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# Book review: Shaping entrepreneurial marketing: a South Asian perspective

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## Introduction

In the modern, hectic, digitalised environment, South Asian entrepreneurs are discovering ways to reach out to markets, customers and communities. Although increasing inequality and crumbling infrastructure are challenges, the combination of diverse cultures, a fast-rising middle class, and a young population in the region creates opportunities. The book “*Shaping Entrepreneurial Marketing, Volume 1: A South-Asian Perspective*” examines how these entrepreneurs combine creativity, innovative ideas and strategic marketing to overcome such challenges. It demonstrates that winning is achieved by placing products in a manner that touches the heart and creates curiosity, which in turn develops customer bases that can be maintained to gain competitive advantages. Other points highlighted in the book include the increasing demand for culturally relevant campaigns, the strength of AI and data analytics, mobile-first approaches and sustainable approaches like green initiatives that are emerging as affordable and high-quality practices are becoming the new standard in South Asian markets.

A joint work by Narayanage Jayantha Dewasiri, Payal Kumar, Nirma Sadamali Jayawardena and Mananage Shanika Hansini Rathnasiri, *Shaping Entrepreneurial Marketing* offers a new perspective on entrepreneurial marketing (EM) for South Asia. The authors conceptualised the concepts using theories and real-life data to demonstrate that marketing is not just another business operation but a potent driver of socio-economic development and cultural transformation. The book comprises 281 pages of English prose, divided into 15 chapters, which address the region’s most significant marketing currents, including digital transformation, cultural nuance, innovation strategy, sustainability, storytelling and community-based value creation. We used the academic approach adopted by [Peiris et al. \(2020\)](#), [Iddagoda and Dewasiri \(2020\)](#) and [Rathnasiri and Dewasiri \(2024\)](#) in reviewing this edited book.

## Chapter overview

The first chapter provides the background to the concept of EM in South Asia, identifying a combination of risks and opportunities of firms in this region. The interaction of social, economic, cultural and technological aspects is identified, ensuring that marketing based on local realities can be a potent source of change. It highlights tactics such as creating value with customers, storytelling, guerrilla campaigns and utilising social media, as well as other technological tools, to achieve greater sustainability and social impact. Lastly, it is recommended that collaboration among researchers, practitioners and policymakers ensures

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that theory remains current with practice. As key highlights, the chapter emphasised other grand frontiers, social entrepreneurship, green and sustainable marketing and the digital shift through e-commerce, which ought to be priorities of both research and practice.

Chapter Two examines the potential of EM to drive community-based enterprises (CBEs) in Nepal, addressing issues such as poverty, unemployment and migration. It introduces a four-dimensional EM model, encompassing customer, entrepreneurial, market and innovation orientations, in addition to entrepreneurial networking as a growth enabler. Four essential supports to Nepal's ecosystem are introduced by a new encouragement orientation, which includes local promotion, a favourable economic climate, easier registration and improved infrastructure. The internationalisation of Nepal will combine trust-based community networks with contemporary marketing strategies, making grassroots entrepreneurship a source of empowerment. It requires a substitution of top-down assistance with culturally based, bottom-up development and better dimensionalising the EM theory, noting that internationalisation models need to be improved and that CBEs need to be strengthened to enable sustainable and inclusive development.

Chapter Three examines the path that family-owned firms in South Asia take toward digital agility amid an escalating economic crisis. Although most firms are still in the early stages of digital adoption, the study concludes that a digital-first mindset, combined with a long-term perspective, is crucial to achieving transformational change. Based on the dynamic capabilities view, four pillars of resource orchestration, workforce transformation, technology orientation and a proactive digital risk strategy are incorporated into a culturally sensitive S-curve model, which involves a slow adoption period, a period of rapid change and finally a levelling-off period. This chapter highlights the gaps in the existing digital-agility theory by highlighting family-specific qualities as sources of adaptability. It concludes with practical and region-specific advice that integrates technological innovation with family values and demands future investigation into the causal pathways connecting family dynamics and digital success.

Chapter four emphasised the reasons behind the concealment of knowledge by entrepreneurial undergraduates in Sri Lanka (KHB). It is based on a philosophical consideration of the concepts of Jnana (knowledge) and Vidya (knowledge), highlighting South Asian cultural values in the way traditional learning is conducted. The chapter applies the social exchange theory, social capital theory and psychological ownership theory to understand the reasons behind sharing and concealing behaviours. KHB is highly motivated by the presence of distrust, expectations of reciprocity and psychological ownership, but social interaction and identification are minor factors in the Sri Lankan context. The chapter concludes by encouraging the development of open, trust-based, collaborative learning cultures to restrain knowledge curbing among entrepreneurial students.

Chapter five identifies three major student engagement and loyalty leverage points in the Sri Lankan private universities, which include the institutional image, perceived quality and student satisfaction. Engagement serves as an intermediary between academic quality and loyalty. The chapter applies the same idea to the university level, where the authors suggest that EM can be used in higher education to ensure stronger emotional connections, as the students become the creators of value. Finally, emotional bonding and service quality turn out to be the keys to achieving sustainable growth in private institutions.

Chapter six identifies transformational leadership with four main dimensions: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration, which mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and small- and medium-sized enterprise (SME) performance in Sri Lanka. EO, which is a combination of innovativeness, risk-taking and proactiveness, leads both financial and non-financial performance. Such leaders enhance the motivation, creativity and flexibility of employees, which is crucial in a culturally sensitive, family-based business environment, and these factors are essential for SME success. The chapter also expands the classical theory of EO, positioning

leadership as a contingent variable, which is a vital strategic force in mobilising people, embracing innovation and maintaining a competitive advantage for SMEs.

Chapter seven examines the key motivations for green purchasing among Sri Lankan SMEs, including government regulation, environmental awareness, market competition, customer expectations, supplier pressure and perceived product quality as secondary influences. It claims that sustainability has been a major market differentiator, which is consistent with the SME Policy Framework and the SDGs of 8 and 12. It proposes capacity-building and awareness programmes to increase rural environmental literacy. Nevertheless, financial constraints and worries about the cost and quality still pose a barrier to adoption. This chapter contributes to sustainability-entrepreneurship research by also providing policy and educational implications of long-term, environmentally sustainable SME development.

Chapter eight emphasised the critical drivers of picker performance in a 3PL warehouse in Sri Lanka, including motivational factors, leadership factors, financial factors and process variables (routing, storage assignment and order batching). Productivity, accuracy and cost are directly influenced by picker efficiency; therefore, managers must combine human-focused process redesign with selective automation and skill development. In the face of cost pressures and skills shortages, the chapter emphasises that human-tech interactions are a strategic lever for positioning Sri Lanka as a logistics hub in the region.

Chapter nine highlights HRM practices, training, performance appraisals, compensation and supportive relationships with employee happiness in the travel industry of Sri Lanka, and the effect is enhanced by work-life balance. Dynamic hours, recognition and wellness programmes improve satisfaction, performance and happiness, which is a strategic product of people management, and service firms should embrace employee-based, wellness-based cultures as a way of maintaining sustainable motivation and loyalty.

Chapter ten presents an inquiry into the consequences of job hopping in the Sri Lankan software development industry, offering a nuanced analysis of the dynamics surrounding the situation. Applying a qualitative methodological framework further enhanced by the Tonnquist model, the study finds that, although occupational mobility may lead to a remuneration increment, it also leads to dissatisfaction that can be explained by the incompatibility of expectations, loss of job security and weakening of organisational ties. This chapter highlights the necessity of developing human resource models that are proactive in terms of employee retention, as well as creating a systematic career path and fostering a strong organisational culture. It also emphasises that frequent work changes tend to erode team spirit and undermine long-term strategic planning. The authors therefore support the broadening of empirical research on the job-hopping phenomenon in diverse industries, with special attention paid to its consequences on organisational performance and staff welfare.

Chapter eleven is a critical analysis by the author of the work-life conflict that copreneurial couples face in South Asia, especially in relation to the cultural expectations and gender roles in the Asian region, as well as the fact that these issues are becoming increasingly ambiguous in terms of defining who is in the personal and professional sphere. Based on sound qualitative interviews with entrepreneurs, clinical psychologists and sociologists, the discussion reveals that strict adherence to gendered norms, as well as vague demarcation of work-life boundaries, negatively affects the lives of individuals and the efficiency of organisations. As a result, the chapter suggests implementing flexible work solutions, mental health support practices, and discipline-specific conflict management approaches within the copreneurial culture. The study, by highlighting the multifaceted nature of the family-business relationship under South Asian conditions, helps to underscore the urgency of evidence-based policy interventions and additional academic research regarding gender-sensitive entrepreneurship frameworks.

Chapter twelve examines the significance of employee branding (EBR) in the development pathways of SMEs in India, aligning with the country's objective of becoming a US\$5 trillion economy. Based on the qualitative interviews with SME leaders and human resources professionals, the study outlines EBR as the conscious preparation of employee behaviour and corporate brand image. The most essential elements are organisational culture, reward

systems, training programmes and communication mechanisms. The chapter also highlights the critical role that the employee value proposition plays in attracting and retaining talent. The empirical evidence suggests that EBR has a positive impact on recruitment, employee engagement and brand advocacy. As a result, the paper offers practical recommendations to SMEs and HR managers, suggesting tailored EBR strategies to support long-term growth.

The thirteenth chapter of the third volume discusses how social media can contribute to sustainable business practices among SMEs in Sri Lanka, utilising a systematic literature review of forty articles on the topic. Based on this overview, it is evident that there are seven major thematic strands of sustainable supply chain management: sustainability communication, waste reduction, customer relationship management, crowdsourcing, marketing and branding and operational performance. Social media is proven to generate real-time interaction, environmentally friendly consumer behaviour and inexpensive promotional mediums. Additionally, these platforms support innovation through their crowdsourcing programs, facilitating more effective decision-making. The chapter concludes by hypothesising social media as an effective agent of SME sustainability and urges a more exhaustive empirical study to confirm the results and map the way of digital transformation in young economies.

Chapter fourteen presents a rigorous examination of the determinants that influence green purchase (GP) behaviour among Sri Lankan SMEs. It is identified that government policy initiatives, the increase in environmental consciousness and the rivalry are the major drivers of GP. Complementary considerations, such as perceived product quality, customer pressure, corporate social responsibility involvement and good practices in the supply chain, are also emphasised. The influence of peer pressure and existing social norms is also given appropriate attention, and the substantive effect they have on decision-making procedures is highlighted. The chapter also explains the economic and strategic dividends associated with GP, including regulatory compliance, consequential cost savings and increased market access. Considering these results, the authors support the introduction of special awareness campaigns and a supportive policy framework to support the process of sustainable practices. It is recommended that future studies be conducted to explore potential obstacles to GP adoption and to expand the analytical scope to include additional green initiatives.

Chapter fifteen discusses strategic plans to maintain employee engagement in the banking sector in Sri Lanka during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Using qualitative semi-structured interviews and word-cloud analysis, the study outlines fundamental human resources strategies, such as decentralisation, flexible work schedules and work environments, IT services and special stress-management programs. The empirical data indicate that hybrid work models, financial support, recreational opportunities and a culture of open communication are the elements that employees appreciate in particular. In addition, the chapter highlights the critical importance of empathy, employee recognition and the trust of both the organisation and its employees in maintaining engagement during crises. Lastly, it provides practitioners in the HR management field with practical information and supports the conduct of additional longitudinal studies on post-pandemic engagement approaches across various industries.

### **Evaluation**

[Dewasiri et al. \(2025\)](#) offer an insightful exploration of EM as a driver of transforming business in South Asia. It clearly indicated how local entrepreneurs redefine marketing in the face of resource constraints and institutional challenges while integrating considerations of innovation, culture, and sustainability. Regionally grounded elaboration with global applicability offers various insights along with theoretical aspects and practical implications across higher education, logistics, tourism and SMEs. Each chapter is well-written, concise and engaging, drawing readers in with insightful empirical evidence.

Some chapters are grounded in methodological explanations that integrate theories into the context and provide empirical validation with results. Some other chapters integrated conceptual discussions, using a literature-based outline to highlight important themes that emerged from the discussion. Thus, the central themes of sustainability, green marketing and digital transformation are integrated across various studies, offering valuable insights and implications for local entrepreneurs through an in-depth exploration of EM as a driver of business transformation in South Asia.

## Conclusion

This book is relevant for academic and postgraduate students, policymakers, and practitioners seeking to enhance their understanding of how marketing drives sustainability, innovation and technology-driven growth in developing nations. Each chapter demonstrates how entrepreneurs navigate institutional voids and leverage innovation and sustainability to create competitive advantages in emerging markets. It also explores, through a multidisciplinary approach, how leadership, digitalisation, sustainability and culture influence the dynamic landscape of business. Overall, editors have successfully integrated diverse perspectives to advance the academic and practical understanding of EM in South Asia.

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