoting Empathy through AI and Media: A Case Study on Palestine

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Abstract

The landscape of global diplomacy is being transformed by digital cultural diplomacy, which has proven especially valuable in conflict zones. This paper examines how digital cultural diplomacy, through the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and media, can promote empathy and facilitate conflict resolution, focusing on the case of Palestine. By leveraging AI-driven media, such as the "All Eyes on Rafah" exemplifies Palestine's innovative use of AI and media especially through Tik Tok, Twitter & Instagram even amidst the struggle for electricity using VPN due to blackout from Israel to draw global attention to their plight. AI-driven analytics and real-time reporting spotlighted the humanitarian crisis while aimed to foster a deeper global understanding and empathy towards the region's cultural and historical context.

The primary objective of this research is to investigate how digital cultural diplomacy, utilizing AI and media, can effectively promote empathy and facilitate conflict resolution in Palestine. This study aims to explore how AI-driven media initiatives can humanize the Palestinian experience and foster a deeper global understanding. By analyzing specific AI tools and media strategies, the research seeks to identify best practices for bridging cultural divides and enhancing the impact of empathy-driven diplomatic efforts. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Data collection includes secondary interviews of digital media professionals, AI experts, and cultural diplomats, as well as surveys/ posts of social media users in Palestine to explore the content analysis of social media campaigns and AI-driven initiatives that provide quantitative data on engagement and reach.

Media campaigns and awareness-raising efforts by Palestinian journalists have garnered significant international support. For instance, various governments and the public in countries like Norway and Ireland have extended their backing to Palestinian political authorities. These campaigns have led to increased humanitarian aid, diplomatic support, and advocacy for Palestinian rights at international forums. Although cultural diplomacy alone cannot resolve the conflict, it plays a crucial role in shaping global perceptions and building solidarity. The full paper will delve deeper into these examples, highlighting the tangible impacts of media-driven awareness on international support for Palestine.

The Palestinian case study also reveals the complex challenges and opportunities in applying digital cultural diplomacy in conflict zones. Furthermore, ethical considerations are paramount, as AI must be used responsibly to foster genuine understanding and avoid reinforcing stereotypes. The study delves into how social media campaigns, virtual reality experiences, and AI-generated content contribute to reshaping perceptions and building empathy. By showcasing Palestinian voices, these initiatives counteract negative stereotypes and provide a more nuanced perspective of the region.

Keywords: *Palestine, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Media, Empathy, Cultural Diplomacy.*

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Diplomatic Strategies of Somalia against Carbon Market Inequities

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Abstract

The carbon market strategy is a process involving the purchase and sale of carbon credits. Individuals or any other party can use carbon markets to compensate for their greenhouse gas emissions. Somalia is one of the countries encountering significant inequities within these systems. The political dimensions of carbon markets reveal that the net beneficiaries are often developed countries in the West, who have greater power and control over these markets. In contrast, Somalia is a low-end export destination for earth minerals and agricultural products both of which have high carbon emissions. Digital diplomacy offers solutions to address the challenges related to baseline emission levels, verification project development costs, and market access. The objective of this study is to understand the strategies employed and their effectiveness in addressing potential barriers in the carbon markets of Somalia. The methodologies used in this research employ an analytical framework grounded in theories of international political economy (IPE) and global environmental governance (GEG). The IPE framework examines how global economic power dynamics impact Somalia's participation in carbon markets, such as the influence of trade agreements and foreign investments. It analyzes how trade agreements between Somalia and Western countries impact Somalia's economic structure and carbon emissions. The GEG framework analyzes the role of international environmental agreements and organizations in shaping the rules and accessibility of carbon markets. GEG explores how agreements like the Paris Agreement create opportunities or barriers for Somalia.

The results of the study indicate that Somalia's primary issue in the carbon market is inequitable access, a result of historical emissions and lack of technological infrastructure. However, digital diplomacy actions have significantly addressed this issue. One of the key actions taken by Somalia is the development and implementation of advanced digital measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems supported by blockchain technology. These systems have significantly improved Somalia's ability to accurately track carbon reductions and participate in carbon credit trading. Furthermore, Somalia has been able to better represent its interests and advocate for fairer carbon market regulations through real-time engagement in international negotiations. Digital platforms have facilitated more effective data sharing and increased transparency in international discussions allowing Somalia to build stronger cases for equitable treatment in the carbon market. The discussion highlights that improvements in MRV systems and the use of blockchain technology have enhanced transparency and Somalia's credibility in the carbon market, expediting the trading of carbon credits and benefiting from global climate initiatives. In conclusion, digital diplomacy has proven to be an effective tool for addressing the inequities in Somalia's access to the carbon market. Continuous investment in digital infrastructure and training of state and private sector parties will significantly contribute to achieving these goals. Moreover, stronger regional coalitions will enhance the bargaining power of Somalia in international forums, ensuring that its interests are well represented. Increasing digital advocacy efforts will also be crucial in promoting Somalia's climate initiatives and securing fairer terms in the carbon market.

Keywords: *Digital diplomacy, Carbon market equity in Somalia, Climate advocacy*

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The Role of Digital Currencies in Shaping International Trade Dynamics

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Abstract

International trade is changing as a result of the digital currencies' explosive growth, which includes both cryptocurrencies and central bank digital currencies (CBDCs). This research looks into how these digital currencies affect the dynamics of international trade, with an emphasis on how they might improve transaction efficiency, reduce costs, and enable more inclusive financial systems. Digital currencies appear as a viable answer to the problems that traditional banking systems and currencies confront, including excessive fees, restricted access in some areas, and long processing times. This study is relevant in the context of given the pace of globalization and the demand for more streamlined and accessible trade mechanism.

The primary objectives of this research are to analyse the impact of digital currencies on international trade, explore the benefits and challenges they present, and provide insight into how these currencies can be effectively integrated into global trading systems. This aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role played by digital currencies in reshaping trade dynamics and formulate strategic recommendations for policymakers and international traders.

Our arguments and discussions centre around several key points, The efficiency gains from employing digital currencies in trade operations, the decrease in transaction costs, and the possibility of broader financial inclusion are the main topics of our debates and discussions. We also look at the difficulties presented by virtual currencies, such as the volatility of cryptocurrencies, cybersecurity threats, and regulatory barriers. A comparison of private cryptocurrencies and CBDCs is included in the analysis to show the differences in their functions and efficacy in global trade. Policy ramifications and the requirement for a cogent regulatory framework to maximize benefits while reducing risks are also discussed. And here also discuss about how a small country like Sri Lanka, with relatively weak material power, would experience digital currencies and would it be similar to what is happening to our rupee: a weak and fragile currency losing parity and negatively affecting international trade, or would it be better.

This research recommends that government and international bodies should work together to create uniform, clear regulations that guarantee the safe and stable usage of digital currencies in cross-border trade. Investing in a strong IT infrastructure is also essential to facilitating seamless integration and strengthening cybersecurity protocols. Programs for education and awareness should be put in place to enlighten stakeholders about the advantages and dangers of virtual currencies, encouraging a wider acceptance and use. In order to effectively control the volatility of digital currencies, traders and financial institutions need to implement comprehensive risk management procedures, such as diversified currency portfolios and hedging approaches. Finally, developing standardized procedures and practices that enable seamless and effective international commerce transactions requires cross-border cooperation.

Keywords: International trade, Digital currencies

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The Future of the Global Digital Economy: A BRICS Perspective

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The digital economy, encompassing transformative technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT), presents a dual prospect of promise and challenge for BRICS nations. These emerging economies, collectively accounting for a significant portion of global GDP, face persistent digital divides that threaten to exclude marginalized rural and low-income populations from the benefits of digital advancement. This research focuses on Brazil, India, Russia, China and South Africa within the BRICS framework, aiming to examine specific case studies that illustrate the paradox of digital advancement alongside prevalent digital divides. Further, examines how collaborative facilities among one another can be used to enhance and develop one's economy with the support of New Development Bank.

This study adopts a multifaceted methodological approach, comprising a thorough review of extant literature, rigorous analysis of pertinent data regarding digital infrastructure and e-commerce penetration, and a comprehensive examination of policies and initiatives within India aimed at catalysing digital development. Two primary case studies will be analysed: the Digital India initiative and the impact of e-commerce on rural development in Brazil, India, Russia, China and South Africa.

Through a detailed examination of the Digital BRICS initiative, this research identifies opportunities for enhancing digital infrastructure and accessibility. Additionally, it explores how e-commerce can serve as a catalyst for socioeconomic development in rural areas, potentially bolstering incomes and improving quality of life. However, significant challenges persist, such as the accessibility and affordability of internet services, gender-based disparities in digital access, and the prevalent reliance on cash-on-delivery mechanisms in e-commerce transactions.

In conclusion, this study advocates for concerted efforts to harness the transformative potential of the digital economy, not only for domestic development but also for asserting collective influence on the global stage. Recommendations include fostering knowledge exchange, promoting digital literacy initiatives, and empowering women in the digital sphere. Collaborative initiatives such as organizing trade expos, fostering joint research endeavours, and strengthening partnerships between academia and industry are crucial for maximizing the dividends of digitalization for inclusive growth and global reconfiguration.

Keywords- BRICS, Digital technologies, transformational economies, economics, international trade

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The Impact of E-Commerce on International Trade: A Case Study of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The e-commerce wave has profoundly transformed the landscape of international trade, allowing businesses of all sizes access to global markets. An e-commerce platform is the content management system (CMS) and commerce engine websites used to manage catalogued products, register purchases and manage the users relationship with an online retailer. This digital revolution has broken traditional barriers, facilitated seamless cross-border transactions, and introduced significant cost efficiencies. As digital technology continues to reshape global commerce, it drives e-commerce growth, enhancing global connectivity. The global e-commerce sphere is thriving, with projections estimating its value will reach \$8.5 trillion by 2026. Sri Lanka is at the forefront of this transformation, boasting rising digital literacy and increasing smartphone penetration across urban and rural areas.

The main objective of this research has been “investigate the impact of electronic commerce on international trade with the case study of Sri Lanka”. The study presented in this paper contains three different aspects. First, the development of international trade is disclosed from different perspectives, including e-commerce as well. Second, the framework that incorporates factors determining the ability of companies to develop international trade is presented. Third, the application of framework for Sri Lankan production and trade enterprises is given. The study is based on comparative and multiple criteria analysis and while having used qualitative research methodology and using the case study method for the data collection. The study can be useful to analyze the development of international trade in the future Sri Lanka.

The analysis of literature shows that international trade should be understood and analyzed from the perspectives of enterprises activity. Therefore, it is important to reveal the ability of enterprises to develop international trade in the current challenging conditions, to evaluate, if enterprises, considering the new circumstances can respond and adapt to these challenges adequately. One of the challenges is the application of new technologies in the development of international trade. One of such technologies is e-commerce technologies, supporting development of trade in foreign markets. Under conditions of the application of e-commerce technologies buyers and sellers become less dependent on place. By applying e-commerce technologies both tangible and intangible goods may be realized in foreign markets. The capacity of international trade will rise via e-commerce. New opportunities for international trade have created throughout internet. The way of communicating or doing business and trade between companies and individuals has changed as the geographical distance decreased between buyers and sellers.

Keywords: *E-commerce, International trade, Economy, Geography, Government*

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