



Bridging the Research Impact Divide: University Contributions to Community Well-Being in the Global South

Surendra Prasad Joshi^{1,✉} Padma Prasad Khatiwada^{2,*,✉}

¹Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Management, Thames International College, Nepal

²Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Central Department of Population Studies, Nepal

*Correspondence: padma.khatiwada@cdpl.tu.edu.np

Article History

Received: 30 April, 2026 Revised: 18 June, 2026
Accepted: 23 June, 2026 Published: 30 June, 2026

How to Cite:

Joshi, S. P., & Khatiwada, P. P. (2026). Bridging the research impact divide: University contributions to community well-being in the global South. *Tribhuvan University Journal*, 41(1), 23–36. <https://doi.org/10.3126/tuj.v41i1.93708>



Scan to access

Keywords

Community well-being, Knowledge-to-impact gap, Management science tools, NorthSouth research asymmetry, Resource-constrained settings, SDG alignment

ABSTRACT

Even though university research in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) areas has grown by an order of magnitude since 2015, a gap remains between academic research and community outcomes, particularly in climate-vulnerable and resource-limited communities. This study employs a structured evidence-mapping and bibliometric analysis design, supplemented by thematic synthesis, to synthesize 80 sources from environmental science, health, management science, and education, and to examine university research contributions to well-being and community outcomes between 2015 and 2026. Findings provide evidence of a research map for impact pathways in the context of the Global South and low-resource settings. Community-based research that is participatory and policy-informed achieves better community results than top-down research. The North-South asymmetry in structures influences research agendas, with Global North institutions playing a major role in authoring studies based on empirical research from the Global South. Although models, frameworks, and tools from management science have proven effective in Nepal, Uganda, and Peru, they remain underutilized. Models, frameworks, and tools from management science that have proven effective in Nepal, Uganda, and Peru are underutilized. Closing the alignment-to-impact gap requires institutional reforms, including changes in research governance, partnership equity, and impact measurement. Future research needs to focus on community-embedded designs (longitudinal), community-based consortia (equal co-authorship), integration of management science tools in low-resource settings, and standardized metrics for well-being that measure objective and subjective community outcomes, as well as those in Scopus-indexed literature.

Introduction

Well-being and sustainability are the dominant goals for development. The United Nations 2030 Agenda pro-

poses measuring progress against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a holistic set of outcomes that include, among others, goals related to health, education, poverty and the environment (Mohd et al., 2024). Research institutions are explicitly called on to play impor-



tant roles in their advancement. Indeed, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are well-placed to lead the promotion of the SDGs and can set the bar for the rest of society. Universities are "knowledge institutions" that serve their communities through research, education and community service and have the capacity to contribute to social and economic development. Universities have increasingly embraced sustainability-focused missions that explicitly include community well-being as a goal (Málovics et al., 2025; Mohd et al., 2024).

Simultaneously, greater attention is paid to the impacts of social research. Governments and funding bodies are now seeking evidence of the societal benefits of university research, in line with the SDGs and national agendas (Abad-Segura & González-Zamar, 2021; Agusdinata, 2022). As a result, many scholars are now engaged in interdisciplinary, practical research projects that help address local and global problems. In this new environment, HEIs are expected to measure their performance not only by their publications but also by their ability to disseminate and tackle problems of regional importance through collaboration and engagement. Ultimately, research should lead to innovations, policy advice or community capacity-building measures that enhance people's well-being and resilience (Mohd et al., 2024; Scaini et al., 2024). Universities have been responsive to this by integrating general sustainability goals into their research and teaching strategies, aiming to improve community health, education and livelihoods alongside global development goals (Málovics et al., 2025). This is difficult to measure because multiple stakeholder metrics are used (Chapman et al., 2020), although successful projects engage in co-production and participatory methods (Israel et al., 2012).

These challenges are particularly acute in resourcepoor settings. Many lowincome and lower-middle-income settings suffer from stark poverty and ill-health but have not been prioritized in research agendas (Brear et al., 2017). In many cases, communities in these countries have not been involved in research conducted about them and therefore have not been benefited from the knowledge generated. As such, researchers stress the need for community-based research in resource-poor settings. Through community participation in research projects, universities can better understand and address community needs (Israel et al., 2012). At the same time, universities in these settings may face resource and capacity constraints, and so it is important to identify how research can still advance welfare in this context (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2006). This review thus focuses on "resource-constrained settings" to examine how research in higher education affects community well-being in these environments.

While there are isolated studies in these areas, there is no synthesis of global trends in the benefits of university research on people's lives. To address this, we undertook a literature review using structured evidence mapping and bibliometric analysis. The 2015 start date aligns with the SDG era and a rising policy focus on research for development. Our approach first charts publication patterns to map the field, then qualitatively synthesizes the themes of how HEIs address well-being outcomes. The dual objectives are to characterize global patterns in the relationship between university research and community well-being and to conduct an in-depth thematic analysis of studies from low-resource settings. In doing so, we aim to highlight both successful approaches and persistent gaps in academic research's contribution to societal welfare. Research institutions play a crucial role in achieving SDG-related development outcomes, as reflected in national policy frameworks such as the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Plans and Nepal's Nationally Determined Contribution commitments under the Paris Agreement, yet the process of embedding academic knowledge production into policy uptake and community impact remains poorly institutionalized.

The study first defines key concepts and reviewed the conceptual landscape of university research and community well-being. Next, it describes the systematic review methodology, including the evidencemapping and bibliometric methods. Then it presents the results of the bibliometric analysis and thematic synthesis of the literature. This is followed by a discussion of implications for universities, policymakers, and communities. Finally, it concludes with recommendations and directions for future research.

Materials and Methods

The methodology adopted in this study is a systematic review that maps the existing literature on digitalization and digital governance in Nepal, using both bibliometric and thematic synthesis approaches.

Research Design, Data Sources and Search Strategy

Following an evidence-mapping and bibliometric analysis design consistent with structured reviews that combine quantitative mapping with qualitative thematic synthesis, we reviewed global trends in the relevance and application of university research to human well-being and community impact from 2015 to 2026. The review period begins in 2015 to coincide with the adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the launch of the SDG framework, which marked a significant reorientation of university research priorities toward societal impact. Crucially, the oper-

ational utility of university-generated insights and subsequent SDG indicator data remains heavily contingent upon a nation's implementation capacity. This local integration is frequently constrained by resource limitations, inadequate monitoring frameworks, and varying baseline data quality (Khatiwada et al., 2023; Khatiwada et al., 2026). To address these systemic gaps and ensure data integrity, global and national statistical infrastructures rely on robust systems of checks and balances. These institutional safeguards evaluate national statistical systems through internal quality frameworks, international peer reviews, and independent civil society oversight, ensuring that academic and governmental progress tracking remains transparent, reliable, and standardized. The end date of 2025 reflects the inclusion of early 2026 publications available at the time of database retrieval, capturing the most recent scholarly output in this rapidly evolving field. A systematic semantic search was conducted across Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, and OpenAlex. The following Boolean search string was applied across

title, abstract, and keyword fields:

(university OR "higher education institution" OR HEI) AND ("well-being" OR "community impact" OR "community outcomes" OR "sustainable development goals" OR SDGs) AND ("resource-constrained" OR "low-income" OR "Global South" OR "developing country") AND (research OR bibliometric OR "systematic review")

Searches were conducted in English. Additional targeted searches were conducted using author names and citation tracking in Google Scholar for key papers identified during initial screening. The search yielded approximately 1,000 initial records prior to screening.

Screening and Eligibility Criteria

To ensure a multi-criteria approach, a structured screening process for abstracts was conducted, focusing on relevance, rigor and conceptual fit to the study's aims (Table 1).

Table 1

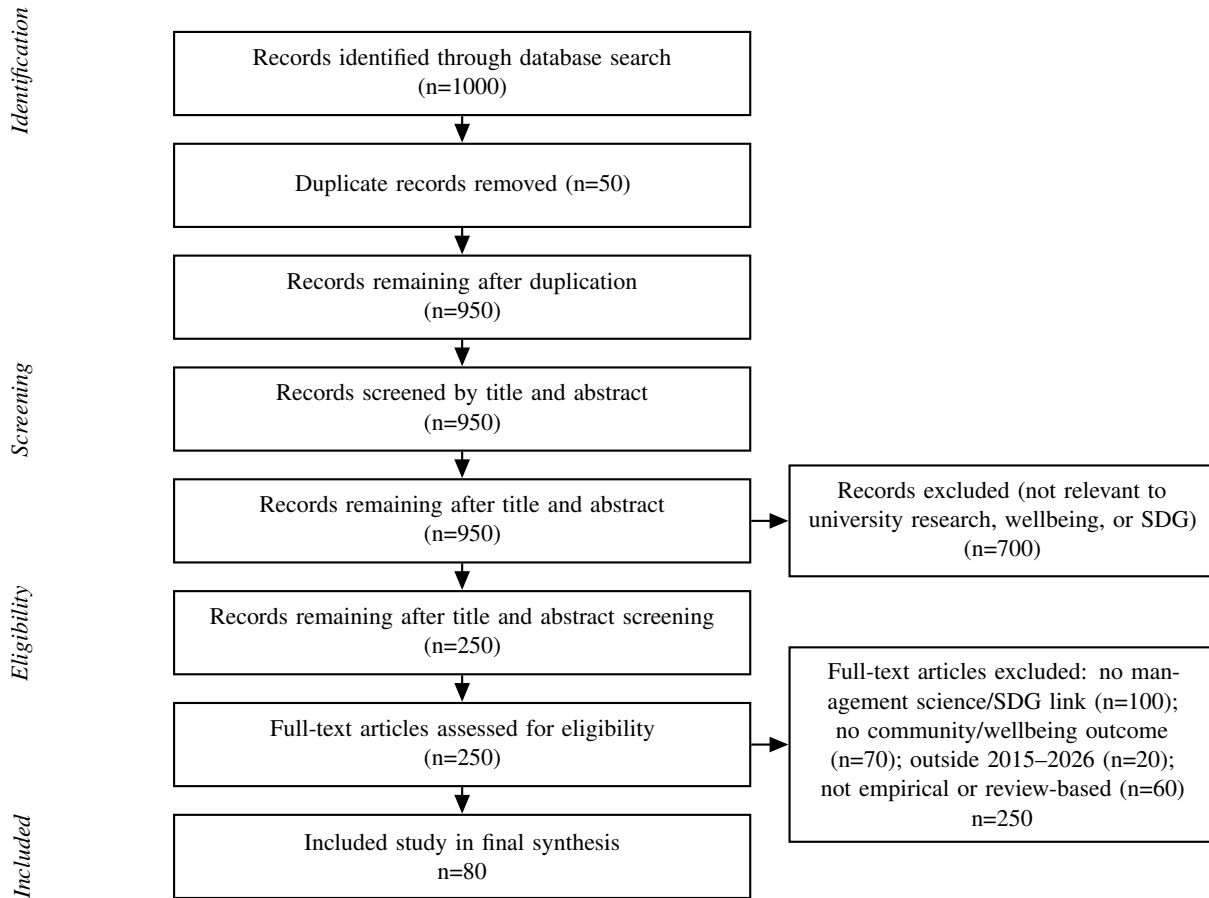
Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria Framework

Dimension	Inclusion Criteria	Application in Study
University Research Focus	The study must involve universities, higher education institutions, or academic research centers.	Included
Well-being & Community Impact	Must address human well-being (SDGs, resilience, health, social outcomes) or community-level impact	Included
Management Science Integration	Must apply or discuss decision models, stakeholder analysis, simulation, optimization, or impact frameworks	Included
Research Relevance	Must examine the translation of academic research into societal, policy, or practical outcomes	Included
Empirical or Review-based Evidence	Must be an empirical, systematic review, bibliometric, or meta-analytical study	Included
Societal Orientation	Must explicitly link research to broader social, environmental, or developmental outcomes	Included
Global South Relevance	Must include developing countries, climate-vulnerable contexts, or North-South comparative analysis	Prioritized
Temporal Scope	Publications must fall within the 2015–2025/2026 window	Enforced

Note. Records retrieved=1,000, Records excluded (abstract screening) =920, Final studies included for full analysis= 80

The exclusion of studies was primarily due to a lack of direct relevance to university research impact, absence of well-being/community linkage, or insufficient methodological align-

ment with management science perspectives. The full PRISMA 2020 flow diagram is depicted in Figure 1, which shows the identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion stages.

Figure 1*Flow Diagram***Data Extraction, Synthesis and Analytical Strategy**

Data extracted from the 80 shortlisted studies were combined in a narrative-thematic synthesis, using systematic coding and comparative analysis across studies. It enabled the integration of quantitative descriptive themes (thematic writing, methodological approaches) with qualitative ones (instruments of impact, contextual differences, and institutional insufficiencies).

The synthesis examined (i) key research themes, (ii) trends over time in research relevance to universities, (iii) geographical inequities (with particular attention to the Global South), (iv) in-

tegration of management science methods for impact research, and (v) mechanisms of research transfer in different institutional and policy settings as summarized in Table 2.

The methodological framework of the study is based on systematic principles of transparency, reproducibility and coherence. This ensures interpretive validity through human oversight. This research combines elements of systematic review, evidence mapping and structured qualitative synthesis to provide a holistic assessment of global research trends in universities' contributions to human well-being and community impact.

Table 2*Data Synthesis and Analytical Framework*

Analytical Dimension	Purpose of Analysis	Key Analytical Focus
Thematic Synthesis	Identify dominant intellectual structures	Clustering of themes (e.g., SDGs, resilience, governance, innovation, community impact)
Temporal Analysis	Examine the evolution of research (2015–2026)	Shifts in topics, methods, and priorities over time
Geographic Analysis	Assess Global South representation	Country-level participation, Nepal focus, North–South collaboration patterns
Methodological Analysis	Classify research approaches	Bibliometric, systematic review, empirical models, mixed methods
Management Science Integration	Evaluate decision-support usage	MCDM, stakeholder analysis, simulation, optimization, impact frameworks
Research Impact Pathways	Understand the link to well-being	SDG alignment, policy influence, co-creation, knowledge transfer
Gap Analysis	Identify limitations and weaknesses	Geographic, methodological, institutional, and translational gaps

Note. Source: Author(s).

Results

Characteristics of Studies

The 80 sources reviewed cover a broad spectrum of research areas, geographical areas, time periods, study designs, and types of analysis, all described in Table 3.

The search period starts in 2015, but only 3 of the 80 studies searched in that period were published between 2015 and 2017, 22 (27%) between 2018 and 2022, and 55 (68%) between 2023 and 2026 (Table 3). The distribution of empirical and bibliomet-

ric research showed delayed growth in research aligned with the SDGs from the early years, with most studies producing policy documents and conceptual frameworks that did not fulfil the inclusion criteria. Formal modelling of growth rates was not within the scope of this review; the concentration of studies observed in the years 2023–2026 (69% of the collections) is consistent with the observed upward trends in the numbers of publications around SDGs from the included bibliometric reviews (Hossain & Haque, 2026; Sekyere et al., 2025). The growth in publications as reported in this section is not necessarily statistically analyzed and should be considered to indicate patterns reported in the studies included.

Table 3*Summary of Included Studies (n=80)*

Study Domain	Count	Primary Method	Geographic Emphasis	Date
Sustainability in HEIs	25	Bibliometric / Review	Global / Regional	From 2015–2017 (n=3), Early SDG-era; policy/conceptual papers
SDG Research Trends	30	Bibliometric / Scientometric	Global / Global South	
Env. Science & Climate	10	Systematic Review / Mixed	Global South / LMICs	From 2018–2022 (n=22) Growing empirical base
Health & Well-being	8	Priority-setting / Review	Global South (Nepal, Uganda)	
Management Science (CSR, HRM)	7	Bibliometric / Content Analysis	Global / South Asia	From 2023–2026 (n=55) Rapid maturation of SDG research field

Note. Source: Author(s).

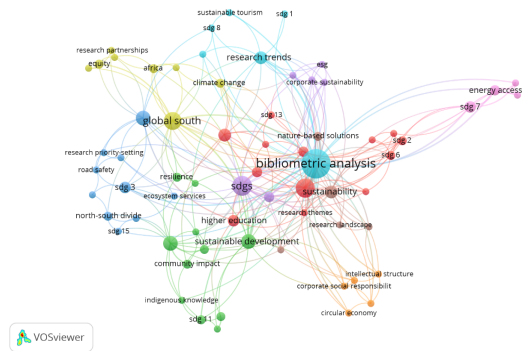
Co-occurrence Analysis

In this section, we have analyzed co-occurring author keywords using VOSviewer to explore the intellectual landscape of the literature and its thematic patterns.

The co-occurrence analysis reveals 4 major groups: SDG

frameworks and bibliometric methods (red); well-being, higher education and sustainability (green); environmental governance relating to climate change and resilience (blue); and context-specific research in lower-income settings, with focus on Nepal and health priorities (yellow).

Figure 2
Clusters Reflection



The sustainability concept serves as a linking concept trans-disciplinarily, as detailed in Table 4, between the various clus-

ters.

Table 4, further, shows the network produced 78 keywords organized into nine key thematic clusters, with normative and applied centers of the network being Cluster 1 (SDG frameworks and research methods), Cluster 5 (management science and ESG), SDGs (14 occurrences) and SDGs (15 occurrences) acting as high density bridging nodes, while Cluster 4 (North-South research partnerships) and Cluster 3 (Global South health and equity) together place geopolitical imbalance and Nepal (8 occurrences, the most frequent keyword at country level) at the center of the network. Other terms, such as indigenous knowledge, community resilience, monitoring and evaluation, and transdisciplinary research, and the most emergent cluster, Cluster 7 (corporate responsibility and circular economy), also provide quantitative evidence that participatory and accountability-focused approaches are under-represented in the network's structure despite being normatively prominent in the literature's recommendations.

Table 4
Cluster/Theme

Cluster / Theme	Key keywords	Top keyword (occurrences)	Avg. pub. year
SDG Frameworks & Research Methods	SDGs Well-being Bibliometric Review SDG 2, 4, 6, 12, 13 education, scientometrics, agriculture	SDGs (14)	2024.6
Community Impact & Sustainability	sustainable development systematic review community impact university research resilience indigenous knowledge SDG 11 Thailand	Systematic review (8)	2024.3
Global South Health & Equity	Nepal North-South Divide SDG 3, 15 biodiversity road safety ecosystem services stakeholder engagement research priority-setting	Nepal (8)	2023.5
North-South Research Partnerships	global south climate change equity Africa research partnerships north-south collaboration monitoring and evaluation transdisciplinary research	Global South (12)	2024.2
Management Science & ESG	SDGs, management science, environmental sustainability, corporate sustainability ESG triple bottom line	SDGs (15)	2024.9
Bibliometrics & Research Trends	bibliometric analysis research trends entrepreneurship SDG 1, 8 sustainable tourism	Bibliometric analysis (33)	2024.9
Corporate Responsibility & Circular Economy	corporate social responsibility (CSR), circular economy, intellectual structure, SDG 12	CSR / Corporate SR (2 each)	2025.5
Sustainability Research Landscape	sustainability, nature-based solutions, higher education institutions, research landscape VosViewer	Sustainability (6)	2024.4
Energy Access & Rural Electrification	SDG 7 energy access, rural electrification, decentralized energy	SDG 7 (5)	2024.6

Note. Source: Author(s).

Thematic Analysis

We have analyzed major themes that emerged from the reviewed database. Themes were derived inductively from structured coding of the 80 included studies using NVivo, followed by iterative human review to validate and consolidate categories. The following six themes represent the dominant patterns that emerged from this data-driven process, rather than being imposed a priori."

SDG Alignment as the Organizing Framework for Research Relevance

Across nearly all the studies, the SDGs provide the key normative framework for university research to link with human well-being and societal impact. Before 2015, the number of publications on the SDGs was low, but the 2030 Agenda led to an explosion of research across disciplines. Bibliometric studies reveal that interest spiked dramatically after 2014 and in 2023 (Kumari et al., 2025), with urban climate change studies increasing by 21.84% annually post-2015 climate deals (Sekyere et al., 2025), exponential growth in green economy research post-2016 (Imtiaz et al., 2025), and from fewer than 30 papers in 2015 to more than 130 in 2024 in South Asian solid waste management research (Hossain & Haque, 2026). Across the entire themes, SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 4 (Quality Education) are consistently the most researched in higher education (Chung et al., 2024), with SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) dominating environmental and management sciences (Sharma & Bhimavarapu, 2025).

The SDG structure also organizes studies of research impact pathways. The imbalance here mirrors a broader trend: research significance is increasingly defined in terms of the SDGs, but the pathway from SDG alignment to community impact remains, for the most part, aspirational in all studies. Most studies document potential impact pathways rather than confirmed community-level outcomes (Roy et al., 2022), with only a minority: the Uganda newborn health priority-setting exercise (Waiswa et al., 2019), the Thailand school disaster resilience intervention (Juwitasari, 2025), the NepalUnited States health partnership evaluation (Amos et al., 2023), and the PAR study spanning six countries (Uraguchi, 2025); so long as evidence of actual, rather than anticipated, community impact.

Underutilization of Management Science Tools

A striking methodological convergence emerges across the 80 sources: bibliometric analysis has become the dominant approach for mapping the relevance of university research to well-being and community outcomes. VOSviewer and Biblioshiny or R-based bibliometrix packages are employed across disciplines spanning environmental science (Roy et al., 2022; Sekyere et al., 2025), health sciences (Justin et al., 2025; H. L. Shrestha et al., 2025), management science (Mishra & Pandey, 2025), and education (Chung et al., 2024). Machine learning-assisted approaches are beginning to emerge: BERTopic topic modeling is used by Das et al. (2026) to identify latent thematic structures in sustainable fashion research, and by Nedungadi et al. (2025) to cluster SDG research themes in Africa. Co-

citation, bibliographic coupling, keyword co-occurrence, and co-authorship analyses are routinely combined to produce intellectual maps of field structure and evolution.

Management science tools appear rarely. The most explicit use of a multi-criteria prioritization model is found in the Uganda newborn health study (Waiswa et al., 2019). The Delphi study on road safety priorities in Nepal employed a five-point Likert-scale ranking across stakeholder groups drawn from government, academia, engineering, healthcare, and civil society (Pant et al., 2022). The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance study employed participatory vulnerability assessments and multi-criteria cost-effectiveness analysis (Mechler et al., 2018). The PAR study across six countries used binary logistic regression (Uraguchi, 2025). Dahal et al. (2020) used management accounting practices as decision-support tools in Nepalese manufacturing companies to demonstrate their effectiveness when combined with basic management science techniques, which they adapted to local institutional contexts. Karki and Dahal (2024) used service quality frameworks to measure investor satisfaction in Nepal's online stock trading system, demonstrating that management science methods could operate in resource-limited environments lacking advanced computing systems.

Outside these exceptions, management science tools remain significantly underutilized. Systematic reviews on global surgery (Kebede et al., 2023) and humanitarian technology recommend monitoring and evaluation, but provide limited evidence of their use. In higher education sustainability, the Smart Sustainable Campus review identifies a lack of integrated frameworks, metrics, and policy strategies (Essien et al., 2026). A number of studies explicitly recommend future integration of management science tools such as longitudinal designs and mixed methods (Justin et al., 2025), computational tools, such as social network analysis, standardized ESG reporting (Mishra & Pandey, 2025), artificial intelligence-based governance and blockchain-based reporting (Imtiaz et al., 2025), but these have not been demonstrated in the period of review.

Well-Being Metrics and Community Impact Directions

Well-being indicators cited in this body have become more sophisticated and expansive over the 2015-2026 period. Initially, health metrics (mortality, morbidity, disability-adjusted life years) and economic empowerment measures dominated. By the mid-2020s, a much wider range of metrics appears: psychosocial resilience measures (Justin et al., 2025), eudaimonic well-being measures (Hasni et al., 2025), climate resilience measures (Juwitasari, 2025), water and groundwater sufficiency measures (Eleksiani et al., 2025) and multi-dimensional measures such as the Flood Resilience Measurement Framework for Communities (Mechler et al., 2018). Joshi and Dahal (2024) expanded the measurement of well-being in Nepalese contexts through their study, which showed that economic push factors, together with psychosocial well-being, determine youth migration patterns. The research demonstrates that well-being assessment must include both economic indicators and subjective personal experiences, as well as social relationship aspects.

Pathways to community impact fall into several recurrent mechanisms. Co-creation and PAR figure most prominently

across fields as diverse as urban governance for climate change (Sekyere et al., 2025) and university-community partnerships in southern Africa (Charmaine Bock et al., 2025). Knowledge translation and policy influence constitute a second major pathway: studies in global surgery (Kebede et al., 2023), social protection in Nepal (Slater et al., 2018), road safety prioritization (Pant et al., 2022), and sustainable development policy (Shabbir & Salman, 2025) all describe mechanisms through which research findings are intended to reach and influence policymakers. A third pathway, capacity-building, appears prominently in discussions of NorthSouth research partnerships (Anghileri et al., 2023), humanitarian supply chain management (Bamel, 2025).

A critical distinction emerges between studies that describe actual versus potential community impact. The PAR study spanning six countries finds that participation in monitoring and adaptive learning functions as a systemic driver of institutional legitimacy, stakeholder trust, and long-term research uptake (Uraguchi, 2025). The Mahasarakham University case study in Thailand offers equally concrete institutional evidence: sustainability-oriented academic programs expanded from 49 to 58, the GreenMetric score rose from 7,575 to 8,475, and the number of internationally collaborative articles increased from 126 to 184 between 2021 and 2024 (Sribanasarn et al., 2025). The majority of studies in the field articulate potential impact without providing corresponding evidence of outcomes.

Temporal Evolution of Research Themes, Priorities, and Methodological Approaches

Over the 2015-2026 period, publication volumes accelerated sharply post-2015 and again during 2020-2022 (Bamel, 2025; Sekyere et al., 2025). Themes evolved from conservation to social-ecological systems and from technical to participatory waste management. However, the methodological framework has not yet followed suit. Longitudinal, participatory, and inclusive data sourcing (beyond Scopus) is preferred over embedded sourcing. The challenge for the next decade is not the production of more SDG-oriented research but the development of a methodological framework that can demonstrate, not just claim, that it is changing communities.

NorthSouth Divide in Research Production and Relevance

The structural asymmetry between Global North research production and Global South research needs has been the most consistently documented finding in the surveyed literature. The divide manifests across multiple reinforcing dimensions.

With respect to research authorship, scholars from the Global North dominate research based on empirical data from the Global South. In global surgery, research authored by Global North countries accounted for 42% of first-author and 43% of last-author contributions, even though South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are the most studied regions (Kebede et al., 2023). In the Payments for Ecosystem Services, Global North institutions originated 73% of the research, while 81% of the research was based on empirical data from Global South regions, a highly colonial bias (Kolinjivadi et al., 2023). In NDC monitoring research in Africa, only 1% of the authors were African

(Abanda et al., 2023). In the Global Souths spatial conservation, the USA, the UK and Australia collectively produced almost 66% of research (Cobb et al., 2024). In transboundary river research, Global North institutions dominate both the study themes and the research locations (Sahana et al., 2024). Research on riparian ecosystem restoration (78.2%) is based on studies conducted by institutions in the Global North (Becoche Mosquera & Macías Pinto, 2025).

A thematic mismatch emerges when the Global North shapes research agendas. Transboundary river research shows the Global North focuses on governance and the ecological functions, while the Global South primarily focuses on politics and hydro-politics (Sahana et al., 2024). The meta-analysis of ecosystem services presents the field as an ecological solution with little substantive evidence, leading Global North researchers to enter Global South regions without meaningful collaboration with local populations (Kolinjivadi et al., 2023). More than 80% of entrepreneurial positive psychology research is conducted in developing countries, but most studies offer limited exploration, making findings less transferable (Barbosa et al., 2025).

The North-South divide exists at a fundamental level, creating an epistemic issue that undermines proper academic evaluation and equitable research outcomes in SDG-aligned university research. The identified enablers: equitable partnerships, South-South collaboration, open-access systems and participatory co-design, are well-characterized. The remaining challenge is scaling them. The SDG-aligned research field will continue to follow colonial epistemological hierarchies until research funding, leadership, and co-production processes undergo fundamental structural transformations.

Nepal and Small, Climate-Vulnerable, Resource-Constrained Settings

Five sources provide specialized treatment focusing on Nepal-specific or narrowly comparable small, resource-constrained, and climate-impovertised contexts, and several others briefly mention or reference them. Collectively, these sources discuss the particular characteristics, challenges, and opportunities for the field of management science in those contexts.

The TU financial sustainability study finds that despite formal alignment with SDGs and supportive national policies, reliance on recurrent government grants fundamentally constrains curriculum reform, sustainability research, and education for sustainable development initiatives (R. Shrestha, 2025). Public investment predominantly covers administrative spending rather than program-oriented budgets, and SDG 4.7 remains weakly embedded as a structural consequence (R. Shrestha, 2025). This finding parallels the broader pattern identified in the higher education institution sustainability review: resource-constrained and post-conflict HEI contexts are the least represented in the global literature, despite having the greatest need for evidence-based institutional guidance (Hassan & Ahmad, 2025). Dahal et al. (2025) conducted a thematic review of business performance metrics, seeking to improve well-being and resilience and enhance service delivery.

The knowledge management study in Nepalese HEIs finds that

institutions have yet to integrate knowledge management activities into their aims and core functions, and that a knowledge-management cultural framework is urgently needed to address the persistent knowledge-doing gap (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2022). Ghimire and Dahal (2024) examined how financial well-being affects households, as the study area had been neglected by institutional research. The study shows that management science tools, including financial literacy frameworks, can operate in resource-limited urban environments. The research findings demonstrate that policy translation mechanisms are ineffective, confirming the knowledge-to-action gap identified in the broader knowledge of studies.

The road safety Delphi study in Nepal stands as one of the few examples in this knowledge of an explicit multi-criteria stakeholder engagement process applied to research prioritization in a low-income country context. Engaging 93 participants drawn from government, academia, engineering, healthcare, and civil society, the study identified six priority research questions spanning governance accountability, road design, vehicle fitness, driver licensing, public vehicle safety, and emergency response (Pant et al., 2022). The study candidly acknowledges that the majority of participants were drawn from the Kathmandu Valley, creating an urban bias. The study demonstrates that institutions' existing research capacities face ongoing challenges due to insufficient organizational structures that limit their ability to conduct research (Pant et al., 2022).

The evaluation of the NepalUnited States health partnership assessment establishes evidence for collaboration equity, which most participants experienced through bi-directional benefits and shared power relationships, although Nepali participants showed lower agreement on equal power sharing than U.S. participants, and the COVID-19 pandemic majorly affected their in-person work activities (Amos et al., 2023). The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance study in Nepal's Karnali river basin and in Peru demonstrates that participatory, iterative learning approaches, including Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments, simulation games, and community-level resilience measurement, can be co-generated and applied meaningfully across temporal and agency scales. However, seamless integration is neither always possible nor necessarily desirable (Mechler et al., 2018). The health equity bibliometric analysis of Nepal further reveals that a well-connected international research cluster, led by prominent figures including Thornicroft and Kohrt, works in collaboration with a tight national Nepali cluster, including Luitel and Lamichhane, with bridging individuals facilitating cross-cluster knowledge flows; however, the analysis notes a potential and concerning divide between globally and locally led research priorities (H. L. Shrestha et al., 2025).

Comparable dynamics are documented in analogous settings across the Global South. The disaster risk reduction thematic analysis in Thailand finds that research is concentrated in urban areas, with minimal attention to rural regions; that physical infrastructure concerns dominate over socioeconomic dimensions; and that disaster education is the least researched disaster risk reduction theme despite its centrality to community resilience (Inpin & Dania, 2023). The MSU-GenSan university-based research mapping in the Philippines identifies signifi-

cant data gaps stemming from the loss of undergraduate theses across multiple academic years and recommends improved archival systems, alongside strengthened academelocal government partnerships, as essential foundations for evidence-based policy development (Garcia et al., 2025). The Mahasarakham University case study in Thailand demonstrates that a resource-constrained regional university can nonetheless achieve meaningful SDG integration through strategic SDG-aligned investment, Plan-Do-Check-Act governance cycles, and sustained cross-sector collaboration (Sribanasarn et al., 2025).

The evidence synthesized across Nepal and analogous small, climate-vulnerable, resource-constrained settings reveals a consistent and troubling pattern: the institutions and communities most exposed to the consequences of SDG underachievement are simultaneously the most underserved by the global research infrastructure designed to support it. TU's budget-constrained SDG misalignment (H. L. Shrestha et al., 2025), the Kathmandu-valley urban bias in Nepal's road safety prioritization (Pant et al., 2022), the power asymmetries within the NepalUnited States health partnership (Amos et al., 2023), and the archival losses undermining evidence-based policy in the Philippines (Garcia et al., 2025) are not isolated institutional failures; they are symptomatic expressions of the structural NorthSouth divide documented in Section 3.2.5, now operating at the national and subnational level. The study shows real pathways to progress through its findings. The Karnali basin participatory resilience study demonstrates that iterative, co-generated methodologies can function meaningfully even in severely resource-constrained environments (Mechler et al., 2018), and the Mahasarakham case confirms that strategic governance frameworks can produce measurable SDG integration without requiring high-income institutional resources (Sribanasarn et al., 2025). The management science research field requires context-sensitive, participatory, institution-based research methods because these approaches are essential to conducting research that achieves both trustworthiness and significant impact.

Discussion

The results show that the number of publications on the SDGs has increased significantly since 2015, but gaps remain in the field regarding research relevance, geographic equity, and community impact across the reviewed research. This paradox is nothing new. It manifests a long-standing conflict in the sociology of knowledge between Mode 1 knowledge production, based on disciplines and institutionally self-referential, and Mode 2 knowledge production, which is problem-oriented, participatory, and context-sensitive, as described by Gibbons et al. (1994). This strength indicates that there has been an appropriation of the language of SDG-aligned university research, but not yet its structural conditions.

Locally-led, participatory and institutional partnerships are clearly more effective in research. This trend is supported by the Uganda newborn health prioritization (Waiswa et al., 2019), the Nepal road safety Delphi study (Pant et al., 2022), and the six-country PAR study (Uraguchi, 2025). The results of this

study support both the community-based participatory research framework of Israel et al. (2012) and the theory of participatory knowledge power of Gaventa and Cornwall (2006), which suggest that research is relevant when whose knowledge is considered and who controls the research agenda are taken into account.

However, an alternative explanation should also be considered: some of the apparent poor performance of externally funded research could be due to measurement bias rather than to actual poor performance. The majority of this review; bibliometric tools which systematically exclude grey literature, practitioner reporting and non-English-language publications, where usage of applied management science tools and community-level impact are most likely to be recorded (Hassan & Ahmad, 2025; Shabbir & Salman, 2025). This is a tentative conclusion because the absence of management science tools in Scopus-indexed literature does not necessarily mean they are not used in practice.

This NorthSouth asymmetry, as seen here, can be understood as an engagement with postcolonial science studies and Connell (2007) Southern theory, which claims that knowledge produced at the global periphery is systematically devalued by academic institutions in the metropolitan centers of the globe. The payments-for-ecosystem-services meta-analysis is the most extreme example of this: a decontextualized, externally imposed structure that can exacerbate rather than solve social and ecological crises (Kolinjivadi et al., 2023). Incapacities to structurally reform the system, such as devolving research leadership to Southern stakeholders, formalizing equitable co-authorship, and extending the index to include more than Scopus indexing, are not nice-to-have' improvements but rather prerequisites for epistemically just and practically effective SDG research (Anghileri et al., 2023).

There are four mechanisms that sustain the relevance gap. Academic incentives are given for novelty of method rather than for applied impact (Huang et al., 2024). Community change processes demand long-term engagement (over decades), whereas short funding cycles (2-4 years) create temporal mismatches (Scaini et al., 2024). The imposition of conditionalities on North-South partnerships undermines the South's autonomy in conducting research (Anghileri et al., 2023). Locally relevant, non-English, and grey literature is invisible in Scopus-based bibliometrics (Hassan & Ahmad, 2025). These mechanisms form a self-reinforcing process that favors research production over research impact, which goes beyond incremental methodological changes. Nepal's case highlights this systemic failure: a national-level SDG agenda, budget constraints, research bias toward cities, and reliance on research frameworks set outside Nepal, all of which reflect structural barriers at the institutional, national, and global levels and widen the alignment-to-impact gap. To overcome these interlocking barriers, we must more fundamentally reconceptualize what constitutes good research design, funding, and governance in a way that puts community well-being outcomes at the heart of the university's research mission rather than publication metrics.

Conclusion

This study reviewed 80 peer-reviewed publications from the fields of environmental science, health, management science and education between 2015 and 2026 to examine how university research improves community well-being in resource-poor and climate-sensitive environments. Although the number of publications on SDG-related themes has grown exponentially, tangible community-level results are rare, indicating not only a methodological but also a structural deficiency. There are three findings that are especially important. Decentralized, participatory and policy-integrated research consistently yields greater results for communities than research driven from above. There is a widespread NorthSouth imbalance that explicitly influences research agendas and affects the authorship of empirical studies from the Global South. While management science tools have been effective in Nepal, Uganda and Peru to date, they are underutilized. This experience in Nepal, which includes the challenges of resource constraints at Tribhuvan University, research focus on urban contexts, and power asymmetries in partnering, shows the ways in which global structural barriers can manifest at the national level and highlights the capacity for contextually salient, participatory research to produce policy-relevant evidence under extreme resource constraints. Institutional changes in research governance, partnership equity and impact measurement, and funding mechanisms that emphasize community impact over publications are needed to close the alignment-to-impact gap. Recommendations for future studies include longitudinal, community-driven, multilingual studies that use standardized community well-being measures and go beyond literature published in Scopus-indexed journals.

Implications

For Nepal and analogous small, climate-vulnerable, resource-constrained settings, the evidence supports several specific conclusions. Management science research in these settings is more likely to achieve community relevance when it employs explicit stakeholder engagement frameworks and multi-criteria research prioritization, embeds participatory monitoring and adaptive learning from the outset, and aligns with existing national policy frameworks and institutional planning cycles rather than operating independently of them.

The financial sustainability constraint at TU demonstrates that government grants, which support operational costs rather than funding research projects and educational program development, constitute Nepal's most direct evidence of a loss of research value due to limited resource availability. It also points to a specific intervention leverage point: performance-linked and project-based funding mechanisms partially address these limitations, but their fragmentation undermines systematic integration of the SDGs. This mirrors the pattern found in the HEI sustainability review, which identifies unreliable funding flows, policy incoherence, and shortages of qualified staff as the dominant institutional barriers in post-conflict and resource-constrained settings.

Future research should prioritize longitudinal, participatory studies at Nepal's subnational government level to test whether co-designed research agendas yield measurably higher policy uptake than investigator-driven designs. Comparative studies across provinces that apply the Delphi method, the CHNRI framework, and validated community engagement tools would further establish transferable evidence for SDG-aligned management science in resource-constrained federal settings.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use and Disclosure

Statement: In the preparation of this manuscript, AI tools were used for some sections, with minimal or no editing.

Similarity and Originality Confirmation

The manuscript is original, not under review elsewhere, and complies with TUJ publication ethics.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding

The authors declare no funding received.

Data Availability

Data available from the corresponding author on request.

References

- Abad-Segura, E., & González-Zamar, M.-D. (2021). Sustainable economic development in higher education institutions: A global analysis within the sdgs framework. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 294, 126133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.126133>
- Abanda, F. H., Chia, E. L., Enongene, K. E., Fobissie, K., Manjia, M. B., & Pettang, C. (2023). Catalysing the monitoring and evaluation of nationally determined contributions through northsouth cooperation. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 26(4), 8211–8234. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-023-03092-5>
- Adhikari, D. R., & Shrestha, P. (2022). Knowledge management initiatives for achieving sustainable development goal 4.7: Higher education institutions stakeholder perspectives. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 27(4), 1109–1139. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jkm-03-2022-0172>
- Agusdinata, D. B. (2022). The role of universities in sdgs solution co-creation and implementation: A human-centered design and shared-action learning process. *Sustainability Science*, 17(4), 1589–1604. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-022-01128-9>
- Amos, V., LeBaron, V., Chuong, T., Elmore, C. E., Hamal, P. K., Paudel, B. D., Steen, A., & Chapagain, S. (2023). Co-constructing collaboration: An evidence-based approach to advance and evaluate equitable global public health research partnerships (C. E. Draper, Ed.). *PLOS Global Public Health*, 3(10), e0002481. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0002481>
- Anghileri, D., Kandel, M., Austen, M. C., Cheung, V. V., Coskeran, H., Devenish, A. J. M., Dunlop, P. S. M., Dzodzomenyo, M., Goh, H. C., Mwamakamba, S., Ross, V., Spafford, J., Yeki, P., & Agaba, G. (2023). Rethinking northsouth research partnerships amidst global uncertainties: Leveraging lessons learned from uk gcrf projects during covid-19. *Land*, 12(4), 791. <https://doi.org/10.3390/land12040791>
- Bamel, U. (2025). A systematic analysis of big data-driven humanitarian supply chain management research: Implications for emerging economies. *Administrative Sciences*, 15(12), 478. <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci15120478>
- Barbosa, R., Barbosa, M., Pérez-Nebra, A. R., Villajos, E., & González-Ladrón-de-Guevara, F. (2025). A half-century perspective of entrepreneurs well-being: Comparing academic and global entrepreneurship monitor trends. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-025-04869-x>
- Becoche Mosquera, J. M., & Macías Pinto, D. J. (2025). Global perspectives on riparian ecosystem restoration: A systematic literature review. *World*, 6(4), 164. <https://doi.org/10.3390/world6040164>
- Brear, M., Hammarberg, K., & Fisher, J. (2017). Community participation in research from resource-constrained countries: A scoping review. *Health Promotion International*, 33(4), 723–733. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dax010>
- Chapman, G. R., Cully, A., Kosiol, J., Macht, S. A., Chapman, R. L., Fitzgerald, J. A., & Gertsen, F. (2020). The wicked problem of measuring real-world research impact: Using sustainable development goals (sdgs) and targets in academia. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 26(6), 1030–1047. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2020.16>
- Charmaine Bock, J. T., Walddt, I. d., & Plessis, D. J. d. (2025). University-community engagement: Challenges and mitigation strategies. a systematic literature review and future research directions. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(12), 3192–3206. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2024.8120265>
- Chung, F.-L., Chung, H.-H., & Lin, S.-M. (2024). Current themes and future directions of the sustainable development goals in higher education. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 25(8), 1980–1994. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijshe-07-2023-0308>
- Cobb, G., Nalau, J., & Chauvenet, A. L. M. (2024). Global trends in geospatial conservation planning: A review of priorities and missing dimensions. *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2023.1209620>

- Connell, R. (2007). The northern theory of globalization. *Sociological Theory*, 25(4), 368–385. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2007.00314.x>
- Dahal, R. K., Bhattarai, G., & Karki, D. (2020). Management accounting techniques on rationalize decisions in the nepalese listed manufacturing companies. *Researcher: A Research Journal of Culture and Society*, 4(1), 112–128. <https://doi.org/10.3126/researcher.v4i1.33816>
- Dahal, R. K., Karki, D., Gurung, R., Ghimire, B., & Joshi, S. P. (2025). Direction of business performance metrics: A thematic review. *SAGE Open*, 15(4), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251392797>
- Das, P., Das, D., & Raman, R. (2026). Sustainable fashion and sustainable development goals nexus: A thematic and future-oriented review. *Cleaner and Responsible Consumption*, 21, 100397. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clrc.2026.100397>
- Eleksiani, A., Jackson, M., Mackey, B., & Beal, C. (2025). Renewable energy systems in supporting climate resilience of off-grid communities: A review of the literature and practice. *Journal of Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and Environment Systems*, 13(3), 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.13044/j.sdewes.d13.0569>
- Essien, A., Ekhaese, E., & Babalola, D. (2026). Sustainable development strategies for smart sustainable campus operations: Global trends, challenges and opportunities. *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 8. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsc.2026.1747438>
- Garcia, M. C. A., Dela Vega, C. J., & Zapico, F. L. (2025). University-based systematic review of prevailing trends and information gaps in sarangani research using prisma: Pilot testing for feasibility. *Journal of Engineering, Environment, and Agriculture Research*, 4(1), 81–88. <https://doi.org/10.34002/jecar.v4i1.123>
- Gaventa, J., & Cornwall, A. (2006). Challenging the boundaries of the possible: Participation, knowledge and power. *IDS Bulletin*, 37(6), 122–128. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2006.tb00329.x>
- Ghimire, B., & Dahal, R. (2024). Examining the role of financial awareness, attitude, and knowledge in personal financial planning: A study in the kathmandu valley. *The International Research Journal of Management Science*, 9(1), 85–102. <https://doi.org/10.3126/irjms.v9i1.72717>
- Gibbons, M., Limoges, C., Scott, P., Schwartzman, S., & Nowotny, H. (1994). *The new production of knowledge: The dynamics of science and research in contemporary societies*. SAGE Publications.
- Hasni, M. J. S., Della Lucia, M., Santini, E., & Sacchetti, S. (2025). Transformative service research for human well-being: Contextual challenges, place-based framework and sdgs. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 39(10), 181–200. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jsm-01-2025-0001>
- Hassan, M. M., & Ahmad, A. R. (2025). Systematic literature review on the sustainability of higher education institutions (heis): Dimensions, practices and research gaps. *Cogent Education*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2025.2549789>
- Hossain, I., & Haque, A. K. M. M. (2026). A systematic and bibliometric review on urban governance and circular economy pathways for municipal solid waste management in south asia. *Discover Cities*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44327-026-00195-2>
- Huang, Y.-S. (, Harvey, B., & Vincent, K. (2024). Large-scale sustainability programming is reshaping research excellence: Insights from a meta-ethnographic study of 12 global initiatives. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 155, 103725. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2024.103725>
- Imtiaz, A., Yuanying, C., Shahzad, M. F., Raheel, A., Sabah, F., & Sarwar, R. (2025). Mapping the intellectual structure of green economy and sustainability: A bibliometric analysis of global research trends and policies. *Cogent Economics & Finance*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322039.2025.2507135>
- Inpin, W., & Dania, M. (2023). Mapping research on disaster risk reduction for sustainable development in thailand: Thematic analysis approach. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review*, 23(2). <https://doi.org/10.59588/2350-8329.1497>
- Israel, B. A., Eng, E., Schulz, A. J., & Parker, E. A. (Eds.). (2012). *Methods for community-based participatory research for health* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Joshi, S. P., & Dahal, R. K. (2024). Analysis of determinants of youth migration intentions in nepal. *Quest Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 6(3), 520–539. <https://doi.org/10.3126/qjmss.v6i3.72205>
- Justin, M. A. E., Cherian, N., & Mathew, V. (2025). A 30-year bibliometric analysis on the role of women self-help groups in achieving well-being and sustainable development goals. *Discover Sustainability*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-01942-y>
- Juwitasari, R. a. (2025). Strengthening resilience in schools and communities: The strategic role of universities in climate crisis management. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research*, 7(S), 106–116. <https://doi.org/10.37534/bp.jhssr.2025.v7.ns.id1299.p106-116>
- Karki, D., & Dahal, R. K. (2024). Service quality dimensions and investor satisfaction on online stock trading system in nepal. *Journal of Service, Innovation and Sustainable Development*, 5(1), 63–81. <https://doi.org/10.33168/SISD.2024.0106>
- Kebede, M. A., Tor, D. S. G., Aklilu, T., Petros, A., Ifeanyichi, M., Aderaw, E., Bognini, M. S., Singh, D., Emodi, R., Hargest, R., & Friebe, R. (2023). Identifying critical gaps in research to advance global surgery by 2030: A system-

- atic mapping review. *BMC Health Services Research*, 23(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-023-09973-9>
- Khatiwada, P. P., Shrestha, B., & KC, S. (2026). Evaluating census data quality governance through post enumeration surveys: A comparative study of three national statistical systems. *Journal of Logistics, Informatics and Service Science*, 13(6), 203–217. <https://doi.org/10.33168/JLISS.2026.0612>
- Khatiwada, P. P., Subedi, D. R., Gurung, Y. B., Pradhan, M. S., & Pradhan, P. (2023). Challenges to leave no one behind in nepal for achieving sustainable development goals. In W. Leal Filho, T. F. Ng, U. Iyer-Raniga, A. Ng, & A. Sharifi (Eds.), *Sdgs in the asia and pacific region*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91262-8_105-1
- Kolinjivadi, V., Van Hecken, G., & Merlet, P. (2023). Fifteen years of research on payments for ecosystem services (pes): Piercing the bubble of success as defined by a northern-driven agenda. *Global Environmental Change*, 83, 102758. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2023.102758>
- Kumari, A., Ghosh, M., & Pratap Singh, M. (2025). Deep dive into sustainable development goals through the lens of triple bottom line: Past, present, and future. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences / Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration*, 42(3), 352–376. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cjas.70004>
- Málovics, G., Géring, Z. M., Bajmócy, Z., Juhász, J., Csillag, S., & Király, G. (2025). Universitycommunity engagement and sustainability change: Opportunities and constraints for business schools. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 23(3), 101228. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2025.101228>
- Mechler, R., McQuistan, C., McCallum, I., Liu, W., Keating, A., Magnuszewski, P., Schinko, T., Laurien, F., & Hochrainer-Stigler, S. (2018, November). Supporting climate risk management at scale. insights from the zurich flood resilience alliance partnership model applied in peru & nepal. In *Loss and damage from climate change* (pp. 393–424). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72026-5_17
- Mishra, P., & Pandey, V. K. (2025). Triple bottom line and environmental sustainability: Evolution of global esg researcha bibliometric analysis. *Environmental Sciences Europe*, 37(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12302-025-01184-9>
- Mohd, S., Abdul Latiff, A. R., & Syed Azhar, S. N. F. (2024). Research impact assessment on sustainable development goals in higher education institutions: A qualitative study. *Sage Open*, 14(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241281095>
- Nedungadi, P., Onyancha, O. B., Filho, W. L., & Raman, R. (2025). Exploring systems analysis and interdisciplinary research approaches for sustainable development in africa. *Discover Sustainability*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-01792-8>
- Pant, P. R., Rana, P., Pradhan, K., Joshi, S. K., & Mytton, J. (2022). Identifying research priorities for road safety in nepal: A delphi study. *BMJ Open*, 12(4), e059312. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-059312>
- Roy, A., Basu, A., Su, Y., Li, Y., & Dong, X. (2022). Understanding recent trends in global sustainable development goal 6 research: Scientometric, text mining and an improved framework for future research. *Sustainability*, 14(4), 2208. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14042208>
- Sahana, M., Dhali, M. K., & Lindley, S. (2024). Global disparities in transboundary river research have implications for sustainable management. *Communications Earth & Environment*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43247-024-01928-0>
- Scaini, A., Mulligan, J., Berg, H., Brangarí, A., Bukachi, V., Carenzo, S., Chau Thi, D., Courtney-Mustaphi, C., Ekblom, A., Fjelde, H., Fridahl, M., Hansson, A., Hicks, L., Höjer, M., Juma, B., Kain, J.-H., Kariuki, R. W., Kim, S., Lane, P., ... Tompsett, A. (2024). Pathways from research to sustainable development: Insights from ten research projects in sustainability and resilience. *Ambio*, 53(4), 517–533. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13280-023-01968-4>
- Sekyere, C. K. K., Odoi-Yorke, F., Baah, B., Oppon, J. A., Agbenorhevi, A. E., & Atepor, L. (2025). Mapping urban climate change research: Insights from 20 years of global research trends, thematic evolution, and future perspectives. *Nature-Based Solutions*, 8, 100271. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nbsj.2025.100271>
- Shabbir, M. S., & Salman, R. (2025). Sustainable development policy interventions: Stakeholder engagement and environmental policy in practice. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 35(2), 1997–2013. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.70274>
- Sharma, E., & Bhimavarapu, V. M. (2025). A scientometric exploration of global research and evolving themes on the sustainable development goals. *Discover Sustainability*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-025-02224-3>
- Shrestha, H. L., Paudel, B., Paudel, S., Gurung, M., & Khatiwada, B. (2025). A bibliometric critique of health equity research growth in nepal (2016–2025). *NPRC Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(14), 78–90. <https://doi.org/10.3126/nprcjm.v2i14.88018>
- Shrestha, R. (2025). Financial sustainability as a catalyst for sdg implementation in higher education: Evidence from tribhuvan university. *Janaprakash Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 3, 106–134. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jjmr.v3i1.89274>
- Slater, R., Ghimire, A., & Baur, D. (2018). *Strengthening links between social protection and disaster risk management for adaptive social protection in nepal* (tech. rep.). World Bank. <https://doi.org/10.1596/31213>
- Sribanasarn, W., Phumiphan, A., Kaewplang, S., Khotdee, M., Sivanpheng, O., & Kangrang, A. (2025). Sustainability in action: Analyzing mahasarakham universitys integration of

sdgs in education, research, and operations. *Sustainability*, 17(14), 6378. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17146378>

Uraguchi, Z. (2025). Nothing about them without them: Insights from six countries on involving beneficiaries in co-design, monitoring, and evaluation of research-to-impact projects. *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsc.2025.1569830>

Waiswa, P., Okuga, M., Kabwijamu, L., Akuze, J., Sengendo, H., Aliganyira, P., Pirio, P., Hanson, C., & Kaharuza, F. (2019). Using research priority-setting to guide bridging the implementation gap in countries a case study of the uganda newborn research priorities in the sdg era. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 17(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-019-0459-5>