Lingnan University 2025/2026 SDG Report
SDG 16 – PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



219
Undergraduate Courses

770
Research Outputs

114
Projects/Grants

Lingnan University is committed to advancing **SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** through research, education, and community initiatives that promote transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability. By addressing issues of governance, social justice, and institutional reform, Lingnan scholars contribute to building fairer and more resilient societies. Through interdisciplinary collaboration and evidence based research, the University supports the creation of effective, rights-respecting institutions that foster peace and justice locally and globally.

Strengthening Public Institutions Through Citizen Insights and Strategic Management

Professor Richard M. Walker, Lee Shau Kee Foundation Chair Professor of Public Administration and Director of the Lingnan University Institute for Advanced Study, advances research supporting SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. His work explores how understanding citizens' experiences and applying evidence-informed strategic management can improve public services and organisational performance. Together, these complementary research areas offer insights into building effective, accountable and responsive public institutions.

Citizen satisfaction and strong institutions

Professor Richard M. Walker's research examines how public institutions can better understand citizens' experiences and use satisfaction data to improve public services. Two co-authored articles offer guidance on measuring citizen satisfaction more meaningfully. Their insights are relevant to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, by helping institutions interpret public feedback and identify where

services fall short of citizens' standards.

In "The expectancy-disconfirmation model and citizen satisfaction with public services: A meta-analysis and an agenda for best practice" (Public Administration Review, 2022, 82[1], 147–159), Jiasheng Zhang, Wenna Chen, Nicolai Petrovsky and Walker synthesise 163 correlations from 17 studies. They find broad support for the idea that satisfaction reflects not only perceived service performance but also how that performance compares with citizens' expectations. Satisfaction scores alone therefore cannot provide a complete picture of service quality.

The study recommends that surveys capture expectations alongside satisfaction, particularly normative expectations: the standards citizens believe services should meet. It also recommends directly asking whether services met, exceeded or fell short of expectations, rather than simply subtracting expectation scores from performance ratings. Tracking the same citizens over time, measuring expectations at the relevant point, and asking about specific services can improve understanding of changing experiences. Extending research to human services would also strengthen the evidence base.

In "The next generation of citizen satisfaction research: Theoretical and methodological advancements" (Public Management Review, 2026), Petrovsky, Walker, Miyeon Song and Nathan Favero develop this agenda further. They call for clearer definitions that distinguish satisfaction itself from the processes producing it, and greater attention to minimally acceptable service standards rather than predictions of likely performance. They also emphasise that citizens differ from commercial customers: many public services offer little choice, and some are compulsory.

The authors propose moving beyond survey responses to examine actual behaviour, including complaints, disengagement and continued service use. Linking satisfaction surveys with administrative records and using field experiments could help establish whether changes in satisfaction lead to changes in behaviour.

For strong institutions, the practical message is to listen carefully, measure consistently and interpret feedback in context. Better measurement can help public organisations distinguish perceived performance from expectations, recognise unmet standards and learn from citizens' experiences. These studies provide a foundation for more responsive service management and evidence-informed accountability, without treating satisfaction as a substitute for other measures of institutional performance.
This research has been cited in policy and practice, including the Analysis and Policy Observatory in Australia, Dutch Government, Finish Government and the PublicPolicy.ie think tank in Ireland.

Citizen Satisfaction Research: Policy Citation Records (Excel)

Strategic management and strong institutions

Professor Richard M. Walker's research at Lingnan University examines how strategic

management can strengthen public institutions by improving organisational performance. His work offers insights relevant to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, particularly the ambition to develop effective institutions. Over two decades, Walker has investigated how public organisations choose strategic directions, formulate plans, implement decisions and learn from experience. Two studies bring together evidence on the contributions of strategic choices and planning to public service performance.

In “Revisiting the venerable debate on strategy content and public service performance” (International Public Management Journal, 2026), Walker and Bert George analyse 88 effect sizes from 22 studies. They examine three strategic orientations: prospectors, which prioritise innovation; defenders, which concentrate on core services; and reactors, which respond to external instructions rather than pursue a coherent strategy.

The findings associate prospecting with better performance and reacting with poorer performance, although the overall relationships are modest. Defending has no statistically significant overall association with performance, but shows benefits in particular settings. Context matters: prospecting has a stronger positive association with performance in multipurpose organisations, such as city governments, while defending is positively associated with performance in single-purpose organisations, such as school districts. These findings suggest that institutions should align their strategic orientation with their responsibilities rather than adopt a universal model.

In “Does strategic planning improve organizational performance? A meta-analysis” (Public Administration Review, 2019, 79[6], 810–819), Bert George, Walker and Joost Monster synthesise 87 correlations from 31 studies. They find a positive, small-to-moderate relationship between strategic planning and organisational performance across public and private sectors and US and non-US settings.

The relationship is strongest when planning involves systematic internal and external analysis and the formulation of goals, strategies and plans, and when performance is measured as effectiveness: achieving organisational goals. Planning should therefore not be treated simply as producing a document or as a guaranteed route to efficiency savings.

Together, these studies show how evidence-informed strategic management can support stronger institutions. Their practical message is to combine clear goals and rigorous planning with strategic choices suited to organisational purpose. For public institutions addressing societal challenges, innovation and reliable core services are complementary priorities, supported by implementation and continuous learning. The evidence supports informed managerial judgement, not a single prescription for every institution.

This research has been widely cited in policy and practice, including the Belgian Federal Public Service, French Ministry of the Economy, Government of Finland, OCED, State of California, Swedish Transport Administration, UNESCO, and the US Institute for

Defense Analysis (source Overton), and in US President Biden's Financial Year 2023 Budget (https://www.cityu.edu.hk/class/media_events/news_item.aspx?ref=367) and the official US Budget Guidance for Federal Agencies (https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BUDGET-2023-PER/pdf/BUDGET-2023-PER-3-1.pdf).

Strategic Planning Research: Policy Citation Records (Excel)
Strategic Management Research: Policy Citation Records (Excel)

Addressing Global Cultural Inequalities Through Decolonizing Knowledge Production

Prof Matthew Chew, Associate Professor in Lingnan University's Department of Digital Arts and Creative Industries, addresses global cultural inequalities and exclusion through his research publications and co-editorship of *The Palgrave Handbook of Decoloniality in Asia*. This work supports SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions by promoting cultural inclusion, epistemic justice, and equitable participation in knowledge production.

These publications critically examine global cultural injustice and suggest ways to address it. The first paper explores why and how Hong Kong scholars have failed or neglected to legitimize Hong Kong's local popular culture, highlighting issues of cultural marginalization and intellectual recognition. The second paper—a collaborative work by five minority and non-Western scholars—outlines a general programme for decolonizing intellectual production, advancing diverse perspectives and inclusive scholarship.

The third paper examines a practical mechanism of epistemic coloniality: how "juniority effects" disrupt the formation of intellectual lineages in modern Japan and China. This research illuminates the processes through which intellectual imperialism and unequal knowledge hierarchies are reproduced.

The first, fourth, and fifth publications emerged from an international decolonial intellectual project focusing on Asian contributions to decolonial thought and the specific forms of epistemic coloniality in Asia. Together, these works strengthen cross-cultural dialogue and international scholarly collaboration, offering perspectives on challenging exclusion and fostering a more inclusive and equitable global intellectual community.

1. How Coloniality Operates Differently in the Global East Than the Global South: The Intellectual Delegitimation of "Lowbrow" Local Culture in Hong Kong.
2. Schöpf CM, Daduya JFD, Kitossa T, Purkayastha B, and Chew MM (2025) Decolonizing epistemologies—Introduction to the special issue. *Third World Quarterly*. 46(18), 2433-2450.

3. Chew MM (2025) Meso-level processes of intellectual imperialism: The disruption of intellectual lineage formation in modern Japan and China by 'juniority effects.' *Third World Quarterly* 46(18), 2610-2628.
4. Sanchez PZ, Imbong RA, Chew MM, and Schöpf CM (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Decoloniality in Asia* (pp. 603-619). Palgrave Macmillan.
5. Sanchez PZ, Imbong RA, Chew MM, and Schöpf CM (2025) Conclusion. In: Sanchez PZ, Imbong RA, Chew MM, and Schöpf CM (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Decoloniality in Asia* (pp. 603-619). Palgrave Macmillan.

Historical Agricultural Systems, Gender Equality and Strong Institutions

Led by Professor Plamen Akaliyski, Assistant Professor (Presidential Early Career Scholar) in Lingnan University's Department of Sociology and Social Policy, the study "The Main Global Cultural Differences Today Evolved from Environment-Related Historical Agricultural Patterns," published in *World Development*, examines how historical forms of agriculture have contributed to enduring differences in contemporary societies. The research shows that agricultural systems prevalent more than a century ago are strongly associated with present-day individualism–collectivism, including important societal outcomes directly relevant to SDG 5: Gender Equality and SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. The study's objective measure explicitly incorporates gender inequality and rule of law alongside other societal indicators, providing insights into gender equity, institutional quality and the protection of rights.

For SDG 5, the research highlights how different agricultural systems historically created different economic and social roles for women. In dairy-farming societies such as those in Northern Europe and parts of North America, Australia and New Zealand, women often played economically valuable roles in milk processing and trade, providing opportunities for greater economic independence and social status. The paper connects these historical patterns to comparatively greater gender equality at present, offering insights into the historical conditions associated with women's economic empowerment and equal economic opportunities. By contrast, some pastoral and shifting-cultivation systems were associated with practices and institutions that restricted women's rights and economic opportunities, highlighting historical barriers to gender equality and non-discrimination.

For SDG 16, the study demonstrates how modes of subsistence were linked to the historical development of political institutions. Agricultural systems differed in their capacity to create and sustain centralized states, effective law enforcement, property rights, and protection from violence. The research therefore contributes to understanding why rule of law and inclusive institutions developed differently across societies and why these differences remain visible today. These findings are relevant to effective institutions, rights protection and violence prevention.

By identifying deep historical roots of contemporary gender equality and institutional quality, the study provides a comparative perspective on the long-term conditions that support more equal, inclusive, and rights-protecting societies. It strengthens the evidence base for understanding women's empowerment, the rule of law and inclusive institutional development, connecting historical research with contemporary sustainable development priorities.

Synergies Among Responsible Artificial Intelligence (RAI), Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Research co-authored by Professor Xin Yao, Vice-President (Research and Innovation) at Lingnan University, and Changwu Huang explores how responsible artificial intelligence (RAI), environmental, social and governance (ESG), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can reinforce one another. Their integration offers opportunities for organisations to enhance societal impact while increasing corporate value and fostering responsible innovation and sustainable business practices.

Through a systematic literature review, the study provides foundational knowledge of RAI, ESG and the SDGs, including their origins, core concepts and main implementation challenges. It then examines the connections and synergies among these frameworks, highlighting opportunities to align AI development, corporate responsibility and sustainable development.

Based on this analysis, the researchers propose an integrated framework that synthesises the relationships among RAI, ESG and the SDGs. The framework demonstrates how these approaches can be mutually reinforcing when implemented cohesively, supporting organisations in incorporating sustainability and social responsibility into technological innovation and business decisions.

The paper also discusses implications for multiple stakeholders while acknowledging implementation challenges and tensions. It emphasises the importance of viewing RAI, ESG and the SDGs as interconnected frameworks rather than separate goals. Through this integrated perspective, organisations can align them collectively within strategic planning and operational practices, promoting more effective and sustainable outcomes while addressing complex societal challenges in the AI era.

The research contributes both theoretical understanding and practical guidance for holistic approaches that harness the transformative potential of AI while ensuring that its development and deployment serve broader sustainability and social responsibility objectives. It supports SDG 9 through responsible technological innovation, with additional relevance to SDG 12 through responsible corporate practices, SDG 16 through accountable governance, and SDG 17 through policy coherence and multi-stakeholder alignment.

C. Huang and X. Yao, "Synergies Among Responsible Artificial Intelligence (RAI), Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), and Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs)," in *IEEE Computational Intelligence Magazine*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 20-41, Nov. 2025, doi: 10.1109/MCI.2025.3593452.