

IConArts 2021 PROCEEDINGS

7TH

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

100 Years of Humanities and Social Sciences in Higher Education in
Sri Lanka: Innovation and Adaptation in a Time of Crisis

1st – 3rd December 2021

Faculty of Arts
University of Colombo
Sri Lanka



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University of Colombo**

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To be a centre of excellence in creative thinking, teaching, research, and community outreach in the South Asian region

Our Mission

To promote collectively scholarship, critical inquiry, competencies, and skills in the Social Sciences and Humanities in keeping with the highest academic and ethical standards in teaching, research, training, and evaluation

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR

Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne

Vice Chancellor
University of Colombo
Sri Lanka



The Annual International Research Conference of the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo (IConArts 2021), which is the flagship event in the faculty almanac, is of very special significance this year. It signifies the culmination of the yearlong centenary celebrations of the faculties of Arts and Science and of the main Library, that play an important role in highlighting the role of Humanities and Social Sciences for Sri Lanka.

I am delighted that the Dean, Co-Chairpersons and Coordinators of IConArts 2021 have aligned with the broad theme chosen for the University of Colombo Annual Research Symposium (ARS) 2021. As a novel feature, we wish to emphasize multidisciplinary research and highlight impactful research outcomes that benefit policy development and strategic planning. This is particularly important for Humanities and Social Sciences Education that emphasizes knowledge creation and active learning as the hallmarks of 21st century value-added learning, by addressing the sustainable development goals. I am encouraged by the enthusiasm and support from all members of the Faculty of Arts to have helped sustain their high-end research projects, despite encountering multiple challenges from the COVID 19 pandemic. Your able adaptation to the digital transformation helped continue with pre-planned activities. Additionally, the administrative and financial managers remained focused to support your research activities despite the lockdowns. Our university ranking has gained substantially, with the upscaling of regional and international collaborations in research and academic partnerships, with the best of the best. I look forward to multiple gains in the coming years through your novel initiatives. I pledge the best of support from the central administration.

May you all stay safe and well, enjoy the proceedings, develop fresh ideas and networks and help take our research outreach to the next level.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Senior Professor Lasantha Manawadu

Dean
Faculty of Arts
University of Colombo
Sri Lanka



It gives me great pleasure to write this message for the Annual International Research Conference of the Faculty of Arts (IConArts 2021), which is the flagship event in the academic calendar of the Faculty. This year's conference coincides with the centenary celebrations of teaching Humanities and Social Sciences in Higher Education in Sri Lanka.

The uncertainty and disruption that has impacted on the world following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has been felt intensely in numerous spheres including academia. The theme of this year's conference, "100 Years of Humanities and Social Sciences in Higher Education in Sri Lanka: Innovation and Adaptation in a Time of Crisis," is timely as it underscores the challenges faced by the humanities and social sciences in a time of crisis and social change and also explores the ways in which the discipline could contribute to overcome pandemic-related crises. By deploying a critical lens on social behaviour, culture, politics and hegemonic discourses, the disciplines of humanities and social sciences can provide effective and sustainable policies to maximize human safety and ensure social development. In this context, it is heartening to see the participation of numerous local and international scholars at this year's conference. I hope that the knowledge generated out of the conference will offer new vistas and opportunities for our society which will guide us in the times to come.

This conference is the result of the contribution and commitment of numerous individuals. First of all, I would like to thank the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne for her constant support and guidance to make this event a success. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the organising committee and the sub committees of IConArts 2021 competently led by the co-chairs of the conference. I take this opportunity to thank the keynote speakers for graciously accepting our invitation. Administrative, technical and support staff of the Faculty of Arts are thanked for their assistance in numerous ways. I also appreciate the support extended by the event production

company and all those who submitted abstracts for the conference without which this event would not have been possible.

I would like to extend my best wishes to the organising committee members, presenters and participants. I wish IConArts 2021 all success.

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS



Professor Nishara Fernando

Department of Sociology
University of Colombo
Sri Lanka



Dr. Pradeep Peiris

Department of Political Science and
Public Policy
University of Colombo
Sri Lanka

Since its inception in 2014, the International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences of the Faculty of Arts has evolved into a unique platform that brings together celebrated researchers from the region and beyond. While being an annual assembly point for veterans, the conference has also welcomed and recognized the work of promising young scholars.

This year's conference coincides with the centenary celebrations of the University of Colombo. Thus, the theme "100 Years of Humanities and Social Sciences in Higher Education in Sri Lanka: Innovation and Adaptation in a Time of Crisis" was chosen to commemorate this historical landmark.

As co-chairs, we are delighted by the overwhelming response to the call for proposals by academics, both local and foreign. Following a rigorous peer review process, *crème de la crème* of the submissions were selected to be published in the conference proceedings. These submissions were organized under diverse themes reflecting the discipline of humanities and social sciences.

The conference will also showcase a panel of keynote speakers with an unparalleled track record and a plethora of academic work in their respective academic fields that will set the frame and tone for the event. We take this opportunity to convey our sincere gratitude to the speakers for their contribution.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo, Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Senior Professor Lasantha Manawadu for their support and

guidance. We also thank the session chairs, abstract reviewers, and numerous volunteers for making this event a success. Last but not least, we acknowledge the excellent support we received from the secretary, Dr. Darshi Thoradeniya, Dr. Bihimini Abeywickrama, Ms. Anuradha Senanyake, the chairpersons and members of committees and non-academic staff members in organizing this conference.

INTRODUCTION TO KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga

Professor of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
Head, Global Disaster Resilience Centre
School of Applied Sciences
University of Huddersfield
UK



Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga holds the chair in Disaster Risk Management at the University of Huddersfield, UK, where she leads the Global Disaster Resilience Centre, responsible for supporting research on disaster management portfolios. She is a leading international expert in disaster resilience with an extensive academic career that has a strong commitment to encouraging colleagues and students to fulfil their full potential. Dilanthi's vision has always been to be an international leader in disaster risk reduction and management with specific emphasis on the built environment, and to champion the underrepresentation of women in this key research area.

She has project managed to successful completion a large number of international research projects (over £20 million) generating significant research outputs and outcomes. She provides expert advice on disaster resilience to national and local governments and international agencies including the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). She is engaged in many significant research collaborations around the world, in partnership with key academic and other organisational stakeholders. To date, she has produced over 400 publications, refereed papers, and reports, and has made over 100 keynote speeches in around 30 countries. Among many leadership roles, she is the joint chief editor of the International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment and the Chair of the International Conference on Building Resilience (ICBR) series, which she co-created. In 2019, she won the prestigious Newton Prize which recognises the best research and innovation projects which create an impact socially and economically, between Indonesia and the United Kingdom from 2016 to 2019. Newton Prize is supported by the UK's Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). She is a member of the European Commission and UNDRR's European Science and Technology Advisory Group representing the

UK, a Steering Committee member of the Frontiers of Development programme, a Collaborative Programme of The Royal Academy of Engineering, The Academy of Medical Sciences, The British Academy and The Royal Society, and a Steering Committee member of the UK Alliance for Disaster Research, motivation of which is to bring together the UK's rich and diverse disaster research community to facilitate collaboration and partnership in order to aid representation of the research community at government level in the UK and to facilitate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. She is a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), a Fellow of The Royal Geographical Society, and a Fellow and a Chartered Manager of the Chartered Management Institute, UK.

Professor Neil DeVotta

Professor of Politics and International Affairs
Wake Forest University
USA



Professor Neil DeVotta received his doctorate in Political Science from the University of Texas at Austin in 2001 and was awarded the University of Texas Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award in Social Science, Education, and Business for 2000-01. Prior to joining Wake Forest University in 2009, he taught at Michigan State University, Hartwick College, and the University of Texas at Austin.

His research and teaching focus on South Asian security and politics, ethnicity and nationalism, ethnic conflict resolution, and democratic transition and consolidation. He is the author of *Blowback: Linguistic Nationalism, Institutional Decay, and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004) and *Sinhalese Buddhist Nationalist Ideology: Implications for Politics and Conflict Resolution in Sri Lanka*, Policy Studies 40 (Washington D. C.: East-West Center, 2007) and also editor of *Understanding Contemporary India*, 2nd edition (2010)—with the 3rd edition (2021) co-edited with Sumit Ganguly (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers)—and *An Introduction to South Asian Politics* (2016). His publications have appeared in numerous journals, including *Nations and Nationalism*, *Journal of Democracy*, *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, *Pacific Affairs*, *Asian Survey*, *Asian Security*, *Civil Wars*, *Journal of International Affairs*, and *Contemporary South Asia*. His current research examines democratic erosion due to the rise of soft-authoritarian regimes. He has been consulted for various sources, including the United States Agency for International Development, Freedom House, Bertelsmann Stiftung, and Global Center for Pluralism.

Professor Saroj Jayasinghe

Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University of Colombo
Founder Head, Department of Medical Humanities
University of Colombo
Sri Lanka



Professor Saroj Jayasinghe is an alumnus of the Faculty of Medicine Colombo who qualified with MBBS (Hons) in 1979. He has a MD in General Medicine, from the University of Colombo, MD by research from the University of Bristol, and a PhD from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo. He passed the MRCP (UK) and was awarded Fellowships by Royal College of Physicians (London), the Ceylon College of Physicians and the National Academy of Sciences of Sri Lanka. In 2021, he was appointed to the Advisory Board of the International Medical University Centre for Bioethics and Humanities, Malaysia.

He played a key role in the curriculum reforms of the Faculty of Medicine in 1995. This included the introduction of ethics, communication skills and professionalism through establishment of the Behavioral Sciences Stream (BSS) to medical curricula. He chaired the Behavioral Sciences Stream for several years and was the founder head of the Department of Medical Humanities the first such department in Sri Lanka and perhaps in the south Asian region in 2016. He led more recent reforms in the Faculty that led to the transformation of the BSS to become the Humanities, Society and Professionalism Stream. He conceptualized and helped to develop an innovative and unique curriculum to introduce topics on humanities, compassion and empathy by using narratives and the arts. In July 2018, he organized the Inaugural International Conference on Medical Humanities, held in Colombo. He had conducted guest lectures and workshops on Medical Humanities in Colombo and Bhutan. He was the orator in the inaugural Professor Carlo Fonseka Oration in March 2021 on Medical Humanities. His research interests include kindness in healthcare, empathy in medical education and systems science.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga

Risk is systemic, crises are cascading: Contributions of the scientific community in addressing the dual challenges to enhance comprehensive disaster risk management

Disasters continue to undermine sustainable development so reducing its impacts and identifying pathways towards resilient societies is a global goal. Negative consequences of natural hazards, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, landslides, avalanches, windstorms, heavy rains, floods, heat and cold waves, prolonged droughts and subsequent water shortage have increased in recent years and resulted in major disasters around the globe. Understanding and assessing the drivers and patterns of risk is necessary to identify, plan and implement any measure to reduce risk. Risk assessments serve to create a common understanding of the potential losses and damages. Science is vital for efficiently implementing strategies for mitigating the most of these serious consequences.

The current COVID-19 health crisis stress-tests our ability to cooperate, learn and adapt in the face of deep uncertainties and rising risks. It calls for an important reflection on the necessary contributions of the scientific community and the technological developments to enhance comprehensive risk management. It demonstrates that risk is systemic, and crises are cascading. Disasters are rapidly producing further disaster to become more complex and deadly. There is a need for improved understanding of systemic and cascading disaster risks in all its dimensions of exposure, vulnerability and hazard characteristics as well as the strengthening of disaster risk governance. Emerging systemic risks demand a systemic response. There need to be urgent action to address the dual challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic and other hazards. Countries need to take strategically calculated and measurable actions to develop multi-hazard disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies. Twin emergencies, the amalgamation of a global pandemic with another emergency, such as due to a natural hazard, was, until recently, an inconceivable scenario. Yet this is the reality currently being faced by a number of countries around the world in light of the COVID-19 crisis. Over the last several months, the world has witnessed a number of devastating natural disasters, from the earthquake which struck the city of Zagreb in Croatia, and the Tropical Cyclone Harold which caused extensive damage in the Solomon

Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, and Tonga. Responding and coping measures are limited during a pandemic. The global science community must come to terms with the need for a new understanding of the dynamic nature of these systemic risks, new structures to govern complex risks, and develop new adaptive systems and tools for risk-informed decision-making that allows human societies to live in and with uncertainty. Despite the disruption and suffering, it nevertheless provides governments and communities an opportunity to revisit much that underpins our modern world – from fundamental aspects of governance, investment and consumption, to our relationship with nature, and to place risk reduction at the heart of a policy reboot.

This will require improving links between science and decision-making on systemic risks. Addressing the complexity and non-linear nature of systemic risks entails a holistic approach to hazard identification, risk assessment and risk management. Successful risk management depends on scientific understanding of risk factors and drivers, and on their behaviour, as well as on the ways in which disasters are expressed and materialise in society. Social and natural sciences, alongside technology and innovation, will provide verifiable knowledge and evidence-based answers to help understand causal factors underlying risk. Additionally, observation and experimentation, explanation of principles and causes, the formulation and verification of hypotheses, the use of adapted methodologies for this purpose and the systematisation of knowledge, will help create efficient disaster risk management policies.

Science, technology and research into issues relating to DRR have progressed significantly on all fronts and across all sectors. Scientists and researchers have brought a deeper understanding of the hazards, vulnerabilities, disaster risks and their linkages to the development processes. Science and technology have shown that impact from disasters can be reduced or prevented and is an opportunity for governments to work together with national and international policy and science and technology communities in an effort to reduce disaster risk and prevent disasters where possible. Given the different levels at which disasters can affect the society, it is essential that how the physical and social sciences can be fully deployed in an integrated way is considered, with technology, to reduce both disaster risks and their impacts. While political leadership and community partnerships are required for the successful implementation of effective, science-informed initiatives, the research community has a responsibility to formulate applicable methodologies and tools that respond to real-world challenges.

However, there are many ongoing challenges and gaps in translating this scientific information into policy so that DRR policies are based on science and evidence. All hazards need integrating, a multi-sectoral approach to integrate public health and disaster risk management is needed, and to take strategically calculated and measurable actions to develop multi-hazard DRR strategies.

Researchers, educators, policymakers and practice-based actors must interact and collaborate with, at the local, national, regional and global levels. There is also a need for an inter-disciplinary approach, where a number of separate disciplines surrender their own concepts and goals, and collectively define themselves by reference to a common set of strategic concepts and goals. What do we do to tackle these challenges? Scientists and researchers must work with policymakers and practitioners, including community and civil society, as well as governmental actors to co-design and co-produce research that can be used effectively. Users must be included in the earliest stages of developing research and technology, including through improved dialogues with citizen groups, involvement of local and national universities and institutions, young scientists, and the use of indigenous knowledge. There need to be scientific advice to decision makers through close collaboration and dialogue with more focused attention on interlinkages between DRR, sustainable development, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. There is a need to use a holistic, all-hazard, risk-based and problem-solving approach to address the multifactorial and interdependent nature of the disaster risk chain and to achieve improved DRR. There have been several initiatives that have been launched in supporting this cause. Within this broader context, this keynote will discuss the:

- current trends of disasters, and the drivers of disaster risk
- concept of systemic risks and their cascading impacts
- role of Science and Technology in Disaster Risk Reduction and the outlook of a new agenda for the science and policy community
- challenges associated with S&T integration

Professor Neil DeVotta

The Populist Peril: Whither Sri Lanka and South Asia?

Where democracy exists, so does populism. Indeed, politicians in a democratic society subscribe to populism to various degrees. Depending on the constituency to be accommodated or privileged, populist movements can be left-wing or right-wing. Left-wing populism is rooted in minimizing, if not eradicating, income inequality and promoting the welfare of groups that have been marginalized. Right-wing populism, on the other hand, tends to be rooted in ethnoreligious criteria and embraces “sons-of-the-soil” notions to demarcate who can and cannot belong to the nation. While both left-wing and right-wing populism tend to be anti-elitist, pillory globalization, and undermine socioeconomic stability thanks to extremist policies, right-wing populism promotes ethnonationalism, eschews pluralism, embraces majoritarianism and is therefore especially detrimental to democracy.

Populist movements need not be perilous, if the goal is to provide for marginalized citizens by strengthening institutions. In this regard, Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal is viewed as a successful instance of left-wing populism. But more often populism is reposed in personalism, a cultish leader who projects himself as defender of the real people and protector of the nation. In this context, if Donald Trump—who loved to claim that he alone could solve America’s problems—was a classic example of right-wing populism, Hugo Chavez—who soon after being elected president said: “I demand absolutely loyalty . . . I am not an individual, I am the people”—is a classic example of left-wing populism.

In South Asia, India has experienced both left-wing and right-wing populism. The former took place under Indira Gandhi, and the latter takes place under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party thanks to their Hindutva politics—although an argument could be made that Modi combines both right-wing and left-wing populism. While Sirimavo Bandaranaike’s second government (1970-77) tried to minimize economic disparities and could be said to have pursued left-wing populism, its actions were laced with hyper-majoritarianism that smacked of racism against the island’s Tamils. And given the extent to which Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism dominated politics since the 1950s, much of what has transpired in Sri Lanka—and this especially so under both Mahinda Rajapaksa and Gotabaya Rajapaksa—is related to right-wing politics—although an argument can be made that Sri Lankan leaders also combine left-wing and right-wing politics.

Most populist projects end in disaster, and this is especially so with right-wing populism that gets built around a savior figure. That history heralds danger for both India and Sri Lanka.

Professor Saroj Jayasinghe

COVID-19 and Humanities: An opportunity amidst a crisis?

COVID-19 has awakened human civilization to an unprecedented reality. What began as a health issue in early 2000 has rapidly snow balled to cause socio economic devastation and massive changes to the way people behave and function, globally. Within a period of less than 20 months, COVID-19 has affected about 220 million, killed approximately 4.6 million and is predicted to affect millions more. Human mobility is severely restricted mobilities, institutions have been forced to reimagine their practices, people and organizations have chosen to rely more on working remotely and fresh norms of behaviours are being set across a range of situations. The changes in human behaviour were so extensive resulting in a significant reduction in the global carbon dioxide emissions.

The COVID-19 pandemic offers a unique opportunity for academics, scientists, policymakers and ordinary civilians to be living witnesses to who experience a pandemic of historic proportions. Unlike other global crises, this pandemic is unfolding in real-time under the full glare of a social media driven interconnected world. Those brave enough should surf the wave of knowledge creation. This wave is heading to uncharted waters. It has led to a sea full of scientific collaborations without any borders. Examples include sharing of the virus genome data by China in January 2020 and the global initiatives for control of the pandemic by organizations such as the WHO. Wider availability of knowledge through open access platforms has ensued (e.g. almost all medical journals have allowed research papers related to COVID-19 to be free and open-access)

In this panoramic setting, the opportunities for creativity, innovations and research in relation to humanities are limitless. The presentation will explore how humanities adapted to COVID-19 and describe some of the novel activities that have emerged during the past two years and attempt to weave a common thread.

The pandemic has triggered a generation of new themes in paintings, sketches, photography and poems exploring novel topics such as those that capture painful experiences: loneliness amidst isolation, letting loved ones die alone in ICUs and tearing up families apart. Designers and media groups are vying for attention to provide health information to the public in very creative ways. This begs whether we are seeing the emergence of a new “art of a pandemic”?

The infomedic (i.e. too much information including those that are false or misleading, in digital and physical environments) has triggered collaborations across experts in mass communication sociology and data sciences to track

changes in behaviors and values of people, and the role of information and misinformation. Are we observing new developments in studying science of mass communication and hyperconnectivity in the digital generation?

Another area of interest is how the pandemic has led to an infodemic. The dumping of trillions of information to the web has shaped belief systems and affected behaviors, globally. For example, did the social media campaigns by anti-vaccine groups in the West influence many to avoid vaccination programs in Sri Lanka?

The arts have seen an explosion of interests in on-line music, plays, and films. More and more artists are switching to on-line concerts, exhibitions and forums. Was the success of our own Yohani with her song “Manike Mage Hithe” partly due to the new configurations in the world of entertainment? Does the song’s simplicity and her clear and fluid delivery that has transcended language and culture denote the unification of humanity under these trying times?

Questions in ethics and values have been raised on the mandatory requirements for vaccinations, quarantine laws that restrict movements and censorship of materials in the social media (e.g. attempts by Facebook to limit sites promoting ivermectin as a cure). How do these impact on personal freedom and community safety?

Historians have compared this pandemic to previous epidemics of influenza and smallpox. What are the commonalities and the lessons we could learn from them? How does the COVID-19 vaccination program relate to the smallpox vaccination in ancient times?

The COVID-19 pandemic has overwhelmed many health services globally. This led to immense physical and psychological pressures on healthcare workers who faced intense moral injuries (i.e. the emotional pain when making decisions that affect the survival of others) and empathic distress (i.e. the repeated distress in response to the suffering of others that is accompanied by a desire to avoid such situations by withdrawing from them). Should health professional education impart compassion training and health systems develop processes to make their staff more resilient?

The above description outlines a series of apparently diverse set of activities by human societies across the globe as a response to an infection caused by a few micrograms of RNA virus particles. The common thread seems to be that they are all attempts by humans and societies to survive, adapt, or react to disruptions created by a micro-organism. It highlights our weaknesses, our vulnerabilities and mortality. Reflecting on the factors that led to the pandemic and the responses by humans help in identifying linkages of the across these threads. It may offer humans an opportunity to weave a new future for civilization, a future built on more sharing, more kindness and based on humaneness.

PROGRAMME

1st December 2021: Inauguration

4.00 pm	National Anthem Lighting the Traditional Oil Lamp
4.05 pm	Welcome Address by Professor Nishara Fernando Co-Chair, IConArts 2021
4.10 pm	Address by Senior Professor Lasantha Manawadu Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo
4.15 pm	Address by the Chief Guest, Senior Professor Chandrika N. Wijeyaratne Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo
4.20 pm	Introduction of the Keynote Speaker Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga Dr Bihimini Abeywickrama
4.25 pm	Keynote Address by Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga University of Huddersfield, UK
4.50 pm	Introduction of the Keynote Speaker Professor Neil DeVotta Dr Chaminda Padmakumara
4.55 pm	Keynote Address by Professor Neil DeVotta Wake Forest University, USA
5.20 pm	Introduction of the Keynote Speaker Emeritus Professor Saroj Jayasinghe Dr Darshi Thoradeniya
5.25 pm	Keynote Address by Emeritus Professor Saroj Jayasinghe University of Colombo, Sri Lanka
5.50 pm	Vote of Thanks by Dr. Pradeep Peiris Co-Chair, IConArts 2021

2nd December 2021: Parallel Technical Sessions

9.00 am – 4.30 pm

3rd December 2021: Parallel Technical Sessions

9.00 am – 4.30 pm

* Programme times are listed in Sri Lankan Standard Time (UTC +5:30)

ABSTRACTS

The impact of online teaching on teacher efficacy: An empirical study

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Teacher efficacy is a critical factor that primarily affects the psychological state of the teachers. It is the teacher's self-reliance to achieve targeted outcomes even from unenthusiastic students through effective classroom practices. With the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, teaching and learning all over the world have been transformed into virtual platforms. Although developed countries are not undergoing the adverse impacts of the pandemic on their educational sector owing to their technological advancements, the third-world countries were largely stalled in online platforms. Sri Lanka is another country that is not satisfactorily competitive enough with technological access and technological literacy to a significant level, especially in rural areas. The unexpected shift from the traditional teaching methods into online teaching seems to have a massive impact on teacher efficacy and student learning in Sri Lanka. This study aims to identify how online teaching has impacted teacher efficacy and examine how it has affected online classroom practices in primary education. A random sample of 20 primary teachers from the Kurunegala Educational Zone was selected for this quantitative study. The study used a structured questionnaire for data collection and SPSS for data analysis. The outcomes of the study demonstrate that online teaching platforms are not very supportive to primary teachers in performing their teaching effectively. This is mainly because online teaching has considerably influenced primary teachers' design and delivery of usual teaching patterns. On the other hand, teachers find it challenging to make learners engage in and interact with the activities due to their personal, economic, and technical issues. The research thus reveals that online teaching has become an obstacle to teacher efficacy. The current study has implications for the school management, teachers, and material designers to gain a holistic understanding of the situation and make recommendations accordingly.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic, online teaching, teacher efficacy, primary education*

A participatory study on integrating e-portfolios in the undergraduate online ESL classroom

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The pandemic has replaced synchronous second language teaching and learning into an asynchronous approach, and it is vital to look into the practical methods of maximizing language learning outputs on online platforms. The study has been conducted with the participation of twenty first year undergraduates who are following the Bachelor of Architecture degree program in a state university in Sri Lanka. At the beginning of the course, the students were given guidelines to work on an e-portfolio. An e-portfolio or an electronic portfolio can be identified as the use of electronic technologies to collect and organize artifacts in many formats (audio, video, graphics, and text). The participants were given the freedom to work on their own e-portfolios and they were supposed to add their classroom learning, which they come across when studying English as a Second Language, to their e-portfolio. The study was conducted in two phases: in the first phase, a questionnaire that contains open ended questions was circulated among the participants and in the second phase, they were supposed to write self-reflective essays on their learning experience with e-portfolios. The voluntary participants have come up with a number of advantages of inculcating e-portfolios to their language learning process by referring to their ability to store multiple media and the ease of editing and updating. E-portfolios have created a collaborative and communicative learning environment and granted an opportunity to check whether the participants have met their educational and career goals. Overall, the results have confirmed the efficacy of e-portfolios as a tool of authentic second language learning and as a successful alternative assessment of blended learning, which can be utilized in the process of attaining a quality education, a sustainable development goal.

Keywords: *English as a Second Language, e-Portfolios, online platforms, undergraduates*

A study on how parliamentarian ethics can be uplifted with the teachings of Buddhist polity

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It has been noticed that certain issues related to the conduct of parliamentarians in Sri Lanka have arisen. These are the individuals who are responsible for the development of the country. The habit of debating without a solid factual basis and the unprofessional manner of communicating at the parliament can be mentioned as instances. As a result of that, the general public has lost confidence in the parliament. Hence, it is a timely necessity to introduce ethics to parliamentarians to ensure a better parliament that strives to improve the sustainable development of the country. Considering the above background, this research was carried out based on the problem how Buddhist teachings can be utilized to uplift the parliamentarians' ethics to increase sustainable development. The aim of this study was to examine whether there is a possibility to introduce ethics for the parliamentarians based on the seven conditions of welfare (*sapta aparihānīya dhamma*) teachings in Buddhism as a global humanitarian religious thought. This research was conducted in the qualitative research approach based on primary Pali sources of the Theravada tradition as well as secondary sources related to the subject. After analyzing the collected data from the sources, the researcher was able to reach the conclusions. Accordingly, three principles that would lead to maintaining standard ethics in the parliament were formulated in this research. They are improving collective responsibility when making decisions for the country without being partial or having party-based agendas, holding meetings and making decisions following a debate containing better arguments supported by valid and accurate facts, setting an example by following rules and enjoying privileges solely for the development of the country. These practices will enable the parliamentarians to better serve the country as well as to regain the public trust. The main conclusion of this research is that there is a strong possibility to suggest three moral principles for parliamentarians based on the seven conditions of welfare.

Keywords: *ethics, sustainable development, parliamentarians, seven conditions of welfare (sapta aparihānīya dhamma)*

Decreasing social discrimination through faith-based economic systems: An example from the Islamic wealth redistribution practice

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Economy is one of the major tools influencing social status. Poverty is a causative constituent of social discrimination and exclusion. This paper examines how a faith-based economic system can be utilized in reducing social marginalization, through wealth redistribution. To explore the religious positions in this kind of economy, the reference will be made to major religions in the world. The Islamic way of wealth management will receive in-depth focus. The compulsory tax 'zakat' and other optional and occasional charities propounded by the Islamic economic system are considered as a viable solution for manifestations of poverty and inequity. The progress of this kind of activity within the Muslim minority of Sri Lanka is reflected in this study. This study adopted a qualitative and quantitative mixed methods approach and consulted both printed and field data samples from various parts of Sri Lanka. The study found that faith-based economic systems make positive contributions to mitigate the plight of underprivileged households, thereby sharing in the socioeconomic development profile of the authority indirectly. Furthermore, it could be posited that this kind of economic system plays a vital role in minimizing the gap between the wealthy and needy people through equitable wealth redistribution and helps to uplift the social status of people with economic dilemmas. This study may accelerate the rate of zakat payers in future, as well as inspire supporters and authorities who are interested in poverty fighting measures. Further, the study will be useful for trustees and volunteer organizations which are dedicated to the elimination of social discrimination, and can encourage like-minded societies to practice similar measures.

Keywords: *socioeconomic, poverty, discrimination, zakat*

A study of the Buddhist teaching (philosophy) of social problems and its approach to current social problem solving

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Although the central aim of Buddhism, which belongs to the tradition of Eastern religions and philosophical thought, is to provide a solution to the problem of worldly suffering faced by man, it also focuses considerably on socio-economic and political issues related to the practical life of man. This is further illustrated by the various sermons and discussions that Buddha has delivered in different contexts. It is important to examine the relevance of contemporary social and political issues and their nature in resolving current social crises by analyzing the content of these discussions. Accordingly, the main purpose of this research is to examine the relevance of the Buddhist philosophical approach to social problems and the analysis and solution of current social problems with the data collected from the examination of those sources. Qualitative research methodology was the main methodology used in this research, which was based on a Sutta Pitaka (The Basket of Discourses) of Pāli Tipitka (The three Baskets) that contained Buddha's sermons. Relevant data is collected by examining the psychological and sociological aspects of the social issues contained in the Pali Sutta sermons, such as Cakkavatti Sutta (The Wheel-turning Emperor), Kūtadantasutta Sutta (A Bloodless Sacrifice), Kalaha-vivada Sutta (Quarrels & Disputes), Sakka-pañha Sutta (Sakka's Questions), The Mahanidana Sutta (Discourse on the Great Origin), Aggañña Sutta (The Formation of the world), and Vāsettha sutta in sutta pitaka. Buddhism, a teaching that focuses on the individual mind and life, is based on the dependently origination (Paticca-samuppāda) theory in interpreting crises related to human life. This is evidenced by the fact that all the various factors influencing the formation of social crises have been interpreted on a psychological and sociological basis as inherent weaknesses as well as social institutional weaknesses. This research concludes that the above psychological and sociological interpretation of social problems can be applied to the analysis of current social problems as well as in the formulation of relevant solutions.

Keywords: *Buddhism, social problems, discourses, philosophy*

Role of COVID-19 politics in shaping the New World Economic Order: Economic distancing of China and its impact on Sri Lanka

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Scholars and researchers from different fields have begun putting forth conspiracy theories on the origin of the COVID-19 virus. Based on these assumptions, recently, both the US and Japan have decided to economically distance themselves from China. These two countries are major trade partners of China. The foreign policies of the US and Japan on economic activities such as bilateral trade, foreign direct investments, and others towards China have changed now. As far as Japan and its economic relations with China are concerned, Japan has started implementing the policy of “Economic Distancing” with China. Simultaneously, the US and its economic policies with China are also in the process of experiencing a dramatic change, where the US wants to cut down its economic relations with China. Any decisions taken by these two economic giants against the Chinese economy will undoubtedly hit the domestic economy of China severely and this may lead to changes in the future economic diplomacy of China towards third world countries including Sri Lanka. Heavy economic dependency on China could push Sri Lanka into a severe economic crisis in the near future. In this context, the main objective of this research is to briefly analyze the possible negative economic impacts on Sri Lanka, which is economically dependent on China to a great extent. Special attention will be paid to highlight how the new economic crisis in China may impact Sri Lanka in terms of the economic relations of both countries in the near future. The theory of ‘debt-trap diplomacy’ will be applied to analyze how Sri Lankan domestic economy will be further affected by the newly emerging international economic order. Based on the collected and available primary and secondary data and information, a descriptive analysis method will be employed in this study to find the answers to the major research questions.

Keywords: *conspiracy theory, debt-trap diplomacy, economic diplomacy, economic distancing, pandemic*

Challenges to *Mahudikkoothu*: A socio-political analysis with special reference to the Batticaloa region

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This study encompasses *Mahudikkoothu* in the Batticaloa region in Sri Lanka. *Koothu* is a mixture of dance and drama sequences. *Mahudi Koothu* is an art form full of frolic and entertainment. People consider this as ritual drama, sans religion and devotion. The main purpose of this study is to examine the present status of *Mahudikkoothu* in the Batticaloa region. The study used a mixed methods research. To achieve the objectives, the study used primary data as well as the secondary data. The researcher used a non-random sampling method for the selection of the sample that included 100 respondents above the age of thirteen from four areas in the Batticaloa district: Santhiveli, Kommathurai, Vantharumoolai and Thetratheevu and conducted in-depth-interviews with four people from the field of *Koothu*. Through the present study, the researcher discovered that *Mahudikkoothu* art form is not as popular as it used to be in the Batticaloa region. The Sri Lankan economic system, the arrival of social media, new media, mobile phones, cinema, soap operas, civil war and the fact that *Mahudikkoothu* lacks a written format are the factors that have led to the current status of *Mahudikkoothu* in Batticaloa. In order to promote this art form, *Annaviyars* (*Koothu* masters) should use new techniques without destroying the quality of this art, performers should focus on how to express feelings, the government should take action to incorporate practical subjects into the school curriculum, and media should publicize the talent of the performers to the world through telecasting such art forms. The researchers who are working in this field, lecturers, and politicians should pay attention to this art form. Organizations and the public should also extend their support to promote this art form.

Keywords: *folk media, Koothu, Mahudikkoothu*

Content analysis of news in national papers concerning online education in Sri Lanka during COVID-19

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The digitalization of education has resulted in many changes and challenges in the Sri Lankan education system since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Information about these challenges is disseminated by national newspapers playing a vital role in keeping the public informed about current issues in the country. The purpose of this study is thus to identify the main themes discussed in newspapers about the digitalization of education in Sri Lanka. The content analysis was conducted on thirty news articles published in four leading English newspapers in Sri Lanka that can be accessed in physical printed form and through their official online websites. The articles selected were published between March 2020 and August 2021 since the onset of the pandemic. All articles selected were written about the education system in Sri Lanka with special reference to the COVID-19 pandemic. Articles cover education in all stages: primary, secondary, and tertiary except pre-schooling. The articles were analyzed through manual coding to identify conceptual categories and the frequency of occurrence of each conceptual category in the news articles published during the pandemic. The newspaper articles revealed the reality of online education in Sri Lanka during the COVID-19 pandemic. The digital divide, inequities and inequalities of education, accessibility, affordability, and adaptability to online teaching and learning, and the challenges in transitioning from traditional education to online education were highlighted in the newspaper articles. Five major conceptual categories were identified through the content analysis: inequity in online education, student-teacher relationship, teacher competency, psychological impact, and safety in online learning. It is thus evident that newspapers play a vital role in disseminating essential information to the public about socio-economic issues of education that children and youth in a developing country like Sri Lanka face during a challenging time period like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *online education, COVID-19, Sri Lanka, content analysis*

Human security at risk: Untold stories from conflict-torn societies in Sri Lanka

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Human security simply means the well-being of the individual or citizen without any discrimination. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has emphasized freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom to live in dignity of the individuals (citizens) as the potential level of human security in any society. It is further described as protecting fundamental freedom that is the essence of life. The current pandemic situation has added another dimension of uncertainty to Sri Lankan citizens who have suffered 30 years of internal conflict. This sense of uncertainty is further intensified by natural disasters as well as man-made disasters like the Easter Sunday attacks and other forms of organized crimes by non-state actors. This observatory article aims (a) to explore the human security dynamics of the East, North, and North Central provinces (conflict-torn societies) in Sri Lanka, (b) to examine the existing human security complexities and their impact on citizens' well-being, and (c) to identify the gap between citizen's level of understanding of human security issues and the usually highlighted national security issues at the policy level. In order to reach the above mentioned objectives the article analyses the existing human security issues in the said provinces. The article further conducts an opinion survey in three conflict-torn provinces: East, North and North Central by employing a qualitative inquiry. Furthermore, primary data plays a major role in the article, which includes case studies, field observation, and interviews based on open-ended questionnaires. The article creates pressure on human security stakeholders to revisit their socio-economic and political policies to reach positive ends to reach their interests. Finally, the article stresses all human security stakeholders to ensure a genuine practice of human security in the context of democratic governance.

Keywords: *citizen's level, conflict-torn societies, human security*

The impact of demographic factors on decision-making style with special reference to the information technology industry in Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka is emerging as a global IT destination of choice in a number of key focus domain areas. Currently, over 50,000 are employed in the IT industry in Colombo and the workforce is growing at over 20% year-on-year. Different decision makers make decisions differently. The way an individual thinks about various situations, processes information, and makes decisions differs based on the distinctiveness of individuals. The present study, a part of a comprehensive study, addresses the gap in scholarly literature especially in a Sri Lankan context and is an attempt to examine the association between the demographic factors of age, gender, and the level of education of the individuals and their Decision-Making Style. This type of study has not been conducted previously in Sri Lanka. The research population consists of executives and above grade employees who are employed in the information technology industry in Sri Lanka. The Decision Style Inventory (DSI) was administered to test preferences of individuals when approaching a decision situation. The scores derived from the DSI were categorized into four decision styles namely Directive DMS, Analytical DMS, Conceptual DMS and Behavioural DMS. By drawing upon research evidence from 224 individuals, the study reveals that the decision-making style utilized by an individual is significantly different depending on the age and level of education, whereas no significant relationship was found between gender and the decision-making style utilized.

Keywords: *decision making style, Directive DMS, Analytical DMS, Conceptual DMS, Behavioural DMS*

Improving mathematics performance and intrinsic motivation using multi-approach method

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The multi-approach method of teaching mathematics emphasizes student-centred learning by employing various techniques and specifically differs in the pedagogical actions of teachers from the traditional teacher-centred approach. Through observations and interviews with students from Grade 8, it was observed that students doubt the motivation towards mathematics and teaching methods. Therefore, this study aims to improve students' intrinsic motivation towards learning mathematics and performance in mathematics using the multi-approach method (i.) to investigate how the multi-approach method helps motivate students towards mathematics learning (ii.) to improve students' performance using the multi-approach method. This action research is an ongoing study, of which three interventions were completed with 30 students from Grade 8, 1AB school in Kandy district in Sri Lanka. The intrinsic motivation of students was measured through an observation schedule and semi-structured interviews. Worksheets and tests were used to measure students' performance. For this study, the lesson unit "sets" were selected from the Grade 8 syllabus. As schools have been closed due to the COVID-19, the intervention was done using computer-assisted learning. As for the first intervention, a yes/no quiz competition was administered among 12 students. It was observed that students' active participation was high, and they helped each other. However, it was not easy to focus on each student's attitude and capability. Thus, for the second intervention, an individual activity was used as the approach, and results were presented to the class by individuals. All the students presented their findings to the class. In the end, a worksheet was given to observe students' performance. As the results were not fair-able responses, it was decided to do an ongoing test with 20 minutes in the third intervention. The results of this intervention showed good responses, and students showed a good performance. According to the observations, students' participation has gradually improved from the first intervention to the third. It was revealed that the multi-approach method made students active learners while building up students' individual capability of problem-solving, students' curiosity, interest, and confidence for the mathematics with the support of the teacher. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers develop new creative activities and develop good communication skills when handling these activities using computer-assisted learning. The performance and intrinsic

motivation of students increase with multi-approach teaching. Hence, current classroom practices need to be re-evaluated to facilitate student learning.

Keywords: *motivation, intervention, multi-approach method*

Populism and left-wing politics in Nepal

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This paper mainly focuses on assessing whether populism has played a prominent role in the emergence and expansion of left-wing politics in Nepal. Although the left-wing political movement started in Nepal in the 1950s, the country had a relatively weak influence of the left-wing political forces for many years. Yet, since Nepal has promulgated a new Federal Republic constitution in 2015, the left-wing forces have gradually emerged as a dominant political force in the country, securing almost two third-majority in the federal parliament and an overwhelming victory in the provincial and local governments' elections held in 2017. Tracing the history of the emergence of the left-wing political parties from the 1990s onward, this paper argues that the rise of the left-wing political parties in Nepal is mainly driven by their so-called secular nationalist as well as progressive socio-economic and political reform agendas and their effective communication among the general public through effective mass mobilization at the grassroots. This paper analyses left-wing populist politics in Nepal focusing on three major trajectories of the political events: a) a partial impact of the populist programs adopted during the nine-month government of the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist and Leninist) (CPN (UML) in 1994, b) the populist 40 points demands of the then United People's Front (UPF) put forward against the then government led by Nepali Congress, in 1996, and c) the perceived nationalist stand taken by the CPN (UML) led government during the time of an unofficial Indian blockade against Nepal in 2015 remained supportive factors for left-wing parties to represent themselves as nationalist as well as progressive reformist. It shows that more importantly, left-wing parties have been effectively mobilizing the anti-India sentiment, which prevails quite strongly in Nepal for many decades. This paper also explains how the failure of the Nepali Congress to advance the agenda of liberal democracy, which they were advocating for long, has further contributed to the rise of the left-wing politics, which is embracing a populist style of politics.

Keywords: *Nepal, left-wing, populism*

Working from home: A possible solution to low female labour force participation in Sri Lanka?

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The labour force participation rate of Sri Lankan women has remained low (30-35%) for years. This is surprising, given the female education attainment and other relevant socio-economic indicators. Studies to find reasons repeatedly indicate balancing women's dual roles as the main issue. Solutions should therefore be formulated to target this issue. Working from home (WFH) provides women the opportunity to be employed while being at home. The objective is to analyze the viability of the WFH context based on the views of women employed in the government, semi-government, and private sectors as measures to encourage female employment. Data was collected online in 2021 from women (age range: 20-65, education: O/L passed-degree, from different districts, and job categories) who had experienced WFH, as face-to-face interviews were not possible due to COVID lockdowns. The snowball method was adopted due to the lack of a proper sampling frame. Questions were open-ended to get independent views. Thirty-five percent noted that 75%+ of their job could be done effectively from home, while 41% noted that 50% -75% of their job could be done effectively from home. Only 16% noted that working from the office all five days is better. Thirty-two and 35% respectively stated 75%+ and 50 - 74% of their work could be done using telephone and internet. As facilities, the major requirement was good internet connections and computers. Findings indicate that a relatively large proportion of women can do a major part of their work from home, and the facilities required are plausible to be provided. WFH is not encouraged as it can conflict with household duties. Respondents confirmed the view, but the responses also indicated that proper management, monitoring, and training can help to overcome the obstacle. Thus, overall findings indicate the possibility of WFH becoming a viable option. Therefore, a policy decision should be taken to examine which sectors/job categories can adopt WFH on a permanent basis and formalize this procedure in both government and private sectors. The policy cannot be changed based on a single study. The aim is to provide a lead for further research/policy planning to seek solutions to a persistent issue. The prevailing WFH has provided empirical evidence and experience that the country would not have had if not for COVID-19. WFH should not be a temporary response to a pandemic, but taken as an opportunity to capitalize on as a solution to a long-standing issue in the country.

Keywords: *Sri Lanka, women, labour force participation, working from home*

Advantages of the digitalization of education system under the new normal

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Education is the social process by which an individual learns what is necessary to fit him into social life. Education should be a means to empower children and adults alike to become active participants in the transformation of their societies. It is an essential requirement for people to survive in the modern and industrialized world. Modern society is based on people with high living standards and knowledge which allows them to implement a better solution to their problems. Education empowers everyone. Some areas where education helps are the elimination of poverty, safety and security against crimes, prevention of wars and terrorism, commerce and trade law and order. However, with the new normal situation, digitalization plays a significant role in public education, to a varying extent across the world compelling schools to close and education to go digital. This has created new challenges and opportunities for teachers, students, and administrators. Under this new normal situation, not only education but also the corporate world depends on digitalization. In line with these developments, it is necessary to change what is learned and how it is learned. The objective of the study is to take a deep look at the advantages of the digitalizing education system in the new normal. This study, which takes a qualitative approach (desk research), draws secondary data from journals, publications, websites, articles, and books. It is hoped that this study will help understand how the benefits of digitalizing education can be implemented for the betterment of the education system in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *education, digitalization, new normal*

Left-populism and everyday politics: Reflections based on the Sri Lankan experience

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The decline of neoliberal hegemony since the 2008 financial crisis paved the way for two global political trends: far-right populism and left-populism. Both trends relied on the ideologically constructed antagonism between ‘the people’ and ‘enemies of the people’ i.e. economic and political elite. The far-right populist movements have so far been more successful than their left-wing counterparts. While the causes for that success of the far-right and failure of the left are definitely diverse and complicated, this study focuses on one dimension of it: the comparative weakness of the left in bringing its version of populism into ‘everyday politics.’ As Laura Grattan correctly observes, the contemporary left populist movements in the West have failed to combine ‘outrageous populism’ and ‘everyday populism’ (2012: 194-218), which is based on what Pierre Bourdieu identifies as habitus (1977). For Bourdieu, the dominant social dispositions and perceptions are installed within us in the form of habitus through our daily encounters with social structures and practices (1977: 214). The already existing everyday politics among popular sectors is generally favorable for right-wing populism that largely relies on conservative nationalist doxa. However, the left-wing populists should either revive or reconstruct the existing alternative traditions, which have been mostly marginalized from the cultural mainstream. This study suggests that the left populist strategy conceptualized by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe should be supplemented with this idea of everyday populism. It elaborates on the above suggestion through analyzing some failed attempts of left-populism in recent decades in Sri Lanka. Data and information are collected through in-depth unstructured interviews and archival research and analyzed through the method of political discourse analysis.

Keywords: *populism, habitus, everyday-politics*

Securing the best interests of a child during the COVID-19 pandemic: An analysis of child rights in urban slums with special reference to the Peliyagoda Urban Council in Gampaha District, Sri Lanka

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The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly compromised ensuring a child's best interests. Through the lens of child rights, this study attempts to assess the impact of COVID-19 on children's education, health care, and security, specifically in urban slums in Sri Lanka. This was investigated in five wards located in the Peliyagoda Urban Council, namely, Peliyagoda Gangabada, Peliyagodawatta, Meegahawatta South, Rohana Vihara Pedesa, and Gurukula Vidyalaya Pedesa. To achieve the aforementioned purpose, the researchers used both qualitative and quantitative methods and secondary sources as data collection tools. Semi-structured questionnaires and structured interviews were used to collect data. Stratified random sampling was used to select 30 participants from each of the five wards based on age, sex, and ethnicity. The findings revealed that children were more vulnerable to emotional, physical, and verbal violence and exploitation during the pandemic. This vulnerable situation was found to be exacerbated by pre-existing class conflict and economic disparities. Children with disabilities were found to face more verbal abuse. 63% of households reported losing their source of income with the onset of the pandemic. As a result, 47% of children worked as retail assistants or domestic workers to lessen the economic insecurity. Due to the lack of smartphones, internet access, and technological knowledge, 81% were not attending online classes. Children from these urban slums who rely on the school's free meal program are also facing food insecurity due to school closures. Such concerns of urban slum children are often excluded in state-level pandemic discourses. Childhood violence and marginalization can harm a child's holistic development and growth. Thus, stakeholders should put appropriate plans in place to address and mitigate the issues that urban slum children face during the pandemic and strive to protect their children's rights during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *child rights, urban slums, best interests of child, COVID-19 pandemic*

Women, peace and security in post-war Sri Lanka: A lukewarm commitment to develop a national action plan on UNSCR 1325

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Women and girls suffer disproportionately during and after wars, but their conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, as well as the leadership they show in rebuilding war-torn countries, are underestimated, and underutilized in the peace and security decision-making sphere. There have been various requests for women's full and equal engagement in all peace and security projects and gender mainstreaming. As a result, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously endorsed UNSCR 1325, which establishes the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, which strives to integrate gender considerations into peace and security governance. According to the UNSC, the national implementation of UNSCR 1325 and associated resolutions is an important tool for advancing the agenda. Therefore, the UNSC has repeatedly recommended that member states expedite the development of national and regional action plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325, including the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) or other national-level strategies such as peace policies, gender policies, and medium/long-term development plans. Despite its support for the agenda and repeated expressions of willingness to accept the resolution, Sri Lanka is one of many UN member-states that has failed to develop a WPS NAP nearly two decades after the historic WPS Agenda was adopted. This can be seen as a significant setback for peace, security, and long-term rebuilding in post-war Sri Lanka, and the need for it remains acute on the ground. The objective of this study is to assess the importance of NAP in Sri Lanka's implementation of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda, as well as the commitments and obstacles that Sri Lankan national authorities have in developing it. This objective examines the theoretical foundations provided by John Burton's Basic Human Needs theory and John Paul Lederach's Conflict Transformation theory in the context of Sri Lanka, based on the resolution's core mandates, which are condensed into four Ps: Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Prosecution. Sri Lanka was chosen as a case study on a specific subject as a qualitative research design. Primary and secondary data were used in this study to acquire a holistic view of the case and investigate the gap between NAP commitment and development. In this post-war scenario, the country must generate spillover effects across many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly through addressing inequality and closing the development and peace gap.

Keywords: *National Action Plan, Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations Security Council Resolution, women, peace, security agenda*

From non-availability to abstinence: The impact of pandemic lockdown on alcohol consumption behaviour of people in the Southern Province

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Frequent lockdowns and movement restrictions have led to significant behavioral changes in the human lifestyle. The behavior related to alcohol storage and consumption during the pandemic time has emerged as an important, yet underrated issue. Alcohol-related harm is not a new phenomenon, and it has been a serious health and social issue in Sri Lanka for a long time. Therefore, it is important to understand the alcohol storage behavior and changes in consumption during the pandemic restrictions, and to explore the motivation of people to quit alcohol after a brief period of abstinence due to non-availability or non-accessibility. A qualitative study was conducted by using a series of in-depth interviews with a sample that was recruited by a mix of purposive and snowball sampling. Phenomenological method was followed by using both exploratory and explanatory approaches. Phone-based interviews were conducted due to the practical difficulties posed by the pandemic situation. Thematic analysis was done. According to the findings, pandemic lockdown did not prompt regular users to store alcohol overwhelmingly. However, brewing of illicit alcohol and home brewing of spirits became abundant. On account of that, a clear increase in the use of illicit alcohol was noted. Few people who never had illicit alcohol (*Kasippu*) started consuming it. Illegally delivered alcohol also became readily available in the community. Most of the regular drinkers had reduced the frequency of consumption and some of them abstained from alcohol for varying lengths of periods. Non-availability, non-accessibility issues, and lack of affordability due to loss of regular income were elicited as contributory factors. However, almost all of them returned to the consumption when the pandemic limitations were over. These findings highlight the need of strengthening law enforcement to curb the production and sales of illicit and illegally delivered alcohol. There is an opportunity to sustain the abstinence of these people with active intervention by public health staff. Advocacy of policymakers, public awareness, and strengthening of primary care services for alcohol rehabilitation should be done.

Keywords: *abstinence, alcohol taking behavior, non-availability, pandemic lockdown*

Munidasa Cumaratunga's response to teaching Sinhala at the Ceylon University College

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The establishment of the Ceylon University College in 1921 and the University of Ceylon in 1942 were milestones in the field of higher education in Sri Lanka. The study of 'oriental languages' entered a new phase of modernization during this colonial period with the setting up of these academic institutions. At the same time, Munidasa Cumaratunga (1887-1944), a language loyalist and the foremost grammarian of the twentieth century launched a campaign to purify and reform the Sinhala language. The purpose of this paper is to provide an evaluation of the views expressed by Munidasa Cumaratunga on the teaching of Sinhala at the University College during the late 1930s and early 1940s. In a colonial setting, the University College did not give much recognition for the teaching of oriental languages - Sinhala, Pali, and Sanskrit. In this sociolinguistic context, Cumaratunga criticized the standard of teaching Sinhala in the University College, which existed before the establishment of the University of Ceylon. Writing several 'Open Letters' and appeals to relevant authorities of the colonial government, Cumaratunga emphasized the place of Sinhala in the university. Why did Cumaratunga make these criticisms regarding the teaching of Sinhala at the University College and the place of Sinhala in the University of Ceylon? The data will be analyzed to identify themes that are relevant to the main research question of this study. Based on contemporary archival sources, like *Subasa* (1939), and *The Helio* (1941) journals, this paper provides a critical evaluation of Munidasa Cumaratunga's views on teaching Sinhala at the University College. In general, this discussion revisits the colonial legacy of the teaching of Sinhala in academia and the local response to the colonial government.

Keywords: *Munidasa Cumaratunga, Ceylon University College, Sinhala language, oriental languages*

The impact of English medium instruction on undergraduates' academic performances in Sri Lanka: A case study

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English being a lingua franca encourages every student to learn English to meet current trends. In this context, English medium instruction (EMI) can support students to advance their English proficiency while enhancing their competitiveness within the job market. However, students who have followed their studies in their mother tongue encounter challenges in EMI and are unable to achieve the expected academic performances during their first year. The aim of this study is to examine the challenges and issues that the BSc undergraduates experience as a result of offering their degree in English medium and analyze the positive and negative impacts of EMI on academic performances. A qualitative investigation was conducted including twenty undergraduates and five lecturers from the Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University, Sri Lanka. Random sampling method was used to select the participants for the study and the sample included representatives from each department. A questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used to collect data for this study. Data were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (TA). Most participants reported that English being their medium of instruction negatively affected their academic performances during their first year and for this reason, they were not satisfied with their examination results. A majority of the undergraduates identified their inadequate English language proficiency as the key reason for EMI being more challenging for them. Although 10% of the participants indicated that they would choose Sinhala as their medium of instruction if they had a choice. A majority preferred improving their English proficiency rather than changing the medium of instruction. The study's findings offer insights to improve the effectiveness of the English program carried out by the university during the orientation period. The study has implications for the subject lecturers, subject coordinators, and curriculum revision committees.

Keywords: *English medium instruction, academic, performances, undergraduates*

The association between demographic features and life satisfaction during COVID-19 induced lockdowns in Colombo

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Life satisfaction is one of the most important elements of well-being related to psychological issues as it allows a person to cope with adversity. Stringent measures taken to prevent the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) have an impact on the human population's subjective sense of well-being. Studies have found that this impact varies according to social-demographic characteristics. This cross-sectional study examined the demographic differences of life satisfaction among Sri Lankans living in Colombo, a district identified as a hotspot during the pandemic in Sri Lanka due to its high social mobility and population density. The data collection tool was a self-administrated questionnaire and life satisfaction was measured through the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener et al. (1985). Online and face-to-face interviews were used to collect data from 428 respondents living in Colombo chosen through multistage stratified sampling. The association of social demographic factors with life satisfaction was examined through one-way ANOVA and Spearman correlation. As per SWLS, a score below 20 has been categorized as dissatisfaction while a score above 20 as satisfaction. The study found no statistically significant differences in life satisfaction among males (46%) and females (44%). Further, a statistically significant difference in life satisfaction was found in the following demographic groups: in nationality - between Sinhalese (50%) and other nationalities (29%) which was especially due to the low score among Tamils (26%); in education - who had not passed G.C.E. O/L (27%) vs who had passed G.C.E O/L and above (52%); among people who used to have monthly earnings (57%) against people who used to have daily earnings (30%); and among people who live in ≤ 10 perch houses (36%) vs people who live in ≥ 10 perch houses (62%). Further, there was a significant difference in life satisfaction among different generation cohorts as well: baby boomers (53%) and Gen X (54%) have higher life satisfaction against Gen Y (41%) and Gen Z (30%). The high number of bedrooms in a house also displayed a significant correlation with SWLS at a 95% significance level.

Keywords: *life satisfaction, well-being, household, generations*

In the shadow of the pandemic: A study on the implications of COVID-19 on women farmers in Rajanganaya

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Food production and distribution came to a standstill in the wake of COVID-19 in Sri Lanka and worldwide, impacting millions of people, especially women. Pandemics exacerbate existing barriers and widen inequalities and exclusions, making women farmers more vulnerable to debt, hunger, violence, and poverty. The study aims to outline specific socio-economic challenges women farmers had to endure with the outbreak of COVID-19 with a geographical focus in the Rajanganaya Divisional Secretariat. The findings are supported by structured interviews and focus group discussions with a sample size of 80 women farmers from Rajanganaya. The findings seek to draw a correlation between the rise of socioeconomic vulnerabilities among women farmers with the absence of sustainable farming practices, lack of state and non-state driven targeted interventions to support women farmers, control over resources and markets by patriarchal and neoliberal socio-economic structures, and exploitation by unregulated service providers (financial and agricultural inputs) during the pandemic. Findings from interviews affirm that the pandemic has adversely impacted on women farmers economically since they have structural labour roles embedded with agriculture such as sowing seeds, harvesting, and watering. Further women have been discriminated against and excluded from the state of access and control over resources in agriculture such as land, agricultural inputs, and the market. The pandemic has escalated the impact of such discriminations and women farmers have become more vulnerable. A key conclusion presented by the study is that systematic detachment from agroecological farming practices have diminished the resilience of women farmers in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This phenomenon increases vulnerability and dependency of women farmers on debt traps, leading to violence, exploitation, exclusion, and even suicide due to unregulated financial service providers as well as a collapse in household and community level food security.

Keywords: *women farmers, COVID-19, food security, agroecology*

The collapse of the Meethotamulla waste dump and its impact on the governance of municipal waste management in Sri Lanka: A case study of the “A” Municipal Council and the “B” Urban Council areas

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The collapse of the Meethotamulla garbage dump claimed the lives of over 30 individuals and displaced over 180 families. The main objective of the study is to explore the impact that the event had on the national and local level governance of municipal solid waste management in Sri Lanka with special reference to the “A” Municipal Council and the “B” Urban Council areas. The study utilized secondary data such as gazettes, policy and strategic documents. Primary data was collected over a period of three months using a questionnaire from a purposively selected sample of 600 respondents representing low-, middle-, and high-income classes residing in the two local council areas to comprehend the impact on waste practices. The study utilized content analysis to analyze secondary data while primary data was analyzed using Uni-variate and Bi-variate analysis tests using SPSS software. The findings revealed that the central government adopted changes such as improving the capacities of existing dumping sites, building new sanitary landfills, and initiating waste-to-energy projects at the national level. The government also banned the use, production, and importation of polythene products with a thickness of 20 microns or below and this ban was further extended in 2021. At local level, local councils had implemented compulsory waste segregation and had initiated plastic recycling programmes in all wards. Primary data revealed that segregation rates have increased from less than 15% to over 98% in the local councils. Further, over 26% have reduced the use of single use polythene and have increased the use of alternatives such as cloth and paper bags. In addition to these changes, over 12% of residents have resorted to alternative waste disposal methods such as domestic compost production, burning, and burying waste. The findings further suggest that the collapse of the Meethotamulla dumping site has had a major impact on the waste management mechanism at national and local level and has generated positive changes to improve existing management mechanisms. The authors recommend that the collapsing event should be utilized to implement community-based waste management policies such as composting in order to reduce the amount of garbage disposed to the existing dumping sites and to increase community participation in the waste management system.

Keywords: *Meethotamulla disaster, disaster impact, municipal solid waste governance*

Dynamic relationship between inflation rate and stock returns in Sri Lanka

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The question of whether stocks can act as a hedge against inflation has received tremendous attention in economics and financial literature, but there is a lack of evidence when it comes to addressing this issue in Sri Lanka. This paper attempts to examine the dynamic relationship between inflation rate and stock returns including two advanced stages, namely the relationship between inflation and stock prices and the relationship between volatility of inflation rate and volatility of stock returns using monthly data for the period of 1994–2019. CCPI is used as a proxy for inflation while ASPI is used as a proxy for stock prices. The main empirical models used in the study are Johansen co-integration analysis and GARCH models. Cointegration analysis suggests the existence of a significant positive relationship between inflation and stock prices in the long run and Granger causality test confirms that causality runs from $CCPI_t$ to $ASPI_t$. Moreover, OLS regression results advocated for a significant negative relationship between contemporaneous stock returns.

Keywords: *inflation rate, stock market returns, All Share Price Index (ASPI)*

Consumer buying behaviour toward consumer durables during a crisis: COVID-19 pandemic

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The consumer is the centre of today's economy and their buying behaviour changes concerning the significant exogenous and endogenous factors during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Buying behaviour of durables reflects the complex buying behaviour. Durables are much more sensitive to business cycles due to their infrequent transactions and the high involvement of consumers in the purchase decision. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to examine the change in consumer buying behaviour toward consumer durables during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study has focused on examining the impact of income changes on buying behaviour of durables and identifying the change of demand for durables. The study has attempted to derive primary data by administering an online questionnaire during the pandemic period from late 2020 to early 2021. Hence, the convenient sampling method has been used. The sample has consisted of 150 private and public sector employees. Descriptive statistical tools have been adopted in analyzing data. While analyzing the data, simple average and percentages are computed. For research, count, mean, and cross tables have been used. It was identified that the change in income level during the pandemic has affected the purchasing behaviour towards durables. The most affected households consisted of private-sector employees. The majority have used credit cards or borrowings to finance their purchases due to their low-income level during the pandemic. Though quality and durability have become more prominent factors considered by consumers during a normal situation, price and discount have become the most prominent factors that consumers consider during a crisis. Though the consumer behaviour for durables usually reflect complex buying behaviour, dissonance-reducing buying behaviour was exhibited during the pandemic due to the low availability of discounted and low priced goods and low availability of choices with fewer significant differences among brands during the pandemic. The majority of the sample has intended to purchase durable goods to meet their educational and replacement purposes. As an aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, consumer behaviour toward purchasing consumer durables has changed significantly due to the decline in income level, market trend toward digitalization, and the newly emerging necessity of online working, learning and teaching.

Keywords: *durable goods, consumer buying behaviour, purchasing patterns, pandemic*

Care issues faced by aged lesbian and gay communities in Sri Lanka

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At present, homosexuals (lesbian and gay people) are a remarkable minority sexual group in society. They gain both national and international attention from a variety of perspectives. Aging is challenging for every human, but homosexuals have more health issues compared to heterosexuals. Globally, the aging homosexual community is more likely to develop in the future than in the present. Accordingly, the objective of this research is to investigate the care issues faced by the homosexual community in Sri Lanka due to aging. Owing to the inability to openly identify this aging community, two lesbians and eighteen gays over the age of sixty from different districts of Sri Lanka were selected through the snowball sampling method. Accordingly, this research is a qualitative study in which data is collected through an in-depth interview system. Due to the ban on same-sex marriage in Sri Lanka, this community has become isolated from the family due to lack of marriage, lack of children, and social marginalization. According to the study, there were several reported cases of drug abuse and suicide attempts due to poor mental health in this community. The study also found that health care professionals are reluctant to diagnose various ailments due to discrimination and a number of other reasons. A higher number of the sample was more likely to live in isolation in old age. As a result, the community is facing problems in care, and the strong need for institutional care can be further identified here, with a majority of respondents pointing out that institutional care is needed. The findings of this analysis include the need for implementation of awareness programs for the general public about this group of sexual minorities with a greater focus on their health issues, especially institutional care, without discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Keywords: *lesbian, gay, aging, care*

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ඩී. එම්. ඩී. දිසානායක

දේශපාලන විද්‍යාව සහ රාජ්‍ය ප්‍රතිපත්ති අධ්‍යයන අංශය, කොළඹ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලය, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව.

නියෝජිතවරණ යනු නියෝජිත ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදයේ ප්‍රමුඛතම දේශපාලන උපායමාර්ගයක් ය. රාජ්‍යයක ආර්ථික, දේශපාලන, සමාජ, සහ සංස්කෘතික අභිලාෂ සාධනය කරගැනීමට අදාළ ප්‍රතිපත්ති සම්පාදකයින්, විධායකයින්, සහ ජනතා නියෝජිතයින් තෝරාපත් කරගැනීම නියෝජිත දේශපාලනයේ සහ නියෝජිතවරණවල අරමුණය. ඒ සඳහා නියෝජිතවරණ ක්‍රමවේද නිසි ලෙස සැලසුම්කරණය විය යුත්තේ නියෝජිත ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී ප්‍රතිමාන මත පිහිටා රටක ජාතික ප්‍රතිපත්ති මූලධර්මවලට අනුකූලව මිස හුදු නියෝජිතවරණවල තාක්ෂණික ගැටළු විසඳීම සඳහා පමණක් නොවේ ය. මන්ද නියෝජිත දේශපාලනයේ ප්‍රධාන අරමුණ විය යුත්තේ ආර්ථික, දේශපාලන, සමාජ, සහ සංස්කෘතික වෘද්ධිය සහ සංහිදියාව සහිත පොදුජන යහපැවැත්ම ය. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ නියෝජිතවරණ ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ ඉතිහාසය විමර්ශනය කරන විට පෙනී ගියේ එම ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ එකී පදනම් ගැන අවධානය යොමුකොට ඇත්තේ ඉතා අවම මට්ටමකින් බව ය. යටත් විජිත පාලකයින් තම පාලනයට හානි නොවන ආකාරයෙන් නියෝජිතවරණ ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමට උපායික විය. පශ්චාත් යටත් විජිත නියෝජිතවරණ ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී ප්‍රතිමාන සහ රාජ්‍ය ප්‍රතිපත්ති මූලධර්ම කෙරෙහි සෘජු අවධානයක් යොමු නොකළ ඒවා ය. 2004, 2007 වසරවල ඉදිරිපත් වූ මැතිවරණ ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ පිළිබඳ විශේෂ පාර්ලිමේන්තු තේරීම්කාරක සභාවල වාර්තා සහ 2021 එවැනි ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ සඳහා වූ කාරක සභාවේ කාර්යවපසරිය මීට නිදසුන් ය. දීර්ඝ නියෝජිතවරණ ඉතිහාසයක් ඇති ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ එසේ සිදුවන්නේ මන්ද? ඒ කවරාකාරයෙන් ද? මෙම පර්යේෂණ පත්‍රිකාව ඒ පිළිබඳව වූ ඓතිහාසික විශ්ලේෂණයකි. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ නියෝජිතවරණ, සහ නියෝජිත දේශපාලනය කෙරෙහි වන මෙම අධ්‍යයනය දේශපාලන විද්‍යා ශික්ෂණයට අදාළ ඓතිහාසික ප්‍රවේශය සහ ප්‍රතිමානාත්මක ප්‍රවේශ උපකාරයෙන් සිදුකළ එකකි. මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සමකාලීනව ඉතා වැදගත් වන්නේ ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ නියෝජිතවරණ ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ ක්‍රියාවලිය නොනවත්වා ඉදිරියට ගෙන යාමට බලයට පත්වන සෑම ආණ්ඩුවක්ම උත්සාහ ගත් සහ ගනිමින් සිටින නිසා ය. එබැවින් මෙවැනි අධ්‍යයනයක් එකී ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ ක්‍රියාවලි ගුණාත්මක වශයෙන් වැඩි දියුණු කිරීම සඳහා වන ශාස්ත්‍රීය සහ සමාජ කතිකාවක් ඇති කිරීම සඳහා වන දායකත්වයකි. එසේම ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ නියෝජිතවරණ ක්‍රියාවලිය පදනම් විය යුතු ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රීය මූලධර්ම පිළිබඳව මතක් කිරීමකි. අධ්‍යයනයේ අරමුණ වූයේ ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී ආණ්ඩුකරණය සඳහා ප්‍රබල පහසුකාරකයක් විය යුතු නියෝජිතවරණ දේශපාලන ක්‍රියාවලිය සඳහා වන ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ මෙරට රාජ්‍ය ප්‍රතිපත්ති මූලධර්ම සහ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී ප්‍රතිමාන මත පිහිටා සිදු කළ යුතු ය යන්න කෙරෙහි බුද්ධිමතුන්ගේ සහ ප්‍රතිපත්ති සම්පාදකයින්ගේ අවධානය යොමු කරවීම ය. ඒ සඳහා ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ නියෝජිත දේශපාලනයේ සහ නියෝජිතවරණ ක්‍රමයේ ආරම්භයේ සිට 2021 අප්‍රේල් 5 වැනි දා පිහිට වූ මැතිවරණ සහ ඡන්ද විමසීම් ව්‍යුහයේ හා නීති රීතිවල ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ හඳුනාගැනීමටත්, ඒ සම්බන්ධයෙන් අවශ්‍ය සංශෝධන ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමටත් වන විශේෂ කාරක සභාවී දක්වා වූ නියෝජිතවරණ ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ ක්‍රියාවලිය විමර්ශනයට ලක්කොට ඇත.

ප්‍රමුඛ පද: නියෝජිතවරණ, නියෝජිත ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදය, රාජ්‍යය ප්‍රතිපත්ති මූලධර්ම, නියෝජිතවරණ ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණ

Effectiveness of business communication for the fourth-year undergraduates' industrial training: An empirical study

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For effective business practices, employees and management should interact to reach organizational goals and for that purpose, proficiency in English is a key requirement. In this context, the Faculty of Management Studies offers the unit “Business Communication” in order to enhance business English knowledge of the BSc undergraduates. However, to which extent this unit supports the industrial training that undergraduates must complete as a fulfillment of their degree is a question. Therefore, the key aim of the study is to examine how the Business Communication unit supports fourth year undergraduates to undertake their training effectively. The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches with the aim of gaining an in depth understanding of the participants’ perspectives. A questionnaire was distributed among ten randomly selected students from the Faculty of Management Studies of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. The study used SPSS software for analyzing quantitative data while Thematic Analysis (TA) for identifying, organizing and interpreting qualitative data. The findings of the study indicate that what they learned from the Business Communication unit was beneficial for them to communicate effectively during the training. As such, 95% of the undergraduates agreed that the knowledge acquired from this unit can develop their efficacy, employability skills, and professionalism, thus the students can secure better jobs in the employment market. As the undergraduates strongly acknowledge that English language skills are mandatory for finding a career, the university management should further focus on the English skills that are required for employability. The findings of the study have implications for students, teachers, and material designers.

Keywords: *business communication, English language proficiency, industrial training, professional development*

Cybersecurity challenges in the higher education sector and strategies to overcome: A case study of a state university

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As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, people have started using the internet dramatically in many fields, both locally and globally. Notably, in the education sector, students and teachers are compelled to use the internet for the learning and teaching process. With the widespread use of the Internet, cybercrime and cyber-violence are on the rise around the world. International cybersecurity reports have warned that Sri Lanka has become one of the most vulnerable countries in South Asia. Therefore, it is essential to identify the major challenges faced by students and develop strategies to secure them in cyberspace. This study mainly used a quantitative research approach to identify new findings statistically. Primary data were collected from students in all years of the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. Secondary data were collected from the national and international cybersecurity reports and other online resources. The results show that most students are vulnerable to the most popular cyber-attacks due to lack of awareness, poor use of the existing primary security features, and unsafe practices. Results show that the first-year students have the highest awareness percentage while fourth-year students have the lowest awareness percentage. Students' password patterns are not strong enough to secure their accounts, and they share their passwords with the most trustworthy people. Some students have experienced cyber-attacks, mostly on social media, and some students have no idea of how it happened. The study suggests several strategies for overcoming cybercrime under two categories: technical and non-technical. Technically, users should update installed software regularly and use given security features. Non-technically, students should create strong passwords according to the prescribed standards. It is recommended to organize an awareness programme at least once a year to educate all students about the latest trends in cybersecurity.

Keywords: *awareness, cyberattack, cybersecurity*

Analyzing wage differentials by fields of study: Evidence from Sri Lanka

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What is the pay gap among graduates in different fields of study? In recent years, researchers started exploring wage differentials by fields of study at tertiary education, arguing that the years of schooling variable, one of the human capital indicators under the Mincerian earnings function, alone is insufficient to capture such differentials. Empirical evidence on the above will be very useful both for policy makers as well as for students who decide on their field of study either at secondary level and/or at the university. Nevertheless, as far as the author knows, returns to various fields of study have not been investigated in the context of Sri Lanka thereby missing one of the key pieces of information for optimal allocation of both human and financial resources. This study aims at filling the above gap, namely the wage differentials associated with the field of study of graduates. This study employs a variant of Mincerian earnings specification within a multinomial framework for correcting selection bias. Additionally, a quantile regression method is employed in examining wage differentials across wage distribution. Using Labour Force Survey 2017 and 2018, conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka, the study considers 11 different fields of study ranging from Arts to Computer Science. After accounting for a number of observable characteristics, our results suggest that, compared to the base group of Arts graduates, Medicine, Engineering and Law graduates receive around 35-50 per cent higher hourly wage rate. In contrast, wage differentials among Arts, Science, and Commerce study fields remain somewhat lower while graduates in the fields of Agriculture and Indigenous medicine do not receive a significantly positive wage premium over Arts graduates. Interestingly there exists a significantly positive wage premium for males and for English language ability. Our findings justify the policy makers' recent focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) subjects and parents' continued focus on pushing their children in pursuing STEM subjects.

Keywords: *wage differentials, study stream, Mincerian earnings regression, Sri Lanka*

Is informal employment sector hereditary? Evidence from Sri Lanka

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One of the key characteristics of the labour markets in developing countries is that a sizable portion of the workforce is in the informal sector. It is generally presumed that informal employment is inferior to formal employment, in terms of working conditions, wages, and social protection benefits,. Traditionally, labour market analysts assume that the share of the informal economy declines during the process of economic growth and development. However, this natural transformative process is somewhat slow in emerging and developing countries. If the economy consists of a larger informal sector, it excludes the majority of workers from decent work conditions by limiting the opportunities for high-paid decent jobs. In particular, perpetuation in informal employment could cause poverty and inequalities as well as misallocation of labour market skills. As a result, a sizable number of households may witness backwardness resulting in limited upward mobility in society over a span of multiple generations. Understanding the relationship between parents' and children's work choices is essential for assessing the opportunities for social mobility. The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between parents and their children's choice of employment sector. This study employs a three-stage least square (3SLS) estimator and uses data from the Labour Force Survey 2018 to analyze the degree to which a tendency towards the informal sector exists hereditarily. Our regression results clearly indicate that parents' employment sector strongly relates with that of their children. In other words, the probability that a child is employed in the informal sector is significantly higher if his/her parents also engage in the informal sector. This implies that intergenerational social mobility remains weak regardless of the provision of, among others, free education. A weaker intergenerational social mobility could be a stumbling block for reducing poverty and inequality in society and require policy markets' urgent attention.

Keywords: *informal workers, intergenerational social mobility, employment, Sri Lanka*

Challenges of COVID-19 on travel agencies in Sri Lanka: A study based on the Negombo Divisional Secretary Division

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Tourism has been the third-largest foreign exchange earning economy in Sri Lanka (SL). The contribution of Travel Agencies (TAs) to the development of tourism has played an important role. As a result, 15,923 people worked directly and indirectly in TAs in SL. However, this situation changed drastically following the identification of the first COVID-19 patient in SL in 01/2020. Therefore, this research has been carried out under the topic of *Challenges of COVID-19 on Travel Agencies in Sri Lanka: Study based on Negombo Divisional Secretary Division*. The study focused on the impact of COVID-19 on TA in SL and the current livelihoods of TAs population in Negombo. The main objective of this study is to adapt to the challenges faced by Negombo TAs in the post-Corona period. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in this study. It is noteworthy that 90 samples were selected based on systematic evolution from 29 TAs in the study area. An unstructured interview and an online questionnaire survey were used for primary data collection. Moreover, secondary data such as research papers, statistical reports, and the Internet were used for further information. Data analysis for the research was done through MS Excel 2016. According to this study, 21% of females and 79% of males participated in the survey and their standards of living were good until COVID-19. Further, their general well-being spoiled due to struggling with the socio-economic and psychological challenges of post-Corona like unemployment (82%), financial crisis (73%), conflict in families (36%) and mental illness (93%). In 2018, the SL tourism industry received 27% of the contribution from TAs of Negombo. Thus, these people should not be abandoned and should be encouraged through workshops, career guidance programs, subsidies, and alternative online jobs. Additionally, employees' data should be gathered and computerized by the Ministry of Tourism for future needs.

Keywords: *challenges, tourism, travel agencies*

Maara rasthiyaduwa: An ethnographic study of everyday life and experiences of social exclusion of urban communities in a high-rise housing project in the city of Colombo

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This study set in the City of Colombo draws on urban ethnographic field work conducted between September 2019 to January 2021. My research project examines urban communities resettled from urban *waththas* into high-rise, government owned housing projects. Urban development projects purportedly implemented for “the greater good of society” are renowned for global dispossession of the urban poor. Lefebvre (1996) and Harvey (2008) explain this dispossession in theoretical discussions of the right to the city. The urban poor are deprived of their right to establish and construct a meaningful home in the city. This ethnographic study is primarily based on participant observation and other methods i.e. household survey, life-histories, informal interviews and participatory methods. I focus on seven case studies of respondents and participate with them in their everyday encounters which occur within government offices, hospitals, schools, courts and police stations. These experiences are often articulated by respondents as a “maara rasthiyaduwa”. The Sinhala term “rasthiyadu/wa” refers to a “waste of time” and denotes someone who goes to much trouble, spending their time achieving little, or nothing. While time wasting in government offices is often considered a common experience for many citizens, I argue that this is interconnected with notions of time and temporality (*welaawa*) evident in the broader structure of Sri Lankan society, and affects one’s right to the city. My findings extrapolate the pivotal role played by the state in controlling the time and everyday lives of citizens, while commenting on intersecting factors of ethnicity, religion, gender and class that impact the treatment of citizens. In conclusion, my study focusses on how everyday interactions of urban dwellers influence the construction of cities. I recommend absorbing Sustainable Development Goal 11 into the current discourse on urban development, while stating the importance of Sustainable Development Goals 10 and 16 in creating cities, accessible to all.

Keywords: *social exclusion, inequality, right to the city, time*

Semantic mapping: A fun way to learn vocabulary

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Limited lexis and lack of schematic knowledge are barriers for reading comprehension, a skill so vital for the academic success of a university. The mechanical and strenuous nature of vocabulary learning through glossaries has proven unproductive and boring. Hence, this study focuses on finding out whether semantic maps could effectively be employed in reading lessons to trigger prior knowledge, facilitate comprehension, and retain meaning. 143 first year undergraduates of the Faculty of Technology, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, were exposed to semantic mapping during reading instructions of two English language learning courses for a period of five months enabling them to create five maps collaboratively and three individually. They applied their prior knowledge to initiate the map in one color during the 'before-reading' phase, made additions to it with the new knowledge in another color during the 'while reading' phase, and developed a summary of the text based on the map either in groups or individually during the 'post-reading' phase. Moreover, later on they engaged in a gap-filling activity that focused on the key terms of each reading text. The feedback for the intervention was collected through a questionnaire, and the responses of eight MCQ type questions were analyzed quantitatively through parametric one sample t-test, and the feedback for two open-ended questions were coded and analyzed qualitatively by using three theories or hypotheses: The Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1986), Involvement Load Hypothesis (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001) and Depth of Processing Hypothesis (Craik & Lockhard, 1972). The findings of both analyses revealed that semantic maps were an effective and pleasurable way for the undergraduates to acquire vocabulary during English language reading instruction.

Keywords: *lexis, schematic knowledge, semantic mapping, prior knowledge*

The mosque and its role in Sri Lankan society

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Masjid Nabawy in Madinah has a defined series of functions and carried out by the Prophet as a place of worship, an education and dissemination hub, a place of justice, a centre of empowerment, a residence where the Prophet welcomed delegates of the states and other religious leaders and also as a place of conducting cultural events. Yet, currently, the mosques in Sri Lanka have shifted from this historical role in its context of social change towards a place that only conducts religious events such as performing prayers. However, a few of them are operating as institutions for empowering people. Some of them have initiated efforts to build interactions with the local community to empower local potentials. This study aims to find out the root causes that challenge mosques to be a central place in assembling the community on difficulties interrelated to the development of the nation. In order to identify the reality and to gain a clear understanding of prevailing practical social issues, a number of meetings and discussions were conducted with focus groups: Muslim clergies, intellectuals and the members of board of trustees in Udunuwara Divisional Secretariat. It was clear that there is a drive for “separation” of the functions, either from the community towards mosques or from mosques towards the community. It was difficult to change the attitude of people as a midpoint for community empowerment. In the meantime, three key challenges to regenerate the role and task of the mosques, elaborated below, were identified. The development of the mosque has been determined on the physical development as an artistic expression of religious culture or to expand building capacity. Consequently, the efforts of the management have devoted to construction, not to consumers’ mandates. The attitude of mosque activists in common is still traditional approaches. Hence, generated funds are commonly used only for consumptive support, not for empowering the poor. The resources of sermon or oration are generally focused the religious policies, not empowerment principles. Therefore, the improvement of the value of religious messages should be highlighted.

Keywords: *community, empowerment, mosque, Sri Lanka*

A study on the impact of memes on the post-millennials' personal identity and expressions

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In the modern media environment, social media plays a major role. In particular, Post-Millennials (Gen Z: 1996-2009) presents the highest percentage. Today, memes have become a powerful medium of communication in social media. Memes are images, videos, and pieces of texts, which contain ideas that are shared quickly among various social media platforms and some of them are going viral. Researches have shown that memes affect humans' thinking patterns extensively. This research paper studies the memes' impact on the Post-Millennials' personal identity and expressions. For this, a qualitative method has been used. The two generations, Gen X and Y, have been used to compare with Gen Z. For the analysis, 50 respondents from each group were selected. Questionnaires and zoom interviews were conducted to collect primary data. What are the social media platforms they use most; how do they spread the memes, story, or sharing on the wall; do they concern about the accuracy and the content of a meme when sharing were some of the primary questions. Twenty individuals from each of the above three generations, altogether sixty, were observed by using hidden observation methods to collect accurate data regarding their behaviour in sharing memes. After a month-long study, memes shared by these three generation groups were categorized as humour, satire, politics, aggression, and impulsiveness. Among the shared memes, it was evident that 72% of the Gen-Z generation shared memes without proper understanding. This study found most people are expressing their feelings through memes and used to believe memes' content without any reliable source. On this basis, it is recommended that Gen Z people should be more concerned regarding memes' content when they circulate memes to the public as it will attract more people.

Keywords: *Gen Z, memes, personal identity*

Teachers' perspectives of transforming online teaching and learning in school education during the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka

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COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted normal activities such as going to school. Therefore, teachers had to adopt the online teaching process. This research was conducted to identify teachers' perceptions of transforming classroom teaching-learning to online teaching-learning in school education. Quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used in this study within a framework of survey research design. Small group interviews via Zoom were conducted with five teachers in a group. This research was conducted in two parts. In the first phase, there were twenty teachers who were teaching thirteen different subjects at Government schools in Sri Lanka. This sample was selected using a purposive sampling method. Through Zoom interviews, the basic advantages and disadvantages of teachers' perceptions of transforming online teaching-learning were investigated. The advantages are that online teaching is more presentable as the teachers can use videos and photos more attractively, most of the students who were silent in the classroom were active in online teaching, teachers who were familiar with the latest technology could conduct online education at any time, one skilled teacher was enough to teach more students. The disadvantages are that the teachers were not familiar with the latest technology and wanted another one for technical support, it reduces interpersonal relationships and work motivation, teachers had to bear electricity and internet costs. After collecting the primary data from the group interview, an online survey questionnaire was conducted to rate the collected data. 300 out of 500 respondents were collected through a random sample of teachers from all over the country. The percentages of collected data were calculated in relation to advantages and disadvantages. Through a categorical analysis, agreed responses were compared and the advantages were marked as 66%. Therefore, the Sri Lankan education system should move forward towards e-education by considering this pandemic as an opportunity.

Keywords: *e-education, COVID, Zoom, teaching*

COVID-19 and diversity of workforce management: A case study of software engineering companies and garment factories in Sri Lanka

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The year 2020 marked the start of the pandemic caused by the novel COVID-19 virus. As a result of this health crisis, Sri Lanka has been confronted with political, economic and social issues. During the pandemic, the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) initially imposed a new *modus operandi* on Sri Lanka's workforce including a set of COVID-19 guidelines, work from home policies, bio bubbles etc. Software engineering companies (SEC) have utilized the modes suggested by GOSL. However, garment factories (GF) have underutilized employees without enabling them to work under GOSL approved conditions. This study aims to investigate key factors that caused this underutilization of employees and why different approaches have been used to deal with the two employee types (white collar and blue collar) in similar kinds of companies. A mixed methodology was utilized to collect primary data: the online questionnaire method, in-depth (telephone) interviews, and regulated social network evidence. Academic research and reports available online were the secondary data sources. The data was processed using SPSS and Microsoft Office Excel, and then analyzed using the "Human Capital Approach", "Dual Labor Market" and "Job Search" theories. The research findings explain how employees with white collar jobs are treated relatively favorably with wages, job stability and health security. Meanwhile, employees with blue collar jobs are labeled as a vulnerable category during the pandemic. Both companies keep a similar profit level. Through that consistent nexus, employees with blue collar job depend on the proprietor. The proprietor of blue collar jobs can be defined as the bourgeoisie and the employee (the holder of the blue collar job) can be defined as the proletariat. The bourgeoisie always intends to maximize their profits while exploiting the proletariat whilst providing minimal facilities. The bourgeoisie controls the proletariat's job sample and choices based on distal and proximal factors such as education and social factors. The proletariat has to work for their livelihood, even if reluctantly, under detrimental conditions. This study makes it clear that blue collar employees' management is totally under the control of the bourgeoisie. The effects from bourgeoisie subdue the employee rights. However, white collar employees are more independent due to conditions associated with social factors.

Keywords: *blue collar jobs, bourgeoisie, COVID-19, proletariat, white collar jobs*

India's regional diplomacy: A comparative analysis on India's behavior towards bilateral disputes in SAARC and BIMSTEC

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Regionalism has become one of the most dynamic phenomena in International Relations. In the past, the term Regionalism was defined in terms of geographical value and other political factors such as hegemony. According to scholars, under the New Regionalism, regionalism cannot be simply defined by geographical and internal factors. In this paper, the author analyses the role of India in two regional platforms and how India perceives the term regionalism from its perspective. The role of India in SAARC and BIMSTEC projects how a country's contribution can be differentiated based on the motivation and objectives of its member countries of the organisation. While India has geopolitical issues with Pakistan over Kashmir, differences between India and Thailand over market access have become significant issues in SAARC and BIMSTEC. This research focuses on the behaviour of India towards its disputes in SAARC and BIMSTEC. In this research, the author investigates the contribution of India to ease the tension between India and other countries in SAARC and BIMSTEC at the time of disputes. The article compares and contrasts the behaviour of India at the disputes between India and Pakistan in SAARC over the geopolitical situation with the behaviour of India at the differences with Thailand in BIMSTEC over the other market access. The author will examine the main incidents that took place in the Indo-Pakistan relationship in SAARC and India-Thailand relationship in BIMSTEC. Then the author expects to analyze the different approaches taken by India to ease the situation to meet the end goal of the organisation. In conclusion, the author will define the factors that affected India to cooperate and ease the tension in regional platforms and through that the author expects to define the term regionalism through the eyes of India.

Keywords: *BIMSTEC, India, regionalism, SAARC*

Europeanization of Sri Lankan society and the origin of new art: An analysis of socio-cultural diffusion during the British colonial era

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Sri Lanka has an ancient folk culture, which evolved based on the needs of the contemporary socio-political, economic, and natural context relative to the people. With the arrival of the Europeans in the 16th century and the beginning of colonialism, significant changes took place in Sri Lankan society. During the British rule, the system of government underwent fundamental changes in political, economic, and social systems that profoundly affected the people of this country. The present research aimed to study the new art that originated during this British colonial period. Did this new art originate from the cultural diffusion caused by the Europeanization of the Sinhalese people as a result of the British rule? The primary purpose of the present research was to find answers to this research question. The data used for this study were obtained from primary and secondary sources, including newspapers and articles published in Sri Lanka in the late nineteenth century, articles published by the British during the British colonial period, research papers and books written about the English colonial era. Data collected were analyzed thematically to study the relationship between the origin of new arts in Sri Lanka and the socio-cultural diffusion during British rule in the late 19th century. The analysis revealed that the British colonial rule had carried out an organized cultural diffusion in Sri Lanka as a strategy. With this cultural diffusion, Europeanized Sri Lankans enjoyed foreign-inspired art instead of Sinhala folk art. The current research concludes that new arts emerged in Sri Lanka due to Europeanization and cultural diffusion in the late 19th century. Conclusions drawn from the current research can lead to new perspectives and potential research topics for future researchers.

Keywords: *Sri Lanka, British colonial era, Europeanization, folk art*

The effect of COVID-19 on the smallholder rubber sector: A case study in the Kegalle district in Sri Lanka

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Sri Lanka has been combating COVID-19 which adversely affected the Smallholder Rubber Sector (SRS). This study was carried out to assess the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the SRS in Kegalle. Data was collected from 436 Rubber Smallholders (RSs) in Kegalle via a self-administered questionnaire. They were selected from rubber growing areas in Kegalle, in 2021, using the stratified random sampling technique. The effect was measured with dichotomous responses as yes or no, covering key areas of Rubber Farming (RF), during the last 12 months. Henry Garrett ranking method was used to prioritize the perceived constraints of RF by RSs. RSs highlighted a wide range of constraints that had affected their RF activities, which ranked in descending order as follows; immature up keeping, mature up keeping, tapping, processing, extension, and marketing constraints. Tapping and processing operations were done by RSs with few constraints. The extension service was provided with ICTs at a satisfactory level. Marketing constraints included low prices of rubber and the closure of rubber purchasing centres due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *effect of COVID-19, rubber smallholders*

Economic potential of air transport services between Colombo and Batticaloa

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Domestic aviation services play an increasingly important role in internal transportation with significantly less travel times involved compared to other modes of transport. The demand is facilitated by increasing income levels of people, which augments the value of travel time saved, not only in larger countries, but also in small islands such as Sri Lanka. However, Sri Lanka does not have a reliable and regular domestic scheduled air service, which is an imperative for the sustained growth of the demand for internal travel by air, particularly for business and tourism purposes, in which the travellers need to reach their expected destinations safely, comfortably, and expeditiously. The Government of Sri Lanka could not afford to spend sizable capital investments to launch and operate a State-owned domestic air service, and it would not be desirable to engage the Air Force to provide commercial aviation services either. It was at this juncture that the operability of domestic air services by the private sector was explored by the Government. The present study was conducted with the objective of examining the commercial viability of the proposed air transport service from Colombo to Batticaloa. Data were obtained from aviation industry sources and published reports, and the Generalized cost comparison was adopted as the methodology of analysis. Results revealed that the value of time saved by an average passenger would be Rs. 1065 per hour, assuming that all saved were productive hours. No modal shift from public transport to aviation could be expected because even a current A/C bus passenger would not have a Generalized cost advantage to shift to aviation. Instead, there could be a positive Generalized cost saving of a minimum of 13% for a car traveller to shift to aviation. It could therefore be inferred that the Generalized cost saving could be a sufficient incentive for a car passenger to shift towards the aviation mode, for which, no specific inducements coming from State coffers would be required.

Keywords: *air travel, domestic aviation, Generalized cost*

Fertility patterns among ethnic populations in Sri Lanka: The case of Eastern Province

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The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Sri Lanka has declined from 3.4 in 1981 to 2.4 in 2012 reflecting age-sex structure in transition towards an aging population. Labour being a factor of production, this reducing fertility rate could constrain future labour-based economic activities. A particular observation, however, was that the Eastern Province (EP) had reported a significantly high fertility rate in 2012, compared to the national average; Trincomalee district having the highest TFR of 3.02 while Ampara and Batticaloa districts reporting 2.73 and 2.52 respectively. Thus, it is evident that women in the EP contribute towards developing the future labour force of the nation, in spite of their low-income levels corresponding to half the per-capita income of the Western Province. The main objective of the present study was to understand the differences in fertility rates and their patterns in the EP among ethnic populations. The data published by the Department of Census and Statistics were used in both geographic and ethnic sub-divisions. The analysis of Crude Birth Rates (CBR) and TFR was adopted as the methodological approach to explore these differences. The results indicated that the CBR of 20.2 per 1000 population in the EP was significantly higher than the national average of 17.7 in 2012. The CBR of Batticaloa district figured below the provincial average; causes for which were examined in ethnicity-specific statistics. It was revealed that Sinhalese in Batticaloa had a CBR of 4.5, only a little over one-fourth of that of Tamils and one-sixth of Moors. The CBR of Tamils (17.6) was lower than that of Sinhalese (17.99) in Trincomalee, while higher (22.0) than that of Sinhalese (19.4) in Ampara. Moors had the highest CBR in all three districts, 22.4 in Ampara being the lowest and 26.5 in Trincomalee being the highest. Moors had a 20.0% higher CBR in Trincomalee than in Ampara. This observation, not explained by the female favoured sex ratio of Moors in Ampara compared to the male favoured ratio in Trincomalee, warrants future research. The study concluded that the high fertility rate in the EP, particularly in Trincomalee, was due to the high fertility of the Moor population, compared to other ethnicities, reflecting the high contribution per woman in reproductive age towards growth of future labour force.

Keywords: *fertility patterns, ethnic fertility, Eastern province, future labour force*

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and quality of life of people in the Western Province of Sri Lanka

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A novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was reported from Wuhan Province, China, in December 2019. Sri Lanka reported the first case in a Chinese tourist on 27th January 2020 and later in a local person on 11th March, 2020. After that, the World Health Organization (WHO) defined the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic and announced that it would affect every aspect of human life around the globe. Aimed at controlling the COVID-19 situation, the Sri Lankan government enforced a strict strategy of case detection, identification of contacts, quarantine, travel restrictions, and countrywide lockdown. The study aimed to investigate the immediate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and the quality of life among Sri Lankan people above 18 years in the Western province during the lock down periods (since March, 2020 - June, 2021). The study was conducted as a quantitative study by using questionnaires. An online survey was distributed through a social media platform, applying a non-probability convenience sampling method. Statistical and descriptive-analytical methods were used to analyze the data to determine the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and quality of life of the people in Western province, during COVID-19 lockdown period. Furthermore, findings reflected that respondents' mental health was heavily influenced by social media during the lockdown period. The study revealed that inability to do physical exercises (31.5%), financial issues (30.6%), and difficulties of buying/supplying medicine (25%) are the major issues that people faced. 45.4% of the total respondents had stated that they felt some kind of stressful or mentally depressed situation in this period. In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic was associated with a stressful impact on people's lifestyles, and widened the gap between people's living standards. The study recommends addressing the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as it can hinder the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Keywords: *COVID-19, mental health, quality of life, Sri Lanka*

Social impact films as a tool of transforming harmful narratives for peaceful social integration

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The study explores the effectiveness of using social impact films and documentaries which captures the real-life experiences of people and how it can be used to transform harmful narratives in our societies. Certain studies have been conducted in the areas of using media and art in forms of storytelling to impact the vicarious contact learning theory of direct intergroup members, building awareness and transparency towards social injustices, widening the intercultural and inter-religious understanding in peacebuilding contexts upon their newfound shared common values. Through this study, we investigate the adaptability in utilizing modern media and film as a medium of constructive storytelling and communication, further improving the effectiveness and impact of conventional peacebuilding methodologies such as interfaith/intercultural dialogues for communal sensitizing. Within the study, various qualitative and quantitative data will be referred, gathered from a group of youth participants (age 18-29) based in Sri Lanka who underwent a 01-month capacity building programme in social cohesion, preventing violent extremism and participatory community engagement for justice, where the main method of sensitizing was social documentaries based dialogue. In addition, various secondary data has been incorporated to further solidify the study's findings and facts. The initial findings of the study suggest increased adaptability, engagement, and likelihood for positive transformation among the learners through the use of film in nonformal classroom settings. It may improve learners' critical understanding while the follow-up dialogue will encourage their experiential learning through vicarious contact learning, making each other's' experiences more relatable, assisting them to reflect on alternative narratives and perspectives while challenging unjust social norms and harmful stereotypes in their local settings. Therefore, the utilization of social impact films as a tool in peace education attests to be a very feasible possibility worth attention with direct relevance to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 04, 10 and 16.

Keywords: *social impact films, peacebuilding tools, transforming narratives, education for peace and social justice*

Online teaching experience of higher education sector in Sri Lanka: The case study of a state university

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Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, though some state universities had incorporated online Learning Management Systems (LMS), most universities delivered lectures only through traditional classrooms. To adhere to the guidelines issued by the University Grant Commission, the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo was compelled to shift to online modes of learning and teaching suddenly and completely in 2020. The main objective of this study is thus to identify the perceptions, opportunities, and challenges faced by undergraduates pertaining to online learning in the Faculty of Arts. This study is based on both primary and secondary data. A random sample was selected to represent undergraduates in the Faculty of Arts and data was collected via a Google form. The study reveals that 10% of undergraduates from lower and middle-income categories do not have their own devices to join online lectures while only 16% of undergraduates join using laptops. Approximately 36% of undergraduates do not have a separate room to engage in online learning activities. It is noted that undergraduates from the urban areas and higher-income groups have more access and better devices compared to undergraduates in the rural and estate sectors, and the efficiency and performance of undergraduates in urban areas have improved after switching to online learning mode. Connectivity and electricity failure have been reported as major issues faced by the respondents. Some students face physical and mental health problems. Severe stress, anxiety, depression, lack of motivation and lack of social interaction have been noted as physiological challenges. Furthermore, undergraduates with visual and hearing impairments as well as other disabilities also face hardships in following their degree programme purely online. All course units currently offered by the Faculty are not suitable for the online platform. Hence, in the long run, the Faculty should restructure the degree program. The success of online teaching mainly depends on the availability of the devices and connectivity. Therefore, the government should draft policies to improve the infrastructure related to ICT.

Keywords: *e-learning, online teaching, tertiary education, Sri Lanka*

Historical review of the symbolic interpretation of the *Swasthika*

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The *Swasthika* symbol which is associated with people from a thousand years ago is an integral part with reference to historical symbols. The symbol has been identified in different cities in the world based on various structures. The objective of this study is to make explicit this symbolic interpretation through diverse aspects and identify the similarities and variations of this interpretation in different cultures. By means of a literature survey, it was possible to understand some important roles of the *Swasthika*. A library survey was conducted and evidence was gathered from museum galleries. Photographs and recorded findings were used in evaluating interpretations of the symbol. A wide range of facts linked with civilizations and folk societies will be included in the discussion of the results. At first, the symbol was recognized as a geometric letter of ancient art, as in the Akkadian, Assyrian, and Greek civilizations where it was used for linguistic purposes. Later it was treated as a symbolic tool in archaeology when identifying past cultures. In fact, the Indu-Valley civilization yielded the Swastika symbol as a seal, which might have been used as a mode of communication. With an ethno-archaeological perspective, it can be hypothesized that the agrarian cultures used this to symbolize sun worshipping. Furthermore, the Germani, represented the lightening and fire (Agni) from the symbol. The carvings at the national museum of Denmark associate the symbol with the god of dead known as Thor. Funerary urns were also created with the engravings of *Swasthika* in Iran and Burma, representing a spectrum of mystical ideas related with life after death. *Sikavalanda* mentioned that this symbol was known as an auspicious icon. During the Vedic era in India, the Aryans constructed their dwellings and planned the town, tracing the Swastika in expectation of security and wealth. With reference to numismatics, the symbol was prominent in evidence yielded from Sri Lanka and India. The popularity of the symbol suggests that it could be used as an illustration of inter-cultural economic activities. Accordingly, the symbolic interpretation of the *Swasthika* would affirm a unique interpretation with respective cultural values in any region in the world.

Keywords: *Swasthika, symbolic, interpretation*

Examining the impact of interactive strategies implemented by English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers when teaching undergraduates using Zoom as an online platform

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The use of online platforms in education has led to advancement in the use of interactive strategies in the ESL classroom. ESL teachers need to motivate learners by employing various interactive strategies to create a learner-centred classroom. Teachers implement a variety of interactional tasks such as group work, pair work, role plays, discussion, PowerPoint presentations, poster presentations, debates, dramas and peer review sessions to facilitate language learning. The objective of this study is to examine the positive and negative impacts of the interactive strategies used by ESL teachers when teaching via Zoom and how they affect learners' performance. The present study used a qualitative research design. 150 first year ESL undergraduates of the Faculty of Agriculture and Plantation Management at the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka were randomly selected and their responses were gathered through a Google form questionnaire. The responses were automatically analyzed through the Google questionnaire itself and the empirical data show that the majority of the participants prefer interactive activities rather than individual activities because interactive strategies assist them to improve their writing, reading, listening and speaking skills. Further, the findings reveal that the learners gained a better understanding of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and capitalization by engaging in interactive tasks. In addition, interactive strategies have benefited collaborative learning and motivation among learners. However, despite the positive impact of interactive activities, learners find it challenging to engage in these tasks due to the lack of reliable internet facilities, language barriers and physical distractions. According to the findings of the study, positive and negative outcomes are created by the interactive strategies implemented by ESL teachers when teaching undergraduates using Zoom. Hence, there is a requirement to conduct more research to identify how interactive strategies can help to enhance language knowledge and learners' performance in virtual ESL learning environment.

Keywords: *interactive strategies, online platform, ESL learning, positive and negative impacts*

Taliban Buddhists of *Baudiya*: The development of Sinhala Buddhist identity and the emergence of Buddhist-Muslim conflict in post-war Sri Lanka

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For six decades since the independence, the politics of Sri Lanka has revolved around the ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamil. The intensity of this conflict declined significantly after the Sri Lankan state's military victory over the LTTE in 2009. However, the annihilation of the 'Tamil other' has transformed the nature of conflict from ethnicity to religion with the rise of using violence over Muslims by Sinhala Buddhists. This research, by amalgamating Jacques Rancière's concept of politics and Hegel's idea of 'struggle for recognition', attempts to understand how the present Sinhala Buddhist identity and its historical development in post-independent Sri Lanka can be understood in terms of its violent relationship, first with Tamils and later with Muslims. This research discusses how we can understand the post-war Islamophobia in Sri Lanka. To answer this, the research analyses how the Sinhala Buddhist identity replaced its 'other' with Muslims after the death of their other in 2009 and how they have been, in this process, acquiring the characteristic of their Muslim other. Here, special attention has been given to analyzing Facebook posts and comments to understand the nature of the present Islamophobia and the process of the present Sinhala Buddhist identity creation through its Muslim other. Firstly, this research attempts to reconcile Rancière with Hegel. Secondly, it gives a brief historical analysis of the ethnoreligious conflict in post-independence Sri Lanka. Finally, the research will elaborate on the development of the Sinhala Buddhist identity with relation to Islamophobia in post-war Sri Lanka that led to violent clashes in 2014, 2018, and 2019.

Keywords: *Hegel, Rancière, Islamophobia, post-war Sri Lanka*

Search for equal access to learning: Perspectives of rural parents on home-based online education in Sri Lanka during the COVID-19 pandemic

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In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, what we witness within the macro social system is a rapid weakening of social institutions like education. With the COVID-19, educational institutions became the worst casualties, with governments deciding to close them. The mode of delivery became e-learning, for which many were unprepared structurally and attitudinally. Moving away from traditional methods to e-learn mode created unanticipated challenges for students and parents, compelling them to operate from home. Researchers provide evidence that it was not productive as expected (Kara & Gök, 2020; Klapproth et al., 2020), and the overwhelming majority almost globally had no proper internet facilities for online learning. Users complained about eyesight issues as they had to use inappropriate devices (Ullah, Ashraf, Shanza & Sajad, 2020). This study focuses on the perspectives of parents' in rural areas in Sri Lanka, devoid of facilities for learning. Descriptive qualitative design and Manual Thematic Analysis were used to analyze qualitative data with a purposive sample of 50 rural parents whose children are in grades 1 to 5 in five schools in Northwestern, North Central, and Northern Provinces. Telephone interviews were conducted as travel restrictions were imposed. The study reveals that many children do not concentrate appropriately during online sessions; parents' technical knowledge on e-learning was insufficient to help children; burdens of childcare constrained them; they became victims of high economic costs, even sparking off domestic unrest affecting the children and their parents. The study has implications for state policy on education, especially regarding infrastructure needs, if home-based e-learning is to be pursued in Sri Lanka as a viable option during the New Normal phase of life.

Keywords: *home schooling, challenges, COVID-19, remote learning*

Cremation and burial: A Buddhist perspective on corpses

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Seeking deathless life represents the intrinsic nature, the dislike of dying (*amaritukāmā*), of beings. Death is understood as part of suffering (*dukkha*) under the first noble truth in Buddhism. Focusing on Buddhist teachings and practices, this research paper will discuss the Buddhist perspective on cremation and burial of corpses. The research adopts qualitative research methodology while centering on Buddhist canonical and commentarial accounts in early and Theravada Buddhism and paying attention to the current practice on the subject among diversified Buddhist traditions. Certain religions recommend an exact way after death but Buddhism is more flexible and it has agreed with the accepted culture on cremation or burial. An interesting problem here is why Buddhism is more flexible when compared to the other major religions. The Buddhist teachings, becoming (*punabbhava*), impermanence (*anicca*), so-self (*anatta*), dependent co-origination which are well interconnected create a conceptual framework about the cadaver and the socio-economic situation supported to establish the practice. Since there is no special culture called 'Buddhist culture' Buddhism was aligned with the common culture where it was spread but if the accepted culture is harmful, Buddhism will examine it. Following Buddhist teachings, cremation or burial is part of the culture; hence it is based on the belief system and socio-economy of the society. Unlike Buddhism, birth and death are major events of the religious life related to other religions. Hence, the discussion will address the present debate about cremation or burial in the world.

Keywords: *corpses, cremation, burial, anatta*

The significant language-related features for better translation: A comparative study between Tamil and Sinhala language word order

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Translation is the process of transferring a text from one language into another. According to Catford (1965), translation is “the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)” (p 20). In the process of translation, linguistic problems play a major role. The order of the syntactic constituents of a language and how different languages employ different orders are called “word order typology” in Linguistics. The word order plays a major role in translation. Although the Sinhala and Tamil languages share the same word order, it is important to understand the basic word order features of those languages in order to translate successfully from Sinhala into Tamil and vice versa. This study focuses on the basic features of the word order of Sinhala and Tamil. It aims to compare the basic features of the word order in a contrastive analysis of Tamil and Sinhala, based on the word order typology of the two languages, in the process of translation. A translator must have proper knowledge of word order to provide excellent translation work. The main objective of this study is to understand the similarities and differences between the Sinhala and Tamil word order. There are several studies that have been conducted on word order typology: Sinhala and Tamil: A Case of Contact – Induced Restructuring (Thampoe, H.D, 2016) is a key source used for the analysis of the research. The research was approached with the idea that there should be little similarity between these two languages since they belong to different language families. The word order of both languages are compared and described in a detailed manner. This comparative study will be mainly based on various readings and knowledge about the two languages and on fieldwork carried out by researcher. The findings of this study reveal that there are many resemblances between Sinhala and Tamil languages in terms of word order. Translators would be able to produce better translations with a proper knowledge of word order.

Keywords: *translation, word order, Sinhala language, Tamil language*

Undergraduates' perceptions of the online English classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic: A comparative study

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The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on various fields including higher education in Sri Lanka. The temporary closure of higher educational institutes during the COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the educational system in favour of virtual learning. After teaching English for eight weeks online, this study was conducted to investigate university students' perceptions of the equivalence of online English classrooms to physical English classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of the study was to find out whether students get the same learning experience when they are learning English online. The participants of the study were 119 undergraduates from the Faculty of Commerce and Management, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka who follow the course "English for Communication". Data for this study were collected utilizing a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The participants were selected randomly. The quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS whereas qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed thematically. Results showed that 89% of the students prefer physical English classrooms to online classrooms. They pointed out several disadvantages in learning English online such as not being able to join the lectures due to poor internet connectivity, having fewer chances to interact with the lecturer and peers, not being able to do group and pair work and not being able to cover all four skills. Specifically, they highlighted the fact that most of the time they have to be passive learners while learning English online. 23% mentioned that learning English should be an interactive procedure and that learning it online becomes a hindrance to acquiring the language. Overall, undergraduates preferred physical classrooms to online classrooms. The data obtained from this research is of relevance to researchers, instructors, and policymakers since this may inform teaching practices in higher education classrooms within the Sri Lankan context.

Keywords: *COVID-19 pandemic, temporary closure of higher educational institutes, virtual learning, undergraduates' perceptions*

Exploring the digital divide in remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Southern Province, Sri Lanka

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Due to the lockdown and restrictions implemented following the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka, school education mode has been turned to “fully online” where “digital divide” is widened as never before. The study takes a mixed method direction attempting to investigate the scope of digital divide, exploring (i) the groups of students who are unable to access learning during the pandemic, (ii) to what extent they have access to digital tools and the remote learning materials and (iii) which parents are unable to support their children’s learning remotely. The sample consists of 100 participants, 50 students and 50 of their parent or guardian. The demography of the sample is Southern province, Sri Lanka. 25 student participants are from government schools whereas the other 25 are from private schools and the proposition of parent population is also the same. Convenient sampling technique is employed. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather data. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS. The qualitative data gathered was analyzed thematically. The findings suggest that most of the students who are not academically remotely engaged are government school students. Out of the participants who are not involved, 56% have phone credits/ data issues, 47% poor internet connection, 35% trouble accessing devices and 9%, access to electricity. It is found that data and affordability concerns are higher for government school students although a part of private school students also encounter challenges. There is correlation between parents’ ability to support the learners and parents levels of education. Lack of knowledge to operate devices and busy schedules were also reasons for such lack of support.

Keywords: *digital divide, ESL online learning, lockdown, pandemic learning in Sri Lanka, online learning*

The quest of female identity amidst catastrophic milieus: In relation to *Shame* by Taslima Nasreen

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This study manifests diversified social, political, economic and cultural marginalization imposed on females which restrict them from achieving a distinct and unique identity. The doubly jeopardization of females based on sexuality and racism reinforces the extreme subjugation of the female body. As a qualitative study, the research focuses on *Shame* (1993) by Taslima Nasreen with theoretical interpretations of Simon de Beauvoir, Judith Butler, and Gayatri Spivak. Maya's unfathomable desire to secure herself as a Hindu with numerous attempts to conceal her identity is challenged in the microcosmic realm of patriarchy against the macrocosmic backdrop of coeval racial-cultural turmoil. Nasreen highlights the futility of Maya's attempts to secure her identity by marrying a Muslim and transforming her nominal identity. By making herself as a victim of gang rapists, Nasreen portrays the sexual exploitation exercised with the Nationalistic movement. Suronjon's brutal exploitation of the street prostitute who was a Muslim - as a compensation to the sexual marginalization of her sister, Maya witnesses varied contours of female oppression. Suronjon's passive reaction to female marginalization before Maya's catastrophe and his retaliation triggered by Maya's plight are juxtaposed with the opportunistic façade of patriarchy. In addition to that, Kironmoye's forte of singing restricted by male hegemony depicts contours of female oppression. Nasreen's statistical references of rapes with the Nationalist movement upsize the authenticity of female exploitation under the guise of racism. The study exposes novice avenues to position female subjugation in a dualistic connotation. In a microcosmic view, female positioning under patriarchy is elevated to a racial-cultural phenomenon in a broader spectrum to manifest female marginalization in both ends.

Keywords: *female, identity, marginalization, racism*

An analysis of China's role in addressing climate change issues

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This research paper demonstrates China's role in addressing climate change issues. The reasons that prompted this research are twofold as China is the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions and one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change. The primary objective of this research is to analyze China's role in addressing climate change issues. Simultaneously, the research problem has been shaped by the nature of China's role in the arena of climate change. As this is a qualitative study, primary and secondary data are collected based on three data collection methods: library, internet and, questionnaire. This research is constructed on a series of research questions on China's internal and external steps/policies to address climate change issues, the factors/variables that determine its actions, and China's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT Analysis) when addressing climate change issues. Neoclassical realism and national interests have provided the theoretical basis for this research. According to the findings, in the climate change discourse, China takes a dual approach. It is not a rule-taker but positions itself as a rule-breaker and rule-maker. China has tremendous opportunities to lead the climate change discourse, and it is apparent that China plays a significant role in renewable energy. National interests drive decisions taken by China on climate change and economic development as a determinant factor that have a significant impact on climate change. Moreover, the solutions formulated to address climate change are being commercialized. Despite these constructive features, issues related to transparency, integrating issues on top-down and bottom-up approaches, issues in the policy implementation phase continue to exist. The context changes China's role in the climate change discourse. Finally, the paper proposes a few suggestions to overcome China's weaknesses and threats in relation to climate change.

Keywords: *climate change, national interests, neoclassical realism, dual approach*

Factors influencing TikTok usage among youth during the pandemic in Sri Lanka

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TikTok has become one of the highest-used social media applications among the youth in Sri Lanka (Perera, 2020). This research has been conducted to find out the impact of the TikTok app on the youth during the COVID-19 lockdown in Sri Lanka in 2020. The present study identified the factors that influenced the youth's use of the TikTok app during the lockdown. Thereby, four main factors were identified: entertainment, relaxation, popularity, and boredom. This is a quantitative research which collected data through random sampling of 100 youth within the ages of 18 to 28 from the Western Province, Sri Lanka. The collected data were analyzed with SPSS. Descriptive analysis and factor analysis were conducted to analyze the data. The research indicated very interesting findings. TikTok saw a significant increase in popularity among youth during the lockdown than during the pre-lockdown period. Entertainment, relaxation, and boredom positively influenced TikTok usage during the pandemic as it gave the p-value 0.00 which is less than 0.05. It is interesting to note that the popularity factor gave a negative impact as the p-value is 0.41 which is higher than the 0.05 in the present study. The research also identified that 57.5% youngsters liked to watch short dance videos and that 42.5% liked to watch comic videos. Moreover, 65.4% liked to watch non celebrity videos. The factors that influenced the use of the TikTok app during the pandemic differ from the regular factors.

Keywords: *entertainment, relaxation, popularity, boredom, TikTok application*

Furthering Sri Lanka's foreign policy goal of becoming a global maritime hub: Foresight analysis on the Colombo Port City

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Alfred Mahan argues that control of waters will determine the power play as, according to him, the future of the world lies on maritime governance. In this context, Sri Lanka with her strategic location in the Indian Ocean region bears the potential of becoming a global maritime hub, which is one of the foreign policy goals of the current and previous regimes. Sri Lanka is coupled with the fast-developing infrastructure, especially the Port of Colombo, which was ranked as the world's number one container growth port among top 30 container ports in the first half of 2018. The Colombo Port City, a project under the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and adjacent to the Colombo port, is being envisioned as an economic hub. In this descriptive paper, qualitative data is used to argue that the Port City can be seen as an expansion of the Colombo Port and thereby an extension of the Colombo Maritime Hub. The study intends to use secondary data to examine measures through which the potential of becoming a maritime hub could be maximized through the Port City. When Colombo Port City strengthens Sri Lanka's ability to emerge as a global maritime hub, it would be of more interest to regional and extra regional states. Next, the study analyzes the potential response of the existing maritime hubs in the Indian Ocean – India, China, and the US, three main influences on Sri Lanka – with the use of both primary and secondary data, based on the behaviour of these three countries toward Sri Lanka since 2015. The study aims to produce knowledge of future possibilities through a foresight analysis of national and regional trends, thus providing recommendations on balancing relations while minimizing clashes of interest in order to reap the maximum benefit in emerging as a maritime hub in the future.

Keywords: *maritime hub, Colombo Port City, foreign policy*

A typology of the role of the private sector in pandemic preparedness and response: Key insights from four key economic sectors in Sri Lanka

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The estimates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reveal that COVID-19 has created the deepest economic recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s causing a contraction in the global economy by 4.4% in 2020. While the pandemic and its multitude of consequences including socio-economic effects have captured the attention of most scholars across diverse fields in the past couple of years, the role of the private sector in pandemic preparedness and response remains under-examined. This study aims at filling this gap with reference to pandemic preparedness and response activities undertaken by four key economic sectors in Sri Lanka: agriculture, apparel, construction and tourism. The study draws on a review of secondary literature as well as primary, qualitative data gathered through four roundtable discussions carried out with thirty one key informants from said sectors. Additionally, one to one virtual interviews were carried out with a total of fifteen key informants from the tourism sector, Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), Disaster Management Centre (DMC) of Sri Lanka and Regional Chambers of Commerce. The above-mentioned industries demonstrated a low level of pandemic preparedness while several coping mechanisms were used to respond to the pandemic in the short run. However, effects of the pandemic were more adverse on industry actors with pre-existing vulnerabilities such as estate sector households, garment factory workers and fishermen. Accordingly, the authors argue that the role of the private sector in pandemic preparedness and response is four-fold: 1) an advocate: involves actively supporting and undertaking pandemic preparedness measures mainstreaming such preparedness into business planning and corporate culture; 2) a liaison: involves continuous collaboration with technical authorities with specialist knowledge; 3) protector: entails actions taken to protect the rights of vulnerable stakeholders, particularly employees and assuming accountability for the wellbeing of such groups and 4) innovator: calls for transforming crisis into sustainable opportunities. The paper brings to surface key linkages between disaster risk reduction and Corporate

Social Responsibility (CSR) elucidating the need for these dimensions to extend beyond a neoliberalist agenda and uphold of capitalist ideals to ensure private sector resilience to pandemics and similar disaster events.

Keywords: *pandemic preparedness and response, disaster risk reduction, corporate social responsibility, Sri Lanka*

Determination of thermal pollution in inland water surfaces of urban areas: A case study in the Colombo District, Sri Lanka

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Surface water temperature (SWT) is a primary water quality parameter that controls the ecological status of lakes. Diyawanna and Beira lakes are important water retention areas located in Colombo district, Sri Lanka. This study aimed to detect SWT through remote sensing and identify the factors leading to affect the thermal structure in the lakes. For data analysis, this study used Landsat visible and thermal infrared seasonal based data for 2020, and a generalized single-channel method and factor analysis were used to achieve the aim. This study found that the highest water temperature (32C⁰) was recorded in Beira lake in the northeast monsoon. The minimum (22C⁰) in the southwest monsoon. Furthermore, Diyawanna lake has reported the highest SWT (25C⁰) in the first inter monsoon and the lowest (20C⁰) in the southwest monsoon. The SWT of the two lakes has fluctuated throughout the year due to the high volume of population density, industries, homesteads, and urban developments. Domestic sewage, factory effluents, and other waste diverted to this Beira lake than to Diyawanna lake. In the factor analysis, we see that the building density had contributed to the temperature increase of the lake water by 65 per cent. Moreover, the lower normalized difference vegetation index values (0.012 - 0.1) can be seen in the Beira lake area and consequently, normalized difference vegetation index has contributed to the SWT increase of the lake by 70 per cent. Concerning biodiversity in these lakes, maintaining environmental health is particularly important for the sustainable development. Therefore, it is needed to take necessary actions to reduce increment of surface water temperature to create a healthy environment in lakes and solution for future water resources management and planning, especially in formulating policy related to water quality.

Keywords: *SWT, Landsat, normalized difference vegetation index, lakes*

Identification of urban green cover changes in the Galle Municipal Council area using geo-informatics techniques

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Galle city is one of the most popular coastal cities in Sri Lanka. Since ancient times, the city has had the fourth largest municipal population as well as administrative and commercial functions. Many researchers have highlighted that rapid urbanization has been occurring in Galle, particularly within the Galle municipal area, for more than two decades now. As a result of urban expansion, the city's land use and land cover (LULC) changed dramatically. The main objective of this study is to identify and map the spatial changes of green cover in the Galle Municipality area for the last three decades (1988-2019), applying geo-informatics techniques. The analysis was done using multi-temporal Landsat TM images extracted from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) portal from 1988 to 2019. Spectral indices, namely, Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), Normalized Difference Built-up Index (NDBI), and Built-up Index (BUI) generated from the satellite data. Built-up area, homestead, urban green cover, and waterbodies were analyzed using these spectral variations. The analysis revealed that the built-up area in Galle municipality increased from 6% to 31% during 1988-2019. It indicates that approximately 25% of the current built-up area has grown during the last thirty years. The urban expansion has extended to a five-kilometer radius from the city center towards the Karapitiya suburbs, referred to as a satellite town. On the other hand, the urban green cover of the city has depicted a very significant decline from 86% to 15%. For instance, Magalle, Dewata, Thalapitiya, Kongaha, Dangedara, and Milidduwa have seen a drastically decline in green cover. Further, the study is one of the recent pieces of evidence indicating that the city's total green cover has been converted into homesteads and built up areas by 11.5 sq. km (60%) and 4.3 sq. km (22.6%), respectively, during the last three decades. Hence, Galle Municipal Council and the relevant stakeholders must integrate and implement sustainable green city concepts and approaches in city planning and policies to develop a resilient and sustainable city.

Keywords: *Galle, LULC, NDVI, urban green cover*

Unpacking immigrants' perceptions: Suggesting a holistic framework

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Many Western democratic host countries presume that immigrants expect only instrumental facilities from their host society, i.e. economic prosperity, welfare safety or political security. Consequently, the anti-immigrant rhetoric views this instrumental interest as a mere selfish feature that immigrants possess. However, the burgeoning body of migration research reminds us that immigrants do not have instrumental interests alone but also have emotive expectations such as a sense of belonging and loyalty towards the host society. However, the dominant narratives considerably neglect immigrants' multifaceted emotive attachments and lived experiences by being biased to the calculation of their instrumental interests. This paper highlights the importance of considering immigrants' emotive aspects as critical elements in understanding their host country behaviors. For this, I introduce a broader framework to unpack and study immigrants' views. This framework considers immigrants' perceptions as combinations of both instrumental and emotive features. It also includes both the home and host country dimensions and is based on the instrumental and patriotic debate in citizenship literature. Borrowing from the literature, I also provide measures to further dissolve instrumental and emotive views. This not only facilitates an in-depth understanding of perceptions but also the factors that affect those perceptions. By using this framework, I suggest that we can explore immigrants' perceptions more holistically and contextually. Such a holistic approach would allow the policy makers of the host country to make more effective citizenship policies for immigrants, and Western host societies to view migrants contextually, avoiding prejudices against them.

Keywords: *immigrants, instrumental, emotive, patriotic*

Early warning for mitigating global health threats: An analysis of key processes of an effective framework for pandemic response

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No evidence needs to prove the devastation that the COVID-19 pandemic has generated. It has caused an array of unprecedented challenges to the world by distorting the resilience established globally during a shorter time span. Nevertheless, numbers of COVID-19 infections and deaths among the countries have been reassuringly low over the past couple of months due to the great progression of vaccination programmes and other measures. Yet, the emergence of a new brutal variant of the virus threatens to disrupt the progress. The virulent nature of the SARS-CoV-2 virus sparked the need for robust global early warning (EW) systems to effectively combat the current COVID-19 pandemic and anticipated health hazards in the future. The objective of this paper is to explore the key processes of an effective EW system for pandemic response in the context of multi-hazard. A systematic literature review was administered using three electronic databases, namely, Scopus, PubMed, and ScienceDirect. A set of key elements which are derived from the study were analyzed to understand the significance of such elements in the process of pandemic early warning and response. An extensive illustration was done first using a range of identified elements which shows how each element plays a dedicated role in the process, and how they are interconnected to other components. This illustration shows the significance of selected elements from early detection and surveillance of pathogens to the elimination or recovery stage. In the second stage, identified elements are further classified under their vitality in the process, and then embossed to a three-stage framework. As a result of the study, eleven key components were identified and analyzed using upstream, interface, and downstream matrix. Accordingly, epidemiological surveillance and detection, screening information and risk assessment present in the upstream, while EW related components were positioned in the interface. Response and recovery related elements are identified in the face of downstream.

Keywords: *COVID-19, pandemic, early warning, pandemic preparedness, response*

Urban women and the use of traditional family planning methods in Sri Lanka

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Family planning plays a key role in enhancing the health of the mother and the child. Sri Lanka has been specially named as one of the countries with a high prevalence of traditional family planning (TFP) methods in comparison with the other Asian countries in the modern era. Notably, 11.4% of urban women are still using TFP methods in the country. However, the reasons for that have not been investigated. Therefore, this study aims to identify the significant factors influencing the usage of traditional family planning among urban women. The sample size was 1472 and data was gathered through the Sri Lanka Demographic and Health Survey in 2016. Gathered data was analyzed by developing a binary logistic regression model. According to the study, among the urban family planning users 79.7% are using modern methods while 20.3% are using TFP methods. Among the traditional family planning users, the rhythm method is more popular (52.8%) than the withdrawal method (38.1%). The highest usage of TFP methods is reported by women between 31- 41 years of age. According to the developed logistic regression model, the overall predictive power is 79.5%. Knowledge on family planning, having advice from PHM, the decision to use Family Planning, women's age, women's occupation, women's education level, number of children, and wealth quintile are significantly associated with the usage of TFP among urban women. The odds of the usage of TFP among childless urban women are 1.4 times higher than the women having more than 3 children. The factors identified are geared towards providing a contemporary, robust evidence base. It is hoped that the urban women in need of contraceptive services can be targeted more effectively and efficiently through the findings of this study. Organizing counseling programs and promotions on modern family planning and conducting media awareness programs to avoid some myths on modern family planning can be suggested as remedial measures.

Keywords: *Binary Logistic Model, traditional family planning methods, urban traditional family planning users*

Geographies of “homebound road-side alcohol consumption” and the influence of street-level characteristics

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The influence of street-level characteristics on human behaviour is a widely-researched phenomenon. The availability of trees and bushes (e.g. vegetation cover) along the streets particularly influence many immoral practices such as crimes and burglary. According to the extant body of literature, a plethora of studies have investigated the association between street-level characteristics and murders, burglary, assaults, and/or homophobic crimes. More importantly, environmental circumstance has been widely influential with regard to committed crimes. In this context, this study sheds some light on the investigation of the impacts of street-level characteristics on “homebound road-side alcohol consumption” behaviour and their geographies. This study used primary and secondary data for the analyses. For the primary data, the author collected empty alcohol bottles and different containers that were disposed along streets after alcohol consumption in the Walandura Grama Niladhari Division of the Rathnapura district. 20 informal interviews were also conducted. Primary data was collected for a period of three months from January to March in 2021. Satellite images were used as secondary data sources, especially in order to identify street-level characteristics. Quantum GIS (QGIS) 3.20 was used to analyze spatial data. The study also used the Geographically Weighted Regression (GWR) model. According to the revealed results, there is a very strong association between the vegetation cover (number of trees and bushes) and the number of thrown empty bottles and containers (alcohol) along the sides of the streets. In addition, the areas where the highest accumulation of empty bottles and containers were reported are isolated and non-residential areas. The results indicates the influence of ecological characteristics on human behaviour by investigating the association between the street-level characteristics and “homebound road-side alcohol consumption” behaviour, may be for the first time, according to the extant body of literature.

Keywords: *homebound road-side alcohol consumption, street-level characteristics, ecological influence, Quantum GIS*

Reordering the International Order in the post COVID-19 era

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Every global crisis affects the international system and its structures. The spread of the Coronavirus is the most serious global crisis since World War II, which has had a severe impact on international relations in the 21st century. The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted global public health and the world economy, and has caused transformative effects on world politics and caused diplomatic tensions. The COVID-19 pandemic affects policies and processes of international relations related to trade and investment, economy and production, global leadership, nationalism and isolationism, multilateralism, peace and security, regional cooperation, inter-state rivalries, conflict, and cooperation. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries have acted alone, and this has intensified existing nationalist tendencies and de-globalization trends in some countries. Regarding the global political and economic leadership, the internal policies of the United States and other European countries have plunged the whole world into uncertainty, where China emerges as a new savior. The main objectives of the study are to identify the impact of the COVID-19 on the patterns of international order and to explore the future of the international order in the post-COVID-19 era. The research takes a qualitative approach and gathers secondary data, particularly books, journal articles, reports, websites, and publications. The researcher uses descriptive analysis to analyze them. According to the findings of this research, both developing and developed countries have felt the impact of COVID-19 on global politics. The international order is already undergoing a slow and steady transformation, and the reality is that the world will never be the same after the COVID-19 pandemic. The shape of the world after the pandemic will be determined by political desires, leadership, and the ability to cooperate with international actors. The post-COVID-19 world has become highly competitive, economically closed, and less prosperous.

Keywords: *international order, post COVID-19, global crisis, impact*

A spatial and temporal trend analysis of droughts in Sri Lanka

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A drought is a natural event that mainly occurs due to extreme weather and climate changes. Anthropological conditions such as deforestation, urbanisation, industrialisation, and unplanned development have influenced drought increment worldwide. Sri Lanka is highly vulnerable to climate change because it is an equatorial tropical island. Therefore, the extreme impact of climate change can directly affect the severity of drought hazards in Sri Lanka. This study mainly examined the long-term spatiotemporal trend of droughts in Sri Lanka from 1982 to 2020. Drought events were analysed using the Standardised Precipitation Index (SPI) on an SPI-1 and SPI-3 month's scale. Satellite estimated daily rainfall (from 1982 to 2020) was extracted using 25 major meteorological stations from the NASA POWER weather database. The trend of the droughts was assessed, focusing on the spatiotemporal pattern of droughts in Sri Lanka using the Mann-Kendall trend test. As for the Mann-Kendall trend test results for the SPI-1 month scale, there were significant positive trends in the wet, intermediate, and dry zones at the 0.05 significant level, and the p-values of the calculated results were 0.018, 0.002, and 0.029, respectively. Furthermore, the SPI-1 and SPI-3 calculated for the whole country also show a significant positive trend. Although the frequency of droughts has decreased in the country, the intensity of the droughts has increased. This study of past long-term changes in drought conditions and the analysis of their patterns make it possible to identify changes that may occur in the future. It enables us to prepare for potential problems and find solutions for them in the future.

Keywords: *drought, SPI-1, SPI-3, Mann-Kendall trend test, climate change*

Role of sustainable development goals in promoting peace and international development

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The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and International Relations (IR) go hand in hand. The achievement of the United Nations 2030 agenda has tasks not only to do with nationalist policies and institutions but also with international community and foreign policies. Apart from states, international organizations and transnational corporations play a crucial role in implementing SDGs in economic, environmental, and social aspects. All 17 SDGs consist of frameworks that can be linked with international relations, but out of them, SDG-16 (Peace) and SDG-17 (Partnerships) stand out. The cooperation and interdependence among states as well as non-state actors are vital factors for achieving the goals as one. This research intends to discuss the significance of peace and partnerships for maintaining good relations among states. There are several advantages and opportunities that countries could gain by uniting for SDGs. From a political perspective, the geopolitical tensions and conflicts can be lessened to a considerable extent if the global and regional leaders collaborate to achieve the common goals. International trade and foreign investments have vastly helped the economic growth of developing countries, which can be related to SDG-8. Further, international aid and assistance have become an essential requirement during natural disasters for the affected countries. Beyond financial assistance, other vital elements such as knowledge and technological innovation possess significant value in overcoming the crises. However, there are some challenges that both state and non-state actors need to focus on when integrating international relations policies into SDGs. The sustainability approaches of states have always been 'state-centric' for the past few years. Thus, the mindsets of the governing bodies need to be restructured to view them in a global sense. These actors on the international stage need to be encouraged to include SDG frameworks and concepts when forming policies in bilateral and multilateral agreements. Hence, coordination and trust in each other will be of utmost importance in going forward.

Keywords: *SDGs, international relations, partnerships, peace*

Utility of Buddhist counseling to reduce family conflicts during the COVID-19 pandemic

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COVID-19 is a catastrophic condition in which the people of the world suffer without prior experience. Different countries are taking different measures to control it. Many families in Sri Lanka have been affected by the pandemic. This pandemic situation has uniquely affected children and families by disrupting routines, changing relationships and roles especially low-income families. Meanwhile, various social welfare services are coordinated by religious places. In addition, various welfare services are held at Buddhist temples. Buddhist counseling is a Buddhist teaching-based process that suggests solutions to people's mental problems and difficulties and promotes mental relief. Research problem of the study was how to use Buddhist counseling to reduce the increasing family conflicts during the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective of this study was to identify how Buddhist counseling can be used to alleviate conflicts in families based on Buddhist teachings in the face of this pandemic. This study used a purposive sampling method based on the severity of the problems and nature of the needs. The primary and the secondary method used in the research to collect information were in-depth interviews carried out via case studies. Accordingly, 12 case studies were used for this study. These case studies were taken from selected unique people, who are experiencing family conflicts. This study used thematic analysis as the data analysis method. According to the findings of the case studies, individuals were at high risk physically, mentally and socially. It was revealed that many families faced conflicts because they could not bear the pressure. The Karma-based sermon of the Buddha is also very important to understand the reality of life. It was through meditation that the ability to attain mental freedom was discovered, and it was able to further uncover a very important element in Buddhist counseling.

Keywords: *COVID-19, Buddhist counseling, family conflict*

Negative impacts of COVID-19 on upcountry tea estate families

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The coronavirus, commonly known as COVID-19, has infected many people worldwide. As the pandemic spreads around the world, developing countries are facing unprecedented disruption and uncertainty. In Sri Lanka, the outbreak of the current pandemic rages on disrupting every aspect of day-to-day life. The current pandemic-related restrictions led to a drastic impact on the upcountry tea estate families. The main objective of the research is to assess the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the upcountry tea estate families. To explore this, a survey was carried out in Bogawantalawa in the Nuwara Eliya district. The qualitative study adopted the purposive sampling method to choose 50 affected tea estate families in Bogawantalawa. Individual interviews and observations were carried out to collect primary data. Further, this study used thematic analysis for data analysis. The study reveals that COVID-19 has led to sudden a financial crisis, lack of opportunities for children's digital education, increased violence against women, physiological impacts, and increased family poverty. In addition to this, the study gives some policy recommendations such as government accommodation of all low-income families with the *Samurdhi* beneficiary scheme, government subsidization of prices of digital tools and packages to low-income family students, and awareness programmes on family violence in vulnerable families in the tea estates.

Keywords: *COVID-19, digital education, tea estate, violence*

A rapid review of the psychological effects of COVID-19 related lockdowns on school-age children

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The COVID-19 pandemic has affected each and every domain of people's lives around the world. Since January, 2020, various countries started implementing lockdowns to avoid further spread of the disease. However, the direct and indirect effects of the lockdowns, including closure of schools, home confinement, and not being able to play outdoors etc., which are not considered normal experience, have led children to short term and long term mental health implications. Thus, the aim of this study was to identify the psychological effects of the pandemic-related lockdowns on school-age children to provide assistance in identifying and implementing intervention plans during the current pandemic to promote children's mental health. A review of the psychological effects of COVID-19 and lockdowns on children was conducted using the Google Scholar electronic database. Of the 25 papers that were retrieved, 10 papers that met the inclusion criteria (conducted in 10 different countries; with school-age children; using experimental study designs or survey methods and published in peer-reviewed journals) were included in this study. They were qualitatively analyzed using thematic analysis method to compare common psychological effects and arrive at conclusions. According to the findings, consequences of the lockdowns including closure of schools, absence of structured setting of the classroom, home confinement, not being able to play outdoors, not meeting friends and the lack of opportunities for socialization are associated with negative psychological outcomes in school-age children. Most reviewed studies reported negative psychological effects including anxiety, stress, depression, infection fears, frustration, boredom, uncertainty, disturbances in sleep, appetite, attention and emotional regulation, addictive behaviors, and impairments in social interactions and academic work. In conclusion, although the number of school-age children affected by the disease is relatively small, they are more vulnerable to the psychological effects of the lockdown than adults. Hence, there is a timely need for planning longitudinal and developmental studies, and implementing evidence-based age-appropriate services to improve their psychological wellbeing and develop healthy coping mechanisms during the current pandemic.

Keywords: *COVID-19, lockdown, children, mental health*

The unheeded gaps: Examining Sri Lanka's external sector gender wage inequality

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The existing body of work on external sector gender earning gaps extrapolated from positivist methodology have often attributed wage inequality to the lack of competition and differences in male and female labor. However, there is very little work done to examine the validity of these narratives through the same empiricist methodology. This study aims to address this knowledge deficiency, testing the neoclassical (positivist) narrative using data from Sri Lanka's Labor Force Surveys for the period between 2015 to 2019 and by applying a non-parametric matching and decomposition technique proposed by Ćopo (2008). The results show that the unexplained wage gap, which is the gap that remains despite matching the factors that generate differences between male and female labor such as age, household roles, occupation hierarchies, human capital skills, and other socio-economic factors, had increased from 12% in 2015 to 38% in 2019. When ethno-gender intersections are considered, the highest unexplained wage disparity in the tea export sector is seen between Sinhala men and women while Tamil and Muslim women encounter the highest unexplained wage differential in the apparel sector. Across sectors, the unexplained gaps are highest in the apparel sector and lowest in the tourism sector. These results show that increased competition and addressing the differences in male and female labor has not and cannot necessarily ensure gender wage equality. The wage gaps that remain largely unheeded hinders equitable and sustained external sector growth and requires non-market solutions such as interventions encouraging transparency in accounting practices, equal wage laws, and elimination of structures that preserve patriarchal gender biases in capitalist production.

Keywords: *external sector, gender wage gaps, unexplained wage gaps, Sri Lanka*

The Standardized Precipitation Index based drought events over the *Iranaimadu* tank during the last three decades

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The Kilinochchi district is one of the drought prone districts in Sri Lanka. The *Iranaimadu* tank is a major water source to this district, especially for farmers. The main objective of this study was to examine the temporal variation (monthly, annually and seasonal) of the drought events over the *Iranaimadu* tank. Identification of the drought events will be useful to the *Iranaimadu* tank management and future irrigation projects. This study used monthly rainfall data for a thirty four year period (1984 – 2018) from the *Iranaimadu* Irrigation Department, Kilinochchi. A limitation of the study was that rainfall data from the 2005 – 2009 period was not used because rainfall data was not recorded during this time. The study used Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) to identify drought events with different time scales such as near normal drought, moderate drought, very drought and extreme drought. The data analysis was done using the descriptive analytical technique. The results revealed that the annual drought events ($SPI \leq -1$) occurred only in 03 years out of 30 years, i.e. 10 % of the annual drought events. The highest number of monthly drought events indicated 23.3% in September. High monthly moderate drought events recorded in September as 07 drought events, followed by October and April. One high very drought event was noted in November. Seasonal drought events, especially moderate drought events, occurred in all four seasons. Then only two seasons experienced seasonal high drought events: the South West Monsoon (SWM) 6.7 % and the Second Inter Monsoon (SIM) 3.3 %. No monthly and seasonal extreme drought events were recorded. According to SPI analysis, the occurrence of very drought events was very few and moderate drought events were also rare. No consequently significant drought events occur over the *Iranaimadu* tank. However decision makers should give priority to drought mitigation measures during the SWM.

Keywords: *drought, irrigation, monsoon, precipitation*

Neo-liberalism and the ‘right to the city’: Socio-spatial politics in Colombo’s Galle Face Green

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The ‘right to the city’ has excited much debate particularly in recent times, due to increasingly neo-liberalized urban spaces and the latent exclusions they promote. In such a context, the struggle for equitable access to the opportunities afforded by the physical, social, and economic spaces of the city should ideally have intensified, particularly because such opportunities have been repeatedly undermined by corporate interests and compliant states. In the past decade, in the guise of ‘beautification’, Sri Lanka too has experienced dramatic changes that have altered its urban spaces, particularly in the case of Colombo. However, it is truly curious that no struggle to reclaim the right to the city, or even a consciousness of the need for such, seems to prevail in any identifiable sense among those who stand to be particularly marginalized in these emerging spaces and the socio-economic realities they signify. As such, in this paper I focus on Colombo’s recent urbanization experience, particularly the spatial transformations occurring along Galle Face Green, to examine how the politics of this space has altered over the past decade with the emergence of many new up-market establishments, converting the area into what has been termed ‘alpha territory’. In doing so, my aim is to understand the conditions that have contributed towards deterring the growth of a critical political consciousness among many in society, especially those marginalized in and by spatial planning exercises of this sort. To this end, I draw on participatory and passive observations, secondary sources such as books, journal articles, and opinion pieces, as well as the larger discourse around these transformations including parliamentary debates and social media exchanges. The consequent analysis is framed by critical urban theory, within whose parameters I observe that the exclusions implied in these spaces have themselves fantasized the latter, to the effect that those who are barred access to them aspire for such access, rather than question the exclusion.

Keywords: *critical urban theory, right to the city, politics of space, Sri Lanka, Galle Face Green*

The impact of media and public health communication on the COVID-19 response: A review of case studies

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COVID-19 is the first global pandemic of the era of mass and social media. The response to the pandemic hinges on the information circulated through mass and social media. Further, the prolonged lockdown, quarantining, social distancing policies and home-based care has showcased the importance of media platforms as both a tool of information dissemination and socializing. False information and unverified health advice through both social media and mass media has impacted the COVID-19 recovery. Governments and health authorities have had to leverage their communication strategies with regards to COVID-19 in order to disseminate accurate and timely information and to pacify unrest showcased through media. This study reviews the pattern of communication in a case study format using secondary data gathered from China, India, USA, New Zealand and Sri Lanka. The objectives are analyzing government official communication and its impact on the COVID-19 response and patterns in social media during different stages of pandemic. The study shows that timing, accuracy and simplicity of the communication strategy by the government and health authority increased compliance. The steady flow of information was crucial in boosting moral. This was true for all countries in the case study except for China. The Chinese government strategy and the reaction to pandemic by its Populous was difficult to assess due to media and social media bans. A unique pattern in social media was observed in the pre-lockdown, early lockdown, late lockdown and post lockdown periods. A significant increase in use of social media and Televisions were noted during the pandemic. The study concludes that the government communication strategy should be periodical, timely, accurate and simple and should mirror the social media pattern shown in the different stages of lockdown. This would be in line with goals of SDG 8.

Keywords: *media, health, communication, COVID-19*

Potential use of ICT in offering government services to rural areas in a work-from-home context: The case of Pannala Divisional Secretariat Office, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka

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Currently, Work from Home (WFH) has become a norm for employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it is a new scenario and a challenge to both the private and government sectors. This study examined the potential use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which is a pre-requisite in WFH, in the light of practical issues in rendering rural government services, with particular reference to the public officers in the Pannala Divisional Secretariat Office (DSO), Kurunegala, Sri Lanka. A questionnaire survey was employed to collect primary data from randomly selected 127 respondents. The sample represented the 2/3 development officers and 2/3 *grama niladhari* officers of the DSO. According to the results, all respondents owned at least one smart phone, which is positive in terms of the use of ICT when WFH. However, only 18% of them used a tablet or a laptop to perform their duties. Nevertheless, 75% of the officers were willing to accept the use of ICT and adopt it with WFH. Correlation analysis revealed that there is a positive correlation between the use of ICT when working from home and factors like attitudes, family support, and organizational support. However, 46% of the respondents had not received any ICT relevant education or training. Lack of connectivity and the cost involved with calls and internet charges were the main issues faced by the respondents. Giving ICT training with a focus on working from home, providing ICT facilities and remuneration to cover additional costs of calls and internet chargers, and developing positive attitudes toward the use of ICT would be beneficial to improving the delivery of rural government services by government field officers when WFH. Further studies should be conducted to investigate the efficiency and effectiveness of the employees when they WFH.

Keywords: *work from home, use of ICT, COVID-19, rural government services*

Competing interest of environmental protection and resettlement: An analysis of the Wilpattu Judgement

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Settlement of human populations near forest reserves has become inevitable with the scarcity of landmasses that are available for human habitat. Considering this, there is a pressing demand for balancing these conflicting interests where human resettlements in forest areas must be considered with its adverse effects such as deforestation. In the absence of a Constitutional right to a clean a healthy environment, the judiciary in the country has played a significant role in environmental protection and the recent judgment in the Wilpattu case is a prime example of this. Therefore, using the doctrinal approach, this study focuses on the impact of the judgment delivered in the Wilpattu case in this regard. The Wilpattu deforestation became a controversial environmental issue due to the resettlement of war IDPs by occupying its forest lands after 2010. Since then, lands associated with the Kallaru Reserve, the northern sanctuary of the Wilpattu Forest Reserve, have been acquired on several occasions for several resettlements and other development purposes. When this matter came before the Courts, it directed the dependents to implement a tree planting programme on an area equal to the amount of forest land acquired. More specifically, in line with international environmental principles, it was decided that the full cost of the tree planting programme should be borne by the 7th respondent, following the “The Polluter Pays Principle”. However, when it came to the issue of those who have already resided in the forest area, their situation was not clarified and the Court missed a golden opportunity to pronounce a judgment where it could have balanced the public interest of right to a clean a healthy environment against the private right to resettlement. Therefore, it is proposed that legislative measures should be taken to balance out this conflict.

Keywords: *environmental protection, polluter pays principle, resettlement, Wilpattu Deforestation Case*

The perception of Sri Lankan undergraduates on interfaith marriage

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The concept of ‘interfaith marriage’, also known as ‘mixed marriage’, has been identified as a means of improving social cohesion in Sri Lanka. According to Article 10 of the Constitution, Sri Lanka is a multi-religious country. Living in a multi-religious society like Sri Lanka, it is necessary to investigate the perception of the young generation, since their perspectives can bring about social cohesion. Thus, the objective of the study was to examine the perception of undergraduates in Sri Lanka on interfaith marriage. The study employed a quantitative research methodology. A descriptive survey was conducted employing a random sample selected from the University of Kelaniya. 140 undergraduates were given a questionnaire. The collected data were treated statistically employing percentages when describing them. The results showed that 85.7% of the respondents are aware of the concept of interfaith marriage. The majority of the respondents expressed a positive opinion on interfaith marriage while only 14.3% expressed a negative opinion. It was identified that only 8.7% of the parents of the respondents belonged to interfaith marriages. 48.9% of the respondents believed that their parents had no opposition to their children being in an interfaith marriage. Further, only 19.6% of the respondents had chosen to follow one religion in their matrimonial house. 89.1% of the respondents expressed that the children in an interfaith marriage should follow the religion they prefer, while 8.8% were in favor of following the father’s religion. 2.1% expressed that the children should follow the mother’s religion. The study concludes that interfaith marriage is accepted by 85.7% undergraduates at University of Kelaniya. The research revealed that the undergraduates express a positive take on interfaith marriage. This argument is based on the positive perceptions extracted from the research data. Positive feedback given by the respondents regarding interfaith marriage can play a salient role in the process of social integration to create social harmony in Sri Lanka. The researchers expect to broaden the study further by incorporating couples in interfaith marriages to investigate their perceptions.

Keywords: *harmony, interfaith marriages, multi-religious, social cohesion*

Awareness of fake news among social media users in Sri Lanka

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Technology and Internet development has made social media an essential communication tool. However, social media's democratization of content creation and distribution process have created opportunities for bad actors to distribute false, misleading information disguised as news, making fake news a major threat to society, challenging peace, democracy and electoral processes around the world. The threat is amplified by sharing and resharing fake news by social media users. Hence, the objective of this research is to understand Sri Lankan social media users' awareness of recognizing fake news. The authors used quantitative research methodology to collect data using a questionnaire with demographic, multiple-choice and open-ended questions among Sri Lankan social media users. The data was compared using statistical mean value. According to the results, the most popular social media platforms were Facebook and WhatsApp. 91% of participants stated that they had encountered fake news on social media such as rumors, unbelievable offers, misleading/fabricated news, emotional, outrageous or provoking news, and political and medical news. Upon receiving an interesting news on social media, 69% of participants stated that they would share the news as a post or a message. Moreover, 89% of participants showed bias and unreliable ways of identifying fake news such as their dislike or disagreement with the subject, content, source of the news and reliance on someone else's view of the news. That implies they have a lower awareness of recognizing fake news in social media. Hence, there is a high probability these social media users are contributing to the spread of fake news without their understanding. This behaviour speeds up the process of fake news distribution, which leads to inciting violence, creating mistrust and challenging peace in society. In the future, authors plan to propose a learning tool to increase social media users' awareness of recognizing fake news using Virtual Reality.

Keywords: *social media, fake news, awareness, society*

SDGs, National Voluntary Report and citizens' narratives: "Leaving No One Behind" in Nigeria and Sri Lanka

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The members of the United Nations, on 25th September 2015, agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based on the post 2015 development agenda. Notably, the SDGs build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) made up of the global agenda that was pursued from the year 2000-2015 and which will guide global action on sustainable development until 2030. The spread and extent of outcome of these development goals requires deeper, collaborative, and independent peer-reviews in a comparative lens towards seeing more concrete and sustainable deliverables. This study seeks to understand and interrogate the SDGs No.16 and 17 in selected National Voluntary Reports as given by political leaders in Nigeria and Sri Lanka in contrast to citizens' narratives within the context of "leaving no one behind". The core argument of this study posits that at most times political leaders whether at local or national level undertake the SDGs feedback process as seen in the National Voluntary Review document on behalf of the SDGs beneficiaries, which questions the accountability and trust component of good governance. The study relies on secondary sources within narrative and content analysis methods to examine the perceived gaps in citizens' expectations as it connects to governance arrangements and unresponsive institutions as primed against the social contract theory, ethical leadership model, and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) theory. This paper posits that disadvantaged and marginalized citizens tend to have the least say in decisions that affect them. This study raises more questions about the extent to which the aforementioned groups of people from below can give input to the SDGs National Voluntary Report feedback, as a step towards demystify political leaders' development monopoly narratives in all ramifications in developing societies.

Keywords: *MDGs, SDGs, National Voluntary Report, ethical leadership*

The nexus between decentralization and resource availability for education in government schools: The case of the Uva Province in Sri Lanka

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After the establishment of Provincial Councils (PCs) in Sri Lanka as sub-national political administrative units in 1987, responsibility for the educational services of some schools was transferred to the PCs. This study proposes that a positive correlation exists between decentralization and quality of educational service delivery due to the better utilization of human and physical resources in the provincial councils' schools. However, there are hardly any empirical findings to support this relationship in Sri Lanka. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by achieving two specific objectives, which are, 1) to distinguish the differences between physical and human resources in "1AB" type national and provincial schools in the Uva Province, and 2) to determine the impact of existing resources on educational services delivery in the two types of schools. Data were collected from a stratified random sample of 30 1AB type national schools and 30 1AB type provincial schools. The findings revealed that 1AB national schools have significantly better GCE O/L and GCE A/L examination results when compared to similar provincial schools. There were no significant differences between physical resources and educational support facilities between the two types of schools. Similarly, there were no remarkable differences between the human resources, except for a significantly higher percentage of trained teachers in the national schools. These empirical findings prove that decentralization has not contributed to better human and physical resources through more efficient delivery of educational services in the Uva Province of Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *decentralization, human and physical resources, Provincial Councils*

The ones history forgot: Where are the women?

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History is often criticized for adopting a patriarchal point of view with little acknowledgement of women's role and contribution in shaping the history. This paper examines the way women are portrayed in the history textbooks of the local history syllabus for grades 9, 10 and 11. It will examine as to how women are portrayed and to what degree women are featured in the narration of Sri Lanka's ancient history, the period of colonization (Dutch, Portuguese and British) of Sri Lanka, the independence movement and contemporary (recent) history of Sri Lanka. Qualitative research methods such as content analysis and in-depth interviews were used for data collection. In addition to history textbooks, education policy papers pertaining to the development of the history syllabus, the gender biased visuals, gender biased narration of incidents and movements from history and the gender biased narrative style were considered in the analysis. Interviews were conducted with three male and three female history teachers, an academic from the field of history, and three officials involved in developing the history syllabus. This study found that, not only were the portrayals of women inadequate, but they were also highly gendered thereby, further strengthening and proving the patriarchal narrative of history. There are only a limited number of studies on gender representation and perpetuation of patriarchal ideology by textbooks in the Sri Lankan school syllabus and even less with regard to history textbooks. This study will contribute towards a critical engagement of the perpetuation of patriarchy and of the preparation of history textbooks. Additionally, the study will contribute towards creating a context within which young children will become sensitive to gender discrimination and patriarchy, which, in turn, will lay the foundation for an ethical citizenry who will consciously promote and ensure gender parity, ethics and the recognition of women.

Keywords: *history, patriarchy, agency, women*

Sri Lanka English Newspaper Corpus (SLENC): Development, use and potential as a resource for humanities research

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Sri Lanka English Newspaper Corpus (SLENC) is a linguistic database of approximately 10 million words containing a collection of online newspaper articles from two major English newspapers in Sri Lanka, published between 2015 and 2018. SLENC is an effort by the Digital Humanities Laboratory, Department of English, University of Colombo to contribute to developing digitally accessible newspaper corpora to further humanities research in Sri Lanka. This paper describes the creative and methodological processes adopted, including the digital scraping of news articles from two separate websites using custom-written code in the programming language R, as well as the challenges faced by the Digital Humanities Laboratory in developing a digitally accessible newspaper corpus in a local context. The paper outlines the utilization of SLENC in language research, teaching and language assessments, which illustrates its potential as a linguistic resource for humanities research, including thematic and collocational analyses. It also demonstrates how SLENC, envisioned to be an easily accessible online interface featuring an interactive corpus browser, can be an exploratory space for anyone interested in language use, novice and expert alike, and provide an exciting and engaging point of entry to language research in Sri Lanka. The paper concludes with directions for future uses of SLENC including diachronic analyses of Sri Lankan English alongside older newspaper corpora, training of staff and students in the use of software for annotation and corpus analysis, as well as in the fields of digital humanities and natural language processing.

Keywords: *language research, natural language processing, newspaper corpora, Sri Lankan English*

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A study on the influence of learning styles of engineering stream students during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Learning is a lifelong process of transforming information and experience into knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes. Apart from that, it is a combination of approaches, which relates the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic aspects. Since the engineers are designers, there is a need to study their involvement in various learning styles during the current pandemic situation in Sri Lanka. It has been noticed that most of the undergraduates of engineering faculties have failed to perform well in their examinations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This survey focuses on identifying appropriate means for teaching and learning activities. A questionnaire was circulated among the Engineering undergraduates from Sri Lankan universities. The questions were categorized under three major domains of learning styles and the responses were awarded a Likert scale system. The results were analyzed under three categories based on engineering discipline, gender, and year of study. The overall results show that half of the population prefers kinesthetic means followed by visual and auditory at 31% and 19% respectively. Under the visual style, most of the students mentioned that the best way to remember something is to picture it in their minds. The reply from the auditory preferring students depicts that there is a requirement to provide explanations for the diagrams, graphs, and visual directions for them to adapt. Kinesthetic students discover the importance of working with hands and making models. The results suggested that major efforts should be made to continue to improve the academic career of the engineering undergraduates with the suitable adaption of learning styles during the current situation. As this survey covers a limited number of responses, we can validate this study with the entire population. It can be concluded that the engineering undergraduates prefer more kinesthetic means during the study period for the betterment of their academic career.

Keywords: *kinesthetic, visual, auditory, engineering stream, pandemic*

Surface water pollution around the Seethawaka Export Processing Zone and its impact on the surrounding aquatic environment

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Seethawaka industrial zone comprises an irregular elevated topography where people live and the surrounding low-lying areas are mostly used as cultivation land and water bodies. The adjacent area of the Seethawaka Export Processing Zone (SEPZ) effluent outlet became an unexpected waste dumping ground receiving wastewater. The purpose of this study is to identify the surface water pollution and its impact on the SEPZ, and how changes in surface water quality have affected the lives of the surrounding population and survival of its organisms. Accordingly, both primary and secondary data were used in the study. A total of five water samples were collected using the purposive sampling method based on their distance from the effluent outlet and were examined during the wet and dry seasons. Thus, the study used Interpolation Techniques in Arc GIS Software. The water quality index was used to identify the suitability of these water sources for aquatic life. The study found that the river water was black and had an unpleasant odor, and that soil fertility had decreased and production was reduced. Studying the spatiotemporal variability of the water sources, it is clear that the water quality at the confluence of the Kelani River within the Kudagama Canal is at a lower level in both wet and dry seasons. That is to say, health problems had arisen due to the collision of polluted water. The results indicated that the surrounding aquatic environment is exceedingly contaminated by various pollutants released from SEPZ negatively impacted the species in that ecosystem. Therefore, action should be taken to protect these water sources by preventing water pollution caused by the discharge of wastewater from the SEPZ. Otherwise, the aquatic environment in the adjacent areas will be severely damaged within a very short period.

Keywords: *industrialization, interpolation, SEPZ, surface water pollution, WQI*

A review of climate change impact on the built environment in coastal regions: The case of the UK

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The changing climatic conditions highly threaten the coastal regions in the United Kingdom (UK). The UK is one of the most susceptible European countries to sea-level changes. In addition, the coastal populations face a range of other climate-related risks such as extreme climatic conditions. The built environment exerts considerable influence over the local climate and environment of coastal communities. Coastal areas being highly populated with urban centres located near the coastal belts further increases the predicament. Considering this, developing tangible climate adaptation measures in the coastal built environments is vital. In developing suitable adaptation measures, it is necessary to understand the impacts of climate change on the coastal built environment in detail. This research is conducted as a part of BEACON (Built Environment leArning for Climate adaptation), a collaborative research project co-funded by the EU Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. As a part of this study, the UK case was studied in detail. The study adopted a narrative literature synthesis, using the narrative literature review method. Qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis summarized the findings. The primary climate change evidence in the coastal regions in the UK was studied with their impacts on the built environment. The results concluded that the physical impacts of climate change are most directly linked to the built environment. However, though the non-physical elements of economic, social, and environmental impacts due to climate change have been identified, their links to the built environment in coastal regions are yet to be discovered. This will be very useful for local actors to understand the current risks, and expand the future research in the subject area.

Keywords: *climate change, built environment, coastal regions, United Kingdom*

Fostering economic resilience through corporate governance determinants: Evidence from manufacturing sector companies in Sri Lanka

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Economic resilience can be reinforced through imposing rules geared toward mitigating both the risks and consequences of severe crises. The purpose of this study is to examine how economic resilience can be strengthened in the manufacturing sector by implementing better performance and good corporate governance practices (CGPs). Archival research was carried out by using secondary data of ten companies listed in the Colombo Stock Exchange, under the manufacturing sector in Sri Lanka. Board size, board independence, board gender diversity, existence of audit committee, existence of nomination committee, board meetings, CEO duality were used as CGPs. Manufacturing sector performance was used as a mediating variable and economic resilience was considered as an outcome variable. Relevant data were extracted from the annual reports of 10 companies listed under manufacturing during the 2015 - 2019 period. Finally, 50 observations were used for the data analysis. Pearson correlation test was executed to determine the relationship between CGPs, manufacturing sector performance and economic resilience. Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the explanatory power of the combination of these three segments. The correlation analysis shows that manufacturing sector performance has a negative correlation with fiscal deficit to GDP which means that as manufacturing sector performance increases, the budget deficit decreases which impacts the economic resilience of the country. The regression results suggest that board gender diversity has a significant relationship with manufacturing sector performance and development of the manufacturing sector has a significant mediating impact on economic resilience of the country. Hence, the outcome of the study provides insights on the realistic business resilience model. It points the way forward to economic decision makers to formulate governance mechanisms in order to enhance the economy's ability to withstand shocks as well as move towards sustainable economic growth of the country at a time of economic decline. Accordingly, this study proposes a model and reaffirms the vital role of equal participation and leadership in the manufacturing sector to unlock the potential for increasing the number of women in leadership positions and improve female board members' level of contribution to board decisions, with the aim of achieving gender parity which will in turn accelerate the development process of the overall economy.

Keywords: *corporate governance, economic resilience, fiscal deficit to GDP ratio*

Learning Japanese through online classes: A study on kanji education

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The novel coronavirus pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide. At present, the new normal is a transformed system of education with online learning at the core. This new learning method is making a major difference in language education as well. The purpose of this study is to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of conducting online kanji education from the perspective of teachers and learners who study Japanese and to examine the feedback and awareness of learners regarding online kanji education. This study focuses mainly on the following problems and concerns related to the kanji education in the post-COVID-19 context in Sri Lanka, namely, the advantages and disadvantages of online kanji education, the level of awareness in online kanji education for non-Japanese-speaking Sri Lankan learners, and the learner's feedback on overall online kanji education. A questionnaire and an interview survey were used in this study. Data were collected from seventy Japanese language learners who took online kanji lessons at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and five lecturers who teach online kanji. The research focuses mainly on analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of conducting online kanji education from the perspective of teachers and learners, and the results of examining learner feedback and awareness regarding online kanji education. Through all these observations, it is evident that kanji can be taught efficiently using online lectures than physical lectures. Therefore, kanji characters can be taught easily by using online teaching materials and methodologies than old school methods of teaching in classrooms.

Keywords: *kanji characters, online learning, Sri Lankan Japanese learners*

Language alienation of Sri Lankan students studying overseas

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Studying outside is an aging phenomenon. Every year, a considerable number of Sri Lankan students migrate overseas to further their studies. In comparison to previous years, the total number of students emigrating has increased significantly. Especially in such countries, many migrant students are able to find new opportunities for their career development other than furthering their education. This research aims to examine the language barrier of Sri Lankan students studying overseas and how it prevents their academic outcomes. This qualitative research was undertaken with ten migrant students studying in Canada and Australia. The study used questionnaires to gather data and Thematic Analysis (TA) to analyze and interpret the data. A group of migrant students studying in those countries for more than six months was purposely selected for the investigation. The findings of the study revealed that 90% of them experienced language alienation upon arrival in these countries. They could not complete many of their daily tasks such as making friends, understanding lectures, and participating in classroom events, given the language barrier. Participants reported that the inadequate opportunity for enhancing their English communication skills in the ESL classrooms in Sri Lanka is the key reason for this situation. As they claim, Sri Lankan primary and secondary education should give equal significance to all the English skills in the English curriculum rather than prioritizing writing and reading in examinations. This assertion points to the need to practice speaking and to listen in ESL classrooms without focusing only on examination-oriented teaching.

Keywords: *language alienation, migrant students, education*

Screens and clouds: Methodological dilemmas in researching digital literacy during a pandemic

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This paper reviews methodological changes made to a qualitative study on the digital literacy practices of a child. The changes were occasioned due to the pandemic and led to the exploration of some important questions related to qualitative research methodology. The paper is on the first phase of this study, where the researchers collected data from a family with a child of approximately 2 years. Due to the pandemic, the data was collected and conveyed entirely through digital means without visiting the home, with the participating parent conducting much of the data collection. Using our field notes from 6 months of data collection, interviews with one parent and videos and photos of the child's literacy activities, we discuss three main issues that are pertinent to qualitative research. First, we reflect on the importance of considering prior relationships between researchers and participants and examine what the role of the 'participant' means in certain research settings. Secondly, we reflect on children's agency in research about them, especially when the child is the digital native but has no voice in the study. Thirdly, the paper considers ethical considerations that become more apparent when researching the intimacy of the home and family through the screen. This aspect also allows us to explore possible ethical solutions to some problems that appear in the course of changes in the research. Through a discussion of these three issues, the paper aims to bring about a more reflexive consideration of ethics and methodology in researching the digital.

Keywords: *children's digital literacy, digital research methods, ethics, reflexivity*

Assessment methods of practical components in music as a subject at a state university during the global pandemic

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The assessment of the practical aspects of music is a significant challenge in the current situation. Especially in a global health crisis when students are physically far from the teacher, there is still controversy about choosing the appropriate assessment methods for the subject of music. The Faculty of Music at the University of the Visual and Performing Arts is still in discussion mode on the most appropriate assessment method for the practical components of the curriculum. The research objective is to study new assessment methods and their challenges in evaluating music at the University of Visual and Performing Arts. 95 of the 160 sample students from the Faculty of Music filled out and returned the questionnaire. In addition, heads of six departments and ten teaching staff were selected for the interview. The previous surveys conducted by two departments are also used as supplemental data for the current study. The results indicate that participants in the research mainly depend on live zoom session assessment or video uploading method as alternative methods that would likely uncover students' proficiency in their practical subjects. However, few teachers face difficulties since particular instruments and topic components are impractical for future evaluation methods. The study found that 89% of students are ready to deal with virtual assessment methods. 11% of students are still poorly outfitted with digital devices. Assessments are unsustainable when students cannot use current assessment practices due to a lack of musical instruments and human resources. Although the innovative approaches are born of necessity, virtual assessing in music would negatively affect due to lack of close perception, unclear communication, and poor audio quality.

Keywords: *music subject, assessing methods, challenges, global pandemic*

A study on the environmental dimension of national security

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Environmental security has become a prominent issue in world politics, but it is often unheeded due to its slow onset nature. Human security is largely dependent on the environment. The uneven distribution of natural resources could have direct effects on national security. The carbon-fuelled global economy and massive consumption have led to massive environmental pollution, causing eco systems to degenerate. Hence, climate change is the biggest environmental threat the world is facing at the moment. The Sustainable Development Goal 13 of the United Nations, climate activists, and many others have taken steps to counteract climate change. This paper discusses international security in the Anthropocene, and answers the question whether the measures that have been taken to face the threat of climate change are adequate. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in data collection. The tropical forests and the water crisis of Egypt are taken as case studies to demonstrate the effects of climate change and how it affects national security respectively. The key findings of this paper show that the measures that are being taken at the moment are inadequate to combat climate change. However, recent research shows that methods such as geoengineering can help us better prepare to face this global threat.

Keywords: *environmental security, human security, climate change*

Using the SaTScan method to model local Dengue clusters in the Kolonnawa Divisional Secretariat for guiding Dengue control programmes

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Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne illness that substantially has a substantial impact on tropical developing countries due to unplanned urbanization. As a tropical country, Sri Lanka is also affected by Dengue fever, with a high morbidity and fatality rate. Kolonnawa Divisional Secretariat (DS) in Sri Lanka is one of the country's highest Dengue transmission divisions. The purpose of this study was to map, analyze, and predict the spatial and temporal distribution of dengue in the Kolonnawa DS division from April to September of 2019. SaTScan software using the space-time permutation and the Bernoulli purely spatial model was used to identify Dengue clusters using definitively confirmed individual cases in Kolonnawa Divisional Secretariat over the study period. The distribution and statistical significance of clusters were investigated using Monte Carlo replication of data sets under the null hypothesis with replications greater than 999 to provide enough power for cluster definition. The spatial and temporal clusters associated with the reported instances were shown using the ArcMap 10.1 software. During the study period, SaTScan found five space clusters and three space-time clusters. The western region of the study area reported the highest number of spatial and temporal clusters, including Welewaththa, Kuruniyawaththa, and Sedawaththa divisions. The analysis of this variability at the household level using SaTScan and GIS technologies allows for more precise targeting of preventative interventions on the identified high-risk zones. This mapping of Dengue risk allows control activities to be oriented, with high-risk zones designated as a priority, and to ensure the health and well-being of the community by assisting the organisation of intervention trials or research studies on Dengue outbreak prediction.

Keywords: *Dengue, SaTScan, Kolonnawa, clusters*

A needs analysis on the English language skills required in the 13 years guaranteed education programme for trainee tea factory officers and trainee tea field officers at NIPM

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The 13 Years Guaranteed Education Programme for tea factory officers and tea field officers is designed by Sri Lankan government with the National Institute of Plantation Management (NIPM). The objective of this course is to fulfil the necessity of tea factory officers and tea field officers in Sri Lanka. This is a NVQ level 4 programme which caters to students who fail at the G.C.E Ordinary Level Examination. Furthermore, the management of NIPM encourages students to complete the Bachelor of Science in Tea Plantation Management that paves the way for higher studies in Tea Plantation Management in both local and international contexts. Language has become a barrier for trainee officers in this programme because they are not proficient a language apart from their first language. The purpose of this study was to investigate the English language skills that are required by this learner group through conducting a needs analysis and to develop an ESP curriculum for the English language course offered for the trainee tea factory officers and trainee tea field officers at NIPM. 75 trainee officers were selected from NIPM. There were 61 male trainee officers and 14 female trainee officers. There were both Sinhala and Tamil trainee officers from different parts in Sri Lanka. The subjective needs were measured through five interviews with personnel in the field of tea plantation management. The objective needs were measured by conducting interviews with six randomly selected students from the batch and by class room observations. The thematic analysis will be used to analyse the observations and the two types of interviews in order to explore their themes. It requires a detailed data proceeding of qualitative data which provides more insight into the present study than quantitative data. The key findings reveal the importance of learning English in the tea plantation and manufacturing industry. The study also includes suggestions for the ESP curriculum that should be developed in the institute. Therefore, the present study will provide valuable insights into developing a productive English curriculum for these students.

Keywords: *needs analysis, curriculum development, English language skills, National Institute of Plantation Management*

In animal conflict: Richard de Zoysa as shapeshifting witness

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Among the poems of Richard de Zoysa posthumously collected in *This Other Eden*, his animal poems draw immediate attention for their acute political sensibility. While they all bear some sort of witness to Sri Lanka's many crises, a closer look at the chronology of his animal poems shows a remarkable transformation of the poetic personae: from an unmistakable apathy and resignation respectively shown in "Animal Crackers" and "Lepidoptera" published in 1983, de Zoysa takes the subtle sarcasm of elephants in the former to unrestrained—even hysteric—proportions in "Gajagawannama" in 1984. Then, his much-anthologised 1988 poem "Birds, Beasts and Relatives" displays a pessimism that is both observational and mature. The pre-1991 "But Every Gull is Not Called Jonathan L," ironically concluding with the line "security is all" directed at its subject, signals a political detachment and contains an implicit recommendation for self-preservation. Altogether, they present a localized and innovative framework for documenting crisis in poetry that needs to be recognized. Adapting Carolyn Forché's concept "poetry of witness" that records and thus documents poetry written in or about extreme circumstances, I will argue that, rather than adhering to the realistic expectations of it, de Zoysa's animal poems broadens the scope of poetry of witness. This happens primarily because a cover such as symbolism, animal imagery, and allegory was necessary due to the extremely high stakes involved in writing politically at the time in Sri Lanka; as such, the representations of animals, regardless of their contribution to the realism of the poems, amplify the element of witness (and the chaos) rather than reduce it. Besides, the public desensitized by regular atrocities perhaps needed a fresh perspective to read about them in literature. De Zoysa's fluid role of witness among rampaging animals, then, was not optional but essential to not only continue publishing political poetry in local journals, but to the poet's own precarious survival until then as well.

Keywords: *writing crisis/conflict, poetry of witness, Richard de Zoysa, animal poetry*

Open-book vs closed-book examinations in the higher education sector during COVID-19: The case study of a state university

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The main objective of this paper was to compare the performance of undergraduates in onsite closed-book examinations with that of online open-book examinations. The specific objectives of the study were to determine if there was a significant difference in the average marks obtained in the online open-book and onsite closed-book examinations, as well as whether the mode of examination has affected the shape of the distribution of marks. The study was based on secondary data collected from the selected departments (Economics, Sinhala, and Geography) at the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. The academic work for the 2019 intake commenced in February 2019 in the traditional onsite classroom method. The freshers had only two months of experience of onsite learning as the Faculty introduced online teaching and evaluation methods in April 2019 to adhere to the guidelines of the University Grants Commission. In both semesters, the lectures were conducted through online platforms. However, the Faculty managed to conduct the first semester examination as an onsite closed-book examination although the second semester examination was an online open-book examination. Central tendency and measures of variation were used to compare the performances of undergraduates in these two different modes of examination. Correlation analysis was used to identify the relationship between undergraduates' performance on online and onsite examinations. To identify the significant impact of the mode of examination on their performance, the paired T sample test was employed. The findings show that undergraduates perform slightly better on onsite closed-book examinations than on online open-book examinations. The average marks of the onsite closed-book examination were significantly higher than those of the online open-book examination. This result shows that undergraduates do not gain an extra advantage by taking online open-book examinations. The correlation analysis shows that the undergraduates who perform well on the onsite closed-book examinations are unable to reach a similar level of performance in the online open-book examinations.

Keywords: *student assessment, academic performance, open-book examination, closed-book examination*

Productivity, creativity, and lexical innovation in Sinhalese slanguage: A special reference to slang words for illicit liquor

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Slanguage is the register of a language that is characterized by substandard words and expressions. As neologization processes in slanguage are not constrained by prescriptive norms, they naturally tend to be highly creative. Thus, slanguage is the most vibrant and ever-expanding variety of a language. However, there has been insufficient linguistic research into the Sinhalese slanguage. The purpose of this study is to investigate the neologization processes that occur in Sinhalese slang words that allude to illicit liquor, with a focus on morphological productivity, creativity, and lexical innovation. Participant observation, interviews, and social media surveys were all used to collect data. This collection generated a data corpus of 115 slang words. The data were analyzed using theories and methods of structural linguistics. The neologization processes involved in these words have been identified as phonetic matching, compounding, clipping, eponymy, metaphor, semantic drift, semantic reanalysis, generification, folk etymology, loaning, loan blending, and conversion. The most productive neologization process is compounding. Interestingly, most of the compounds are exocentric, and there are a few novel compound structures that are not particularly productive. Gentrification is another extremely productive neologization process. Although there are generic trademarks that appear in compounds regularly, their meanings have been metaphorically extended to indicate illicit liquor. Euphemistic eponyms have been created from proper names that have some phonetic resemblance to mainstream words for illicit liquor. Moreover, there is a variety of semantic processes through which mainstream words have been adopted into slanguage. There are also words of unknown origin that appear to have been invented. These findings reveal some emerging trends of neologization processes in Sinhalese slanguage. In most of the processes, the speech community has relied on intuitive creativity rather than on morphological productivity. As a result, in Sinhalese slanguage, lexical innovations have outnumbered lexical productions by a large margin.

Keywords: *neologization process, productivity, creativity, innovation*

Nativizing the violin: An attempt to introduce Sinhalese technical terms for the parts of the violin

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Although the violin is a key string instrument in both Western and Oriental music traditions, its technical terms are primarily in English owing to its western origin. As a result, using English technical terms even when teaching the violin to Sinhalese medium students has become unavoidable. Students' grasp of the components and their functions is hampered by this act of code-mixing in the classroom. The purpose of this pioneering research is to coin and introduce a set of appealing technical terms in Sinhalese for naming the parts of the violin. Although some have devised Sinhalese technical terms to designate certain parts of the violin (such as *strings* and *bow*) in the early twentieth century, none of them have achieved favor in modern Sinhalese usage. Cumaratunga Munidasa was the first to adopt a linguistic approach to coin Sinhalese technical terms for the violin. These technical terms, which appeared in his 1942 book *He a Miyäsiya* (Helese Music), are limited to the five most essential terms that a beginner is required to know. This study was conducted by furthering Cumaratunga Munidasa's approach in neologization to coin Sinhalese technical terms for all parts of the violin. A corpus of twenty-five technical terms was gathered through extensive literature survey. After studying their meanings and origins it was understood that calquing (English to Helese) would be the most appropriate neologization process to render them in Sinhalese. The twenty-five Sinhalese neologisms resulted by calquing include a variety of simplex, complex, and compound stems. It is believed that these technical terms would make the teaching of violin in Sinhalese more effective as most of the terms are indicative of their functions as well.

Keywords: *code-mixing, neologization process, technical term, violin*

කඳුරට වැවිලි කෙෂ්ත්‍රයේ ඉන්දියානු දෙමළ ප්‍රජාවගේ (නිර්) දේශපාලන සවලීකරණය

ඩී. රත්නමාලී

දේශපාලන විද්‍යාව සහ රාජ්‍ය ප්‍රතිපත්ති අධ්‍යයන අංශය, කොළඹ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලය, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව.

කඳුරට වැවිලි කෙෂ්ත්‍රයේ ඉන්දියානු සම්භවයක් සහිත දෙමළ ප්‍රජාව ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ මැතිවරණ දේශපාලනයේ විශේෂ ගතිකයක් වන අතර ස්වාධීනත්වයෙන් පසු යුගයේ මෙරට මැතිවරණ දේශපාලනය තුළ එම ප්‍රජාවේ ඡන්ද බලය ජාතික දේශපාලනයේ බල සමතුලිතතාව සකස් වීම අතින් තීරණාත්මක භූමිකාවක් ඉටු කරමින් ඇත. එසේ වුව ද, ඡන්දදායක පිරිසක් ලෙස එම ප්‍රජාවේ අභ්‍යන්තර දේශපාලනික සවලීකරණයෙහි කැපී පෙනෙන උපනතියක් නිරීක්ෂණය වන්නේ නැත. ඒ අනුව "ඡන්දදායක පිරිසක් ලෙස ජාතික දේශපාලනයට බලපෑම් සහගත මැදිහත් වීමක් දැක්වීමේ හැකියාවක් තිබිය දී එම ප්‍රජාවේ අභ්‍යන්තර දේශපාලන සවලීකරණය නිෂ්ක්‍රීය ස්වභාවයකට පත් ව ඇත්තේ ඇයි ද?" යන ගැටලුව මේ අධ්‍යයනයේ දී විභාග කෙරිණි. මේ අධ්‍යයනය සඳහා නුවරඑළිය දිස්ත්‍රික්කයේ ණවනරාජා වතුයායේ" තෝරාගත් පවුල් සියයක් පමණ යොදා ගැනුණු අතර තොරතුරු සහ දත්ත රැස් කිරීමේ දී ව්‍යුහගත සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා, අර්ධ ව්‍යුහගත සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා සහ ගැඹුරු සාකච්ඡා ක්‍රම යොදා ගැනිණි. ඊට අමතර ව පුස්තකාල සහ අන්තර්ජාල මූලාශ්‍ර ද අවධානයට ලක් කෙරිණි. සක්‍රීය දේශපාලන සහභාගිත්වයකට ඇති නොකැමැත්ත, ක්‍රමවත් අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රියාවලියක් සඳහා ඇති අඩු යොමුව, අඩු දේශපාලන සවිඥානකත්වය, එදිනෙදා ආර්ථික වර්ධනයේ ඇති සීමිත භාවයන් පමණක් නො ව ඓතිහාසික ව සිදු වූ සංක්‍රමණිකත්වයේ මානසිකත්ව තුළ පුරවැසි භාවය පිළිබඳ ව ඇති ඉවිඡා භංගත්වය ද ඔවුන් ගේ දුර්වල දේශපාලන සවලීකරණය මූලාශ්‍ර කොට ඇති බව මේ අධ්‍යයනයෙන් පැහැදිලි විය. එමෙන් ම මෙහි දී අනුග්‍රාහක-සේවාදායකත්වය යටතේ ගොඩනැගී ඇති ඒකාකාරී දේශපාලන සම්බන්ධතා රටාව මගින් ඉටු කෙරෙන භූමිකාව වඩාත් තීරණාත්මක ය. ඒ නිසා දේශපාලනයේ දී ඔවුන් වෙතින් ප්‍රදර්ශනය වන්නේ ජනවාර්ගික ප්‍රජාවකට වඩා නිශ්චිත ආර්ථික වර්ධනයක් සහිත ප්‍රාදේශීය සුළු ජනවාර්ගික ප්‍රජාවකගේ ලක්ෂණ ය. මෙවැනි සාධක යටතේ ජාතික දේශපාලන ක්‍රියාවලියට ඔවුන් ගේ යොමුව හුදු ඡන්ද සවලීකරණයකට පමණක් සීමා වී ඇත.

ප්‍රමුඛ පද: දේශපාලන සවලීකරණය, ඡන්ද සවලීකරණය, පුරවැසිභාවය, මැතිවරණ දේශපාලනය

An analysis of the relationship between health care facilities and fatality rate during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Coronavirus is putting pressure on health services around the world. Sri Lanka is facing the fourth wave of the SARS-COV-02 (COVID-19) outbreak with massive infection rates and a rapid growth in the death toll. There were 42017 active confirmed cases and 6985 deaths as of 20th August 2020, leading to COVID-19 treatment centres and hospitals reaching the maximum capacity in the country. Due to the rapid spread and uncertainty of the pandemic, it is difficult to predict, how many hospital beds will be needed, even in a relatively short period. People who have COVID-19 related symptoms and do not have access to hospital facilities may experience further health issues. This situation may also put their families and communities at risk. This study aims to investigate the hospital bed and incentive care unit (ICU) bed capacity and determine the correlation between hospital resources and the COVID-19 related fatality rate in Sri Lanka. The data for this study were collected from the World Health Organization and other sources from 20th May to 20th August 2021. Descriptive statistical analysis and linear regression were implemented to test for significant associations between bed capacity and COVID-19 deaths. The study found a significant weakly positive association between the number of ICU beds per 100,000 people and deaths from COVID-19. Hospital beds per 100,000 population has a significant negative effect on the COVID-19 mortality rate ($p < 0.01$). The one hospital bed per 100,000 population increases results in a 3-unit reduction in the mortality rate associated with COVID-19. In conclusion, COVID-19 death rates are likely to be influenced by several factors, including hospital resources, staff, and bed capacity. Therefore, adopting a tiered approach to targeted development of hospital resources can help maximize the quality of care in the event of future pandemics.

Keywords: *healthcare resources, COVID-19, deaths, hospital beds*

Business confidence during the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka

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Businesses have an increased vulnerability to natural hazards in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The confidence of the business is one of the major determinants to enhance economic and social resilience. It has become a necessary factor for policy formulations to improve the business confidence during the COVID-19 outbreak. The study aims to empirically evaluate the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on business enterprise's confidence in Sri Lanka from August 2020 to July 2021. Sri Lanka announced its first island-wide lockdown restriction from 20th March 2020 to 11th May 2020, the second from 30th October 2020 to 13th November 2020, and the third lockdown from 25th May 2021 to 21st June 2021. Moreover, there had been other selective lockdown restrictions in the country (Department of Government Information, 2021). The methodology of the study is based on secondary data with descriptive statistics. The data for the research is mainly gathered from the Sri Lanka Business Confidence index. The study found that, low of -34.6 per cent in October 2020, -14.4 per cent in May 2021, -33.8 per cent in June 2021, and -13.6 per cent in July 2021 as there had been lockdown restrictions during those months. The employment continued to decline in the country due to the reduction of new recruitments. As a result of those restrictions, there had been a decline in most of the business activities. The manufacturers doubt that the reduced demand would continue to put pressure on their business activities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, many businesses have shifted to produce some alternative products relating to health and safety such as masks, hand sanitizers, etc. instead of their regular products. The study concludes that the losing of confidence related to the business may create various vulnerabilities on profitability, skilled labour availability, demand, sales and capacity utilization of business. That will create massive economic imbalances and directly affect the stability of the country.

Keywords: *business confidence, COVID-19, economy, lockdown*

Two phases of populism in Bangladesh

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Despite the widespread use of the term populism, especially in the context of the ongoing democratic backsliding in many countries, there is no agreement on a definition of the concept. However, it is generally considered as an ideology which “considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite,’ and which argues that politics should be an expression of the [general will] of the people.” Available studies show that populism can also be a political style and a political strategy. In this paper, I argue that populism became a dominant feature of the Bangladeshi politics in two different phases of its history: first, between 1972 and 1975; second, after 2009. The former period saw the adoption of populism as an ideology as the government headed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman embraced populist economic and social policies such as land reform and the nationalization of industries. This phase of populism created a binary between people and the elite, and the leadership claimed to be representing the ‘oppressed masses,’ and it attempted to dismantle the existing administrative structure. Mujib’s populist politics led to an authoritarian system of governance and a one-party system was introduced. The latter phase of populism began after the Bangladesh Awami League was elected in 2009 under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina. While the party didn’t adopt the ideological elements of populism, it pursues populism as a ‘political strategy’. This strategy incorporates three elements: “the people”, the “imagined Other” and the “general will”. Besides, instead of dismantling the administrative structure, it has espoused the strategy of ‘capturing’. This phase also witnessed serious erosion of democracy.

Keywords: *Bangladesh, populism, democracy, Awami League, authoritarianism*

Islamic dress codes in the middle of reality and distortion: An experience of Sri Lankan Muslims

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People clothe themselves because it is a custom. It has been proven throughout the history. It is believed that the earliest clothing consisted of fur, leather and leaves. At present, there is a notable advancement in the clothing practice with the emergence of a variety of modes and designs. The emergence of faith-based civilizations and urbanization developments has been the most influential factors in the manner of clothing and dress codes. Moreover, the environment, ethnicity, and faiths are some other influential factors in the clothing culture of people. This study aimed to define the objectives of wearing clothes in general and the Islamic perspectives in particular and to classify the truths and the backgrounds of issues related to the clothing customs of Muslims in contemporary Sri Lanka. The study demonstrated that the Islamic dress code was a mixture of culture and religion in day to day life, while the other traditions concentrate mostly on cultural traditions and personal aspirations rather than religious customs. Furthermore, the study identified that the root causes of the debates on dress cultures of human societies, especially in the Muslim community around the world including contemporary Sri Lanka, were the results of political and personal inspirations assuming common interests. However, there are some reasonable angles that have to be considered.

Keywords: *dress code, customs, pattern of dressing, culture*

Effectiveness of blended learning as a panacea for post pandemic pedagogy in higher education of Sri Lanka

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Sri Lankan higher education system is relatively traditional compared to the developed countries. Most of those countries adopted online learning, hand in hand with the traditional system, way before the higher education system was left with no choice, but to make all platforms transform online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the system in Sri Lanka was quite traditional, where the students were expected to be at the university premises to attend the lectures. Blended learning includes both face-to-face interaction and technology-mediated interactions. For a year, this face-to-face component has been eliminated completely due to the COVID-19 dilemma, which restricted all in-person interactions. Blended learning methodology has been adopted in different ways across the globe by institutions due to the pedagogical advantages it possesses since it combines the perks of both traditional system and online platforms. This model is also known as the “new traditional model”, “new normal model” (Norberg, & Sicilia, 2018), “hybrid”, “inverted” or “flipped” model. In the long run, after the pandemic, there will be an opportunity for the institutions to decide whether they require shifting back to the traditional model completely or if it is more effective to implement both methods when needed. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine the benefits and challenges, and thereby, the effectiveness of adopting a blended learning method, where both traditional and e-learning will be implemented hand in hand in a traditional context. The study will be based on Sri Lankan higher education and will take a deductive approach. An established theoretical proposition is proposed to be used. The main data collection methods that will be initiated are in depth-interviews and questionnaires. A non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling, will be used to understand the views and intentions of the university administration personnel who are responsible for the implementation of the proposal. A three-phase sampling method: systematic- stratified-simple random sampling method was used to understand the perspectives of the other stakeholders including students and teachers. Hence, this study is carried out with the broader framework of thematic analysis and descriptive approaches accommodating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The results suggested that mainly individual and organizational factors affected the effectiveness. Themes were identified as improving creativity,

technological advancement, enhanced engagement, sophistication, motivations, novel thinking, user friendly, and satisfaction. Overall, even if blended learning was appreciated across the discussions, most suggested that with the current levels of technology in the country, it can be questioned whether blended learning would be effective.

Keywords: *blended learning, post pandemic pedagogy, higher education*

Economic drivers of intimate partner violence committed within the domestic setting in Sri Lanka

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The rapid transition of households from simple traditional patterns to modernization has produced lethal effects including domestic violence. When evaluating the prevalence of intimate partner violence by region, the highest prevalence has been recorded in the region of South-East Asia. This is an economic cause than a sociological cause. Nevertheless, the great vacuum in Sri Lankan literature in investigating the economic aspect of this issue was identified as the research problem and this study aimed to investigate the economic factors affecting intimate partner violence against women in Sri Lanka. The study was based on secondary data from Sri Lanka Demographic and Health Survey 2016, conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka and the study extracted a sample of 9992 women aged between 15 to 49 years. The study employs both descriptive and regression analyses in order to identify the economic drivers of intimate partner violence. In line with the employment status of women, the study found that females who are employed have experienced violence more than the unemployed women. Interestingly, unlike the employment status, women with some property ownership are less likely to experience intimate partner violence. In addition, the likelihood of women to be the victims of intimate partner violence is higher at lower levels of education and conversely violence reduces at higher levels of education. Moreover, there exists a positive relationship between the employment status of husband and intimate partner violence. Furthermore, the research found that a woman is less likely to experience intimate partner violence, when both the husband's and wife's earnings are about the same. The households with equal decision making power have a lower prevalence of intimate partner violence. Moreover, when considering intimate partner violence by the residential sector, violence is relatively high in the urban sector in Sri Lanka. More importantly, this study delivers policy implications on education, women's access to productive resources, and effective enforcement of existing laws to reduce the share of intimate partner violence in Sri Lanka to empower women.

Keywords: *intimate partner violence, logistic analysis, employment status, Sri Lanka*

Indicators to assess climate change risk of the road transport system: A systematic review

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Climate change severely impacts socio-economic and environmental systems. The transport system is one such system that is significantly under the disastrous impacts of climate change. Facing the increased frequencies and intensities of climate-related hazards such as floods are more challenging in the less resilient societies than in the resilient ones. Road transportation, a principal lifeline of all the economies, demands urgent attention on climate risk assessment, adaptation, and resilience-building due to its complexity. However, data accessibility is an issue in developing countries that impede those assessments. Thus, the indicator-based method is considered a practical and accessible method to conduct risk assessments in data-scarce regions. Indicators consist of the ability to illustrate the status or level of a study property or a variable. Therefore, this paper aims to propose a set of indicators to assess the climate change risks of the road transport sector, targeting regions with data accessibility issues. This research is based on a systematic literature review that synthesizes scholarly databases such as Google Scholar, Web of science and Clarivate analytics. The primary search refined 15 key research papers based on the keywords and was conducted from 2000 to 2020. The rest of the articles were selected based on the citations of the key papers using the snowball technique. The current study conceptualises the risk as a function of hazard and vulnerability, and vulnerability includes the components, exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity. Based on these themes, indicators were abstracted and analysed to derive four sets of indicators for assessing each risk component of the road transport system's operational and infrastructure aspects. The proposed set of indicators will cover all these risk components, thus collectively they can scale the risk level in a data-scarce region. These indicators will allow the planners and management in developing countries to assess climate change risks on the roads.

Keywords: *hazards, exposure, adaptation, sensitivity*

A review of the categories of textual reliability in translation by Douglas Robinson

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Irrespective of the genre of a translation, it is generally considered preferable to achieve an acceptable level of reliability in the translation process; although the absolute exactitude is almost impossible. Translation reliability means the preservation of the originality of the source text in the representation of the target text. The main objective of the research was to review the categories of textual reliability introduced by Douglas Robinson (1997) in the book *Becoming a Translator*. Data for the research were collected from the Sinhalese novel, *Loveena* by Mohan Raj Madawala, and its English translation by Somasiri Munasinghe, and these were organized as a parallel corpus with 77 sentence pairs based on the categorization of textual reliability by Douglas Robinson. The researchers have selected 77 sentence pairs, giving priority to their inclusion of culture bound terms and contexts where the reliability tends to take a low value. The study has found that the translator has used some of the above categories as strategies to deal with culture capital vibrantly visible in the selected novel. As per the study, the category of foreignism has been used in 30% out of the total pairs of sentences. In addition, Robinson's (1997) categories of summary, commentary, literalism, adaptation, fluency, and summary-commentary have been used in 24%, 18%, 12%, 8%, 4%, and 4% of the selected sentence pairs respectively. Finally, the study concludes that the translator has confronted problematic situations of translating cultural contexts since the categories of foreignization, literalism, and adaptation have taken a high percentage. Moreover, the study shows that the translator has used Robinson's (1997) textual reliability categories as strategies to cope with the translation of culture capital, and the use of such strategies has been highly effective in translating the culture bound terms preserving the translation's reliability.

Keywords: *literary translation, originality, strategies, textual reliability*

Factors affecting little or no access to healthcare for trafficking victims at the destination: The case of Sri Lanka

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Human trafficking derogates human capital due to death, illness as well as all types of labour and sexual exploitations. UN Migrant Workers Convention recognized the rights of migrant populations to health care and other protection. Existing literature has shown that Sri Lanka is a TIRE II country in the trafficking context and is more vulnerable due to little or no access to healthcare at the destinations. This paper discusses the factors affecting little or no access to healthcare for trafficking victims. The specific objectives of the study are to examine the types of illnesses, investigate the reasons for such illnesses, and analyze the factors affecting little or no access to healthcare of traffic victims. Based on the primary data collected in 2016 from 115 household members of the trafficked who lodged complaints on trafficking at the repatriation section of the Ministry of Foreign Employment, Sri Lanka, the sample was selected using purposive sampling and triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data. The results revealed that during the recruitment stage of trafficking, the traffickers use deception, coercion, abduction, intimidation, etc. against the trafficked and that there are high health effects on migrants. Out of a total number of 115 trafficked, 93 percent of them are reported to be infected with physical illnesses, mental illnesses, and disability conditions at the destinations. Trafficking victims are prevented from disclosing their status to health care providers due to fear, shame, and language barriers. 93 percent of the sample was illegal migrants, and they were feared that if they said the truth to doctors the employer will harass them. In this context, migrants were more vulnerable and they suffer from long-term illnesses, depression, anxiety, etc. The study suggests that policies should strengthen the migration laws to reduce illegal migration and develop a mechanism to enrich the health care of the migrants at the destination. Through this procedure, it is straightforward to achieve the SDGs combined with the 'Migration and Development'.

Keywords: *international migration, human trafficking, healthcare needs, health impacts*

Accommodating accountability into disaster governance

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Disaster management, disaster risk reduction, disaster resilience, and disaster governance are relatively new to Sri Lanka, despite Sri Lanka experiencing various types of disasters from ancient times. This research aims to establish a sustainable governance structure that can address the issues of disaster risk governance in Sri Lanka based on the principle of accountability. The research will employ case study research strategy and multiple case embedded research to build theory by using an inductive approach. Brief literature review reveals that the emphasis and focus of international frameworks and legal documents have gradually changed their focus over the last few decades from disaster management to disaster governance, and resilience with a considerable focus on accountability, which emphasize the need of change from response to preparedness and recovery in disaster risk reduction (DRR). The Sendai Framework for Action 2015-2030 (SFDRR), the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Paris Agreement are established to guide, regulate and to assist the global implementation of disaster governance and accountability. Further, SFDRR recognizes strengthening disaster risk governance and bringing accountability into DRR as a priority and requirement for sustainable disaster risk reduction all over the world. On the other hand, Sri Lanka has introduced new policies, laws, and institutional framework for disaster governance based on the Disaster Management Act of 2005. However, with a multiplicity of laws, policies, and institutions involved both vertically and horizontally, lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities, absence of accountability mechanisms, competition among the government institutions and central government as well as Provincial Governments and Local Governments can be identified as challengers to disaster governance in Sri Lanka. While a majority of developing countries have succeeded in accommodating accountability mechanisms within their governance structures in line with international guidelines, middle- and low-income countries show a deficiency in accommodating the same in their governance structures. Therefore, this study aims to introduce a governance structure in line with international standards to bring accountability into disaster governance in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *disaster risk reduction, disaster governance, accountability, Sendai Framework for Action*

The impact and new trends of pandemics on society and global politics

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Pandemics have had great influence in shaping human society and politics throughout history. The impact of pandemics on global politics and society are crucial and long-lasting. It can cause varying impacts on all areas of society such as public health, education, economy, politics, national security and culture. Particularly, it could lead to frustration in the youth. Therefore, countries adopt various strategies to address the consequences of the pandemic. Global pandemics are obstacles to the progress of the world and have the potential to change the direction of geopolitics. With the global pandemic of COVID-19, it is clear now that the post pandemic boom in international cooperation is important for the entire world. Many of the trends that have been recognized with COVID-19 would challenge the extension of geopolitical competition. Therefore, the study aims to have a global view using a system of social science approach to recognize the interactions between pandemics, society, and geopolitics. Mixed methodology is used in the study. Information including scholarly ideas in books, journals, and online resources were mainly used for the historical demonstration and comparative analysis of pandemics in the research. Online interviews with open-ended questions played a major role to collect data and information from experts on the prevailing circumstances in the country. This study seeks to understand what direction pandemics take the world in and what challenges and trends the world will have to face in the future.

Keywords: *COVID-19, pandemic, society, geopolitics*

The relationship between perceived stress, caregiver burden and coping styles among the caregivers of children with Down syndrome

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Down syndrome is a chromosomal condition that is associated with intellectual impairment. Caregivers of children with Down syndrome have demonstrated increased stress and more caregiver burden than caregivers of children without this impairment. There remains a lack of studies focusing on stress, caregiver burden and coping styles among the caregivers of children with Down syndrome in Sri Lanka. The primary aim of the study was to examine if coping styles were predictors of perceived stress. The specific aims are: (1) To determine if there is a significant relationship between perceived stress and coping styles; (2) To examine the relationship between caregiver burden and coping styles; (3) To examine the difference between employment status and perceived stress among the caregivers of children with Down syndrome. A quantitative non-experimental design was used. The Perceived Stress Scale 10, Brief Cope Inventory and Zarit Burden Interview were administered on a sample of 96 caregivers of children with Down syndrome in the Western province, Sri Lanka. The snowball sampling technique was used. Data was gathered online via an electronic survey utilizing Qualtrics. The data was analyzed using IBM SPSS version 25. Regression analysis, a Pearson correlation coefficient and an independent *t*-test were performed. The findings of the study indicated that coping style avoidant coping is a significant predictor of perceived stress. There was a significant relationship between perceived stress and coping styles. It was also revealed that there was a significant difference between employment status and level of perceived stress among the caregivers of children with Down syndrome. The findings of the study can be made use of by psychotherapists and health care professionals in their clinical practice to deliver psychotherapy techniques to reduce caregiver burden by improving their coping method. Further, this study provides scope for future research on caregivers of children with intellectual impairments.

Keywords: *Down syndrome, perceived stress, caregiver burden, coping styles*

A cinematic study of how Mani Ratnam's *Bombay* film portrays the Hindu-Muslim ethnic conflict of India

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Bollywood is one of the leading film industries in the world, which has come a long way in the last few decades. There are some Bollywood movies that have continued to be in the limelight among critics and cinema fans even several years after the release. Mani Ratnam's *Bombay* (1995) is one of the mostly talked-about and controversial movies in the history of Bollywood cinema. The film is based on the Hindu-Muslim riots caused by the destruction of the Babri Masjid by Hindu radicals. The film is presented according to the popular Indian film genre. The first half of the film portrays the romance between a Hindu boy and a Muslim girl. The second half of the film is centered on the Hindu-Muslim ethnic conflict in Bombay. The film ends by bringing the scattered family together. This study examined the cinematic representation of the movie *Bombay*, in which a serious ethnic struggle is narrated using a popular cinema genre. The objective of the study is to understand how a movie that consists of the ingredients of the popular masala cinema, such as song, dance, love, and comedy, can be used to narrate a significant social issue. The study employed the content analysis methodology in order to analyze the narration, character development, events that are portrayed in the movie *Bombay* with special reference to the entire story. The study found that the movie has depicted an ethnic issue by using unique creative cinematic approaches. It was also revealed the qualities, such as friendship, brotherhood, love, and humanity were portrayed in the movie to talk about a sensitive social issue. The movie has also managed to create a discourse about the importance of reconciliation with its unique narrative style.

Keywords: *Indian popular cinema, ethnic conflict, reconciliation, narrative style*

Empirical testing on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim feelings: Evidence from two-split sample experiments

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This paper attempts to introduce a new research experiment to overcome the shortcomings of empirical testing on Islamophobia and anti-Muslim feelings, and its impact on minority integration. Empirical testing of the anti-Muslim feeling suffers from crucial shortcomings such as biasness, hiding of genuine feeling, and absence of the rationale for choice of respondents. Since subjectivity is an inseparable human quality, the puzzle in this context is how does a researcher assure the validity of data in a standard survey by minimizing the subjectivity of the respondents? According to the prevailing literature most empirical research uses methods of comparing different forms of prejudice and asks questions concerning living proximity. This type of empirical testing of the anti-Muslim feeling suffers from crucial shortcomings in terms of their subjective responses: 1) respondents make biased conclusions because they are reluctant to express the negative feelings, 2) respondents refrain from giving a precise idea about the reason for their choice, 3) in standards surveys, it is difficult to ask the respondent to react several times to the same statements, and 4) the item used to measure the attitudes towards different target groups are different, thus one cannot separate the effect of the wording and the connotation of the statements from the identified target groups. To address this problem, I have planned a study in Sri Lanka through a population-based two split-sample experiments to test the following hypothetical statement: terrorist activities and religious fundamentalism make Muslims as common, suitable enemies of the society and thus the result is the expansion of anti-Muslim sentiment among other communities irrespectively their ethnoreligious differences (H1). 1350 respondents from Sinhala, Tamil, and Muslim ethnic groups are participating in the experiment from three different locations, namely, Colombo, Kandy, and Trincomalee. The respondents divided into three groups based on their ethnicity. Then the Sinhala respondents are randomly divided into two groups. Next, one group is given 13 identical statements to evaluate regarding Tamils, and the other half is given identical statements to evaluate regarding Muslims. Then, the same activity is repeated in the Tamil and Muslim ethnic groups. This research is part of an ongoing study.

Keywords: *Islamophobia, reconciliation, subjectivity*

An analysis of student performance in higher education institutions in relation to their other activities

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At present, universities operate in a highly complicated and competitive environment. The universities face significant difficulty analyzing students' performance, identifying their uniqueness, and developing their strategies. The focus of this study was primarily on how student performance changes based on the student's other activities. The students' performance of the studies was analyzed based on the time they have spent on their hobbies, extracurricular activities, extra courses, and other university activities. The data were gathered from a sample of two-hundred graduates of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, through online data collection techniques. Descriptive analysis and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the data. According to the analysis, those who have obtained better results for English in the Advanced Level Examination could obtain higher classes in their degrees. Moreover, students who had regularly done past papers, attended lectures, and made short notes obtained first-classes. Those who had followed other courses after the Advanced Level Examination or during the university period obtained higher classes than the other students. Considering the students' day-to-day life behaviour, those who have browsed social media frequently showed middle-level performance in the degree. Furthermore, extracurricular activities have not considerably affected their performance. Most of the students who obtained excellent classes have gathered extra knowledge through the internet, and they have also attended their lectures regularly. It was also observed that group discussions, sharing experiences with others, academic sessions, and seminars could enhance the students' performance.

Keywords: *student performance, university, results, other activities*

A study on the media portrayal of unsubstantiated COVID-19 cures in Sri Lanka

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Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed a significant socio-economic as well as public health challenges and it continues to have serious implications, especially on the developing countries. The role of media is pivotal during a pandemic as objective and sensible reporting can enhance public awareness by debunking misinformation and disinformation. However, the behavior of the leading media institutions in Sri Lanka was problematic during the COVID-19 pandemic as they gave publicity to non-medical experts and unqualified individuals to inform, take key decisions and also to promote unsubstantiated cures for COVID-19. The contentious nature of the media reporting during pandemic can have a direct impact on the credibility and legitimacy of media in the future. Hence, this study focused on the case of the '*Dhammika Paniya*' that offers insights on different approaches used by the media to propagate these non-scientific cures. The objective of this study is to examine how the leading media institutions promoted the self-claimed 'indigenous medicines' that have not been approved by the medical authorities in the country. It also examines whether these reports followed the fundamentals and ethical standards in health communication. The study critically looks at the narrative styles used by the media to publicize and promote the unsubstantiated COVID-19 cure during the pandemic. It examined whether the news items followed the news reporting standards in which it is expected to provide different perspectives of a story to the public in a credible and objective manner. To examine these dynamics, the study employed qualitative content analysis method to analyze selected news items that were telecast in two leading television channels in the country. The news items were selected for a period of two months covering a month before and after the introduction of the '*Dhammika Paniya*'. The rationale for the selection of the two television channels is based on the media rating reports. The study is conducted based on the theoretical framework of agenda setting function of the media. The parameters used in the content analysis were visual content, language, tone and duration of the selected news items. A comprehensive code sheet was prepared and used in the data analysis. The study found that the media provided visibility and justification for the government's agenda to promote unsubstantiated COVID-19 cures. The study also revealed that these cures are promoted using the rhetoric of nationalism and national heritage in a subtle manner.

Keywords: *pandemic, media portrayal, disinformation, health communication*

The impact of celebrity personality on brand personality: Five selected cases from the Sri Lankan advertising context

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In modern society, youth show an obsession for celebrities. Most advertisers use popular personalities, whose personality combines with the brand image and the product. The star concept and the popular culture used by the advertisers depend on the celebrity personality. According to the literature, a research gap was found on the impact of the celebrity personality on brand personality. The research problem, the positive relationship between endorser personalities with brand personality with special references to five TV commercials telecasted in Sri Lanka, was built with the objective of addressing the research gap. The research attains the key objective of identifying whether there is a correlation between celebrity personality and brand personality. The celebrities were Umariya Sinhawansa for *OPPO*, Pubudu Chathuranga and Mashi Siriwardhana for *Nestomalt*, Yohani for *Prima Kottu Mee*, Sonu Nigam for *Vogue Jewellers* and Angelo Mathews for *Milo*. The random sample of the study was 200 and data was collected using a Google form questionnaire. A twelve point positively ranked semantic differential scale was used. In the scale 11 was given as very important and 0 as not important at all. The celebrity personality was measured under 12 key measurements: authoritativeness, relevancy, expertise, attractiveness, ethicality, trustworthiness, elegance, charm, being informative, handsome/ beautiful and reliable. SPSS 22.0 version was used for analyzing the primary, quantitative data. According to the correlations celebrity expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness correlated with brand personality with 0.597, 0.523 and 0.814 and overall celebrity personality correlated with brand personality with 0.719. However the correlation between relevancy, ethical and brand personality was a moderate association. The analyses correlation values shows that the inter dependency and the correlation between celebrity personality and brand personality positive and the association is almost perfect. Therefor it can be concluded that using an appropriate celebrity personality may influence to build better brand personality.

Keywords: *advertising, brand personality, celebrity personality*

The COVID-19 pandemic and health wellbeing: Understanding obesity as a major health issue

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The COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging the daily routine and health behaviors of humans for last two years. Sri Lanka had several 'lockdowns' in 2020 and 2021. Obesity has become a major health issue during the pandemic. Obesity is a danger factor that can potentially lead to severe complications and death from the COVID-19. The key objective of this study was to identify the reasons for an increase in obesity during the pandemic. The main research question was 'how did the daily routine during the pandemic impact obesity?' The sample of the study was a purposive sample of 50, who exercised and followed a diet plan under instructors of the Eagle Fitness Centre, Anuradhapura. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire through Google forms. According to the key findings, it is identified that the pandemic and the lockdown process influenced the maintenance of healthy behaviour, physical exercise, sedentary behaviour, adequate sleep, and nutritional intakes, and all outdoor activities that respondents were instructed to follow. Exercising with the use of gymnasium accessories was completely paused during the lockdown period and diet plans (like Keto diet planning) were disrupted due to travel restrictions. The respondents have tried diet plans and exercise schedules and also some Zumba using online classes but they had not achieved the fitness level they expected compared to the previous (physical) approach. Results show that the majority of the sample (n = 38) has gained weight and respondents have faced increased waist size, excessive fatigue, increased appetite and laziness during the pandemic. Difficulties in scheduling time, exercising with children, problems in preparing separate meals, being involved in work 24/7, increase of other household chores, and the lack of a suitable environment for exercise were the main reasons for disrupting the instructed schedules. Therefore, we can conclude that obesity has become a major health issue during the pandemic. Respondents emphasized the need for innovative and evolving, multi-level strategies to help individuals in adapting their fitness behaviour to prevent both chronic and infectious diseases.

Keywords: *exercises, health, pandemic, obesity, wellbeing*

Sex differentials in adult mortality in Sri Lanka

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Adult women live longer than men and have a lower death rate when compared with the adult males in Sri Lanka. There is significant gap between adult male and female survival. The objective of this study is to examine the sex differentials in causes of adult mortality in Sri Lanka. This study was based on secondary data from the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka. According to the Indoor Morbidity and Mortality Report, there were 30,746 adult deaths (in the population of 15-59 years) in 2012. Of them, 21,360 were males and 9,386 were females. The univariate and bivariate analyses were done and the Chi-square test was analysed using python programming and results were presented using descriptive and graphical forms. Results showed the major causes of deaths by age and the gender of deceased persons. Accordingly, diseases of circulatory system have contributed at a slightly high percentage to overall deaths. Males have a higher percentage (32.47 % for 15-39 age group and 29.17% for 40-59 age group) value than females. Hence P-value of Chi-square test is <0.0001 , and it is clear that there is an association between deaths by diseases of circulatory system and gender. Moreover, Chi-square statistics show that there is an association between road accidents and gender of fatalities while adult male group aged 15-39 is the most vulnerable group to road accidents in Sri Lanka. Based on the findings, it is evident that adult males were more vulnerable to deaths due to external causes, road accidents, and circulatory system diseases than female adults. Thus, health policies to reduce adult deaths and fill the gender gap in adult mortality should be introduced.

Keywords: *sex differentials, adult mortality, diseases of the circulatory system*

The impact of the digital transformation process on traditional television consumption patterns in the Sri Lankan context

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The media industry has faced many challenges since the transition to digital technology. Contradictory forces can be observed to be active as the power that television once held is now scattered among multiple operators. Businesses that played a clear and separate role have now converged, and today the distinction between broadcasters, content creators, distributors, and social networks has completely blurred or disappeared. All kinds of media are intertwined with the overall lifestyle of the human community, as technology changes rapidly. People are addicted to taking advantage of technological innovation. On the surface of the Sri Lankan context, such changes are also reflected in the television audience. However, such changes should be evaluated by research. The aim of this research was to study the impact of the digital transformation process on traditional television media consumption in the Sri Lankan context. In addition, a study of traditional television consumption and new media patterns and, finally, a comparison of traditional and new media consumption patterns was made. Data related to the research were collected through a questionnaire and content analysis and described through a mixed methodology. The research concluded that viewers were less likely to watch television and that new media consumption patterns affected this choice. This effect can be observed in all mainstream media in Sri Lanka. However, despite the decline in television viewing, there was a tendency to watch relevant television programs on new media platforms.

Keywords: *digital transformation, consumption patterns, television, new media*

Effectiveness of code switching in the bilingual classrooms: A case study

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The conversion between one language and its linguistic variations to another by a person or a collection of people is referred to as code switching. Code switching can be considered as a phenomenon that occurs in multilingual cultures where citizens have the right and ability to speak two or more than two languages. Code switching can be frequently seen in schools in Sri Lanka where English and Sinhala are the most used languages for classroom practices. This study aims to investigate teachers' and students' perspectives towards English and Sinhala in bilingual classrooms, thereby identifying the positive and negative impacts of code switching in the bilingual classroom. Both quantitative and qualitative questionnaires were used to gather data. Five bilingual classroom teachers from three schools in the Hambantota district were interviewed and ten students who are following in the bilingual section from five schools were given questionnaires. The study used random sampling method for selecting the participants. Thematic analysis (TA) was used for identifying, organizing and interpreting data. One key finding of this study is that most teachers use code switching in the bilingual classroom to make the students familiar with the subject matters. Although 90% of students are willing to speak English, as a medium of instruction in the bilingual classrooms, students need their teachers to explain the lesson in both English and Sinhala. It is concluded that code switching enhances a student's knowledge of a specific subject but it does not make the student a fluent speaker or a writer. This study has implications for bilingual teachers, students, syllabus, and material designers.

Keywords: *code switching, bilingual classroom, positive and negative impacts*

Effectiveness of online evaluation in the state universities in Sri Lanka: An empirical study

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Sri Lanka's educational ecology has been negatively interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many higher educational institutions used the existing Moodle-based learning management systems hosted on university web servers to counterbalance the effects of disrupted learning. Currently, the Lanka Education and Research Network (LEARN) has been connected to university web servers to facilitate online education. Due to lockdowns and travel restrictions, undergraduates have been confined to their homes since the 2020. As a result, the regular pattern of learning and evaluation has drastically changed. Online evaluation has a serious impact on the undergraduates and lecturers in the universities in Sri Lanka. The aim of this study is to explore the issues and challenges encountered by the state university undergraduates and the test administrators during online examinations, and thereby provide recommendations to minimize them. Quantitative and qualitative investigation was undertaken with twenty undergraduates and five lecturers of four government universities in Sri Lanka respectively to identify the effectiveness of online examinations. The study used questionnaires to gather data from the undergraduates and interviews with lecturers. Thematic Analysis was used for data analysis. According to the findings of the study, 90% of the undergraduates and university lecturers reported that online evaluation is ineffective due to their lack of familiarity with the learning management systems and inadequate knowledge to use digitalized and internet assisted platforms for examinations and assessing undergraduates' performance. Although 98% of the undergraduates and university lecturers are aware of how to use online platforms for managing lectures, they experienced issues during online examinations. Moreover, undergraduates' economic, technical and personal issues have also hindered the effectiveness of online evaluation. The findings of the study concluded that the integrity of the undergraduates' becomes a question during online examinations. The findings of this study have implications for the university undergraduates, test administrators and the university management.

Keywords: *online evaluations, effectiveness, undergraduates and lecturers, COVID-19 pandemic*

An analysis of Sri Lankan migration policies

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Sri Lanka is a significant sending country with over 3 million out migrants living in different parts of the world. This migrant population includes various types of migrants such as skilled migrants, labor migrants, students and migrants from refugee backgrounds. While living (temporarily or permanently) outside the home country, Sri Lankan migrant population make significant impact to the country's domestic affairs in multiple ways, i.e. economically, socially, politically as well as ideologically. It is in this context that we highlight the importance of possessing effective migration policies to outreach and facilitate migrants. In this study, we analyze the existing key migration policies in Sri Lanka using discourse and thematic analysis to understand how effective and updated those policies are in recognizing the complexities and newer realities of the migrant community. We are precisely interested in understanding Sri Lankan migration policies define permanent migrants and temporary migrants and exploring how effectively different policies cater permanent and temporary migrants. The preliminary findings demonstrate that while Sri Lankan labor migration policy is relatively a developed one in catering the temporary migrants, policies towards permanent migrants are noticeably weak. It was also found that the Sri Lankan migration policies do not capture the nuances and complexities of the migrant community and they have not been updated to the levels of those of many other sending countries. Thus, the study highlights the importance of revisiting and amending migration policies to make them more effective and meaningful.

Keywords: *Sri Lankan migration policies, Sri Lankan out migrants, temporary migrants, permanent migrants*

Infodemic over pandemic: The influence of COVID-19 misinformation in propagating counter-health behaviours among young adults in Sri Lanka

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The COVID-19 virus is both contagious and highly selective. Its ability to infect is universal and non-discriminatory, but the impact is both particular and discriminatory. Those with a solid and trustworthy understanding of the pandemic are likely to overcome the multidimensional challenges compared to those with a lack of access to trustworthy information. The extent to which a person or a country succeeds in dealing with a pandemic relies on trustworthy and reliable information. In a society where social media's influence is strong, much information is readily available, but the trustworthiness and reliability of information can be downturned. An infodemic or having too much evidence, including false or arbitrarily modified information can cause confusion, and encourage risk-taking behaviour, particularly among young adults during a pandemic. This study thus answers how young adults (aged below 19) in Sri Lanka respond to the issues emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic when they place their position negotiating through social media engagement. A constructivist grounded theory was employed and twenty participants were interviewed. The crowd-tangle database (provided by the Facebook research team that includes all behavioural interactions of people who use Facebook) was used to collect interaction patterns of young adults. The analysis indicates that the heavy reliance on information disseminated through social media reduces how young adults perceive the severity of the pandemic. This can divert them from health promotive behaviours or even drive them to extreme harmful practices because their behaviour patterns are unconsciously modified. The infodemic on the COVID-19 pandemic is continuously spread due to the heavy user engagement (which is largely unregulated) in social media while promoting counter-health behaviours such as resistance to wearing face masks and resistance to lockdowns. The unconscious acceptance of information also leads to mistrust in the information provided by health authorities whilst undermining the accepted public healthcare responses. Overall, this study found that the heavy reliance on information (which are difficult to gauge in terms of reliability and trustworthiness) spread through social media can reinforce unconscious behaviour modification leading to counter-health behaviours. This implies that the infodemic can intensify the outbreak obstructing strategic healthcare responses to the pandemic.

Keywords: *behaviour modification, infodemic, misinformation, pandemic, trustworthiness*

The impact of foreign training on sustainable development in the provincial education sector in Sri Lanka

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The Sri Lankan education system is free and western-oriented. It is divided into two main categories for administrative purposes as the central government and provincial council. Educational administrators play a crucial role in achieving sustainable development by improving performance in the education sector. Therefore, they must absorb modern strategies, technologies, and knowledge used by other countries. Targeting this, the Western Provincial Council has begun sending educational administrators for foreign training. The objective of this study is to identify the impact of foreign training on post training performance in educational administrators. The study population consisted of employees who have received foreign training in five departments under provincial education in the year of 2018, 2019, and 2020. The sample size was 75 and purposive sampling was adopted. Descriptive statistics analysis was used with frequency tables, figures, and graphs. A self-administered questionnaire with close ended questions along with a five-point Likert scale was used to measure factors for this study. Modified delphi technique was used to develop the questionnaire and content validity index of 0.91, Cronbach Alpha (all factors above 0.700) and factor analysis employed to assess the suitability of the data collection tool. The study found foreign training had a positive impact on personal development (12% (not positive) vs 88% (positive)), organizational management (16% vs 84%), development of team working (12% vs 88%), continuous improvement (12% vs 88%), innovative growth of organization (8% vs 92%). Findings showed that there is a considerable impact of foreign trainings on innovative growth in education sector due to absorbing modern strategies and sustainable educational tools. Improvement of organizational management performance is comparatively low due to difficulty of changing hierarchical proceedings of traditional educational system. This study recommends that the government should develop the mechanism to implement post training performance within the organization and facilitates to deliver them sustainable manner to the education sector to acquire more benefits through government policy reforms and national priorities.

Keywords: *education sector, foreign training, post training performance, Western Province*

Changes in online grocery shopping habits caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

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The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the human lifestyle and habits in many ways, among which, grocery shopping related habits were one of the most clearly affected. Most people now tend to use the online shopping platforms in fulfilling their shopping needs. This paper focuses on identifying the impact of the pandemic on online grocery shopping habits. The study was based on primary data collected from 135 respondents on their online grocery shopping behaviour. This study mainly focused on identifying the key factors related to online grocery shopping, and it has analyzed how these factors have been impacted as a result of the shift towards online platforms among people. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics have been used for data analysis. It was found that the frequency of visiting stores has reduced significantly due to the pandemic. The findings of the study also reveal that the monthly online grocery expenditure is significantly related to the age, household size, and monthly income of an individual. Additionally, it was found that the sector of residence has no perceivable relationship with online grocery spending. Finally, the study showed that grocery shopping habits have been reshaped notably among people.

Keywords: *pandemic, online grocery shopping, grocery expenditure, primary data*

An empirical study on the internet data usage behavior among employees in government and private sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic

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In today's highly competitive market conditions, most successful business ventures are keen on understanding consumer behaviour. This paper provides an application of microeconomic consumer behaviour theories in analysing data usage among different sectors of employment in Sri Lanka. The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted many organizations towards flexible work environments where employees have the option to work from home, which has also impacted the usage of data among such employees. Hence, this study was conducted with the objectives of comparing data usage increment in pre- and post-COVID periods, identifying the impact of working from home option on data usage, and deriving marginal utility and total utility functions for the private sector and public sector employees' data usage. The cardinal utility approach was the basis in analysing the consumer behaviour in this study. The study was based on primary data collected through a convenient sample of 85 respondents on their internet data usage covering different sectors of employment in the economy, and the data analysis was carried out using MS Excel. A paired two-sample t-test revealed a significant difference in data usage during the pre and post-COVID-19 periods among the entire sample. A two-sample t-test suggested that data usage is higher among private-sector employees, while an ANOVA suggested that the data usage increment differs among the different bases of work. The marginal utility of employees in private and government sectors was derived based on the amount spent on purchasing extra data, and both sectors had diminishing marginal utility in line with microeconomic theory. Further, the total utility functions were derived for both the private and government sectors. While most state sector employees reported to work on a roster basis, most private-sector employees were encouraged to work from home, thus recording different increments of data usage among employment sectors.

Keywords: *data usage, COVID-19, sector of employment, marginal utility*

External role in liberal reforms: The case of post-war peacebuilding in Sri Lanka (2009-2019)

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To understand the external role of Sri Lanka's liberal reforms since 2009, it is necessary to consider how a war-affected country is compelled to engage in post-war peacebuilding. The liberal reforms in particular seek a sustainable solution to war consequences. After winning the war unilaterally, Sri Lanka's governments were obligated to implement various policies and establish institutions for peace and recovery. The two governments in power, namely the United Peoples' Freedom Alliance (UPFA) until 2015 and the National Unity Government (NUG), known as '*Yahapalanaya*' government until 2019, dispensed with external influences on pursuing peacebuilding initiatives. Some key domestic directives were the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), the Udalagama and Paranagama Commissions, the reparation initiative, and the Office of Missing Persons—the initiatives failed to achieve overall success. The *Yahapalanaya* government discovered the National Reconciliation Policy (2015) as a restorative measure. Since the end of the war, external actors have had varying degrees of influence on these policies and institutions. The scholarly literature on the external role postulates a pro-West influence made through particularly the United Nations Human Rights Council resolutions and West-allied donor states' proposals for peacebuilding. Given the emphasis, the paper examines the nature of the external role in liberal reforms and the extent to which they are collaborative for liberal achievements. The case study of Sri Lanka is examined mainly in policy evidences relevant to post-war peacebuilding and framed in the light of the 'liberal peace' theory. A phenomenological case study methodology and qualitative data analysis are utilized. The conclusion emphasizes the gap between 'liberal peace' expectations and the complex realities of understanding in a war-affected society that has long suffered the consequences of war. The paper discusses the external role in their biased implementation and discontinuity resulting in liberal reform failures. The proposed framework of analysis and case study selection on external role related to liberal reforms—a decade after the end of the war in Sri Lanka—maintain the paper's originality.

Keywords: *post-war peacebuilding, liberal reforms, external role, Sri Lanka*

Sri Lanka's symbolic soft power: An exploration of the public diplomatic power of tree-planting

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Soft power is persuasion to obtain one's way over another (Nye 2011). This paper argues that whilst Sri Lanka (SL) has successfully utilised tree planting to strengthen diplomatic relations, it has not succeeded in linking these to a public diplomacy campaign to advance SL's interests and values. SL has a long history of tree planting by heads-of-state and dignitaries (HoS/D) to symbolise ties and commemorate events and visits. Indeed, the culmination of the diplomatic correspondence between the Indian Emperor Asoka and SL King Devanampiyatissa saw the birth of tree planting to symbolise diplomatic ties (Geiger, 1914). Inviting a HoS/D to plant a tree within another country to commemorate a visit is the epitome of the use of soft power for both countries, highlighting significance placed on who is invited, where and what is planted, and why. The Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens (PRBG) within Kandy has been the place for a majority of such symbolic gestures before and after independence. Accordingly, utilising the trees and the plaques that commemorate the planting at the PRBG as the core primary data, the paper examines the symbolism of visits made by HoS/D from the 1880s to 2020. Presenting the symbol of these trees within an International Relations theoretical lens of 'soft power', the authors argue that whilst SL has been successful in utilising tree planting as a representation of diplomatic relations, it has not succeeded in enhancing the soft power potential by using it in its public diplomacy endeavours.

Keywords: *tree diplomacy, soft-power, Sri Lanka, public diplomacy*

Inter-temporal dynamic relationship between exchange rates and stock prices: Empirical evidence from Sri Lanka

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Understanding the dynamic relationship between exchange rate and stock prices in a country could prove to be a crucial factor in financial policy implementation. As a result, numerous studies have been conducted to identify the exact relationship between these two variables although the studies have produced contrasting results, suggesting that the nature of the relationship could vary based on circumstantial differences. In this scenario, the present study has conducted a time series analysis employing Johansen cointegration analysis, VAR models and GARCH models and has observed the inter-temporal dynamic relationship between stock prices and exchange rates in the Sri Lankan context. Daily data for All Share Price Index as well as USD/LKR within the time period from 01st January 2001 to 28th February 2020 has been taken into consideration. In order to obtain the most effectual outcomes, the study has been carried out in three stages, namely stock price and exchange rate, stock price returns and exchange rate returns and conditional variance of stock price returns and conditional variance of exchange rate returns. The results of the study show the existence of both long run and short run relationships between the variables. The results of the study also exhibit a causal relationship running from stock prices to exchange rate, supporting the stock-oriented approach of exchange rate determination. However, these findings suggest the prevalence of inefficiency in the market in the short run, by showing that the information generated can be of use only four days later. It was concluded that policy measures taken regarding the stock prices may effectively have an impact on the performance of the exchange rate.

Keywords: *exchange rate, stock prices, All Share Price Index (ASPI), USD/LKR*

The impact of governance on Foreign Direct Investment in South Asian countries

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Foreign development plays an important role in the development of any country. It will affect the reduction of poverty in countries as well. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is linked to social, economic and political factors of the domestic context which make the determinants significant (Hanif, 2001). A survey of the literature reveals that the results are controversial. In studies by a range of countries and different authors, using numerous methodologies, differentiated by time period as well as a sample of different national contexts have found that there is a positive, negative or no relationship between governance and FDI. The current study empirically examined the impact of governance on FDI in South Asian countries namely, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Maldives and Bhutan using a balanced panel data set, over the period 1996 to 2019. This study has used six government indicators: Government Effectiveness, Control of Corruption, Voice and Accountability, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law and Political Stability. The data were taken from Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) and World Development indicators (WDI) and analyzed through eviews 10 software. According to Generalized Method of Moments (GMM) and two Stage Least Squares (2SLS), Government Effectiveness and Voice and Accountability positively and significantly affect FDI; Political Stability and Rule of Law negatively affect FDI in South Asian Countries. Hassan (2018) found that Voice and Accountability (VA) and Government Effectiveness (GE) have a significant impact on the FDI inflow in the South Asian region. The other four variables, Control of Corruption (CC), Political Stability and Absence of Violence (PV), Regulatory Quality (RQ), and Rule of Law (RL) have a negative impact on FDI inflow. Therefore, this study suggests that the governments must give more attention to the role of governance in order to secure domestic investment and boost foreign direct investment.

Keywords: *governance, FDI, South Asia, GMM*

Establishing the much-needed interfaith dialogue in an ESL classroom of a government university

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The absence of interfaith dialogue in the tertiary level ESL classroom has led to a blatant hostility towards the other whose identity has essentially been thrown into oblivion in ESL textbooks and lesson materials. This study has identified the necessity of shifting from the utilization of ethnocentric lessons to more progressive lessons based on multinationalism, multilingualism, and ethnic inclusiveness to establish ethnic reconciliation. Regressive lessons only representing the dominant ideology, Sinhala Buddhism, were used in the curriculum, othering the identity of the alterity while jeopardizing students' understanding of ethnic reconciliation. Antithetical to many of the national goals of education, this practice has limited the representation of the other in the ESL classroom to peripheries, debarring their identities coming into the focus. The research was carried out at the Bhiksu University of Sri Lanka. A random sample of twenty-five undergraduates was selected for the study and they were individually interviewed and provided with questionnaires to study their understanding of interfaith dialogue, multiculturalism, and ethnic harmony. Based on the Althusserian theory of ideological state apparatus and Erich Fromm's dogma on alienation and the feedback of the research participants, it was understood that most of the ESL lessons should be altered, representing the identities of the local ethnicities equally, taking into consideration their unheard realities. It was also understood that the alteration of the lesson materials could buttress the establishment of ethnic solidarity. Further, it was understood that the absence of interfaith dialogue in the local pedagogy impedes achieving sustainable goals such as the reduction of inequality within and among countries and the establishment of quality education.

Keywords: *dominant ideology, ethnocentric, multicultural*

The impact of distorted development among rural people in Sri Lanka

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Modernization and globalization in the form of development process has resulted in positive and negative consequences in terms of rural and urban community development. Sri Lanka keeps pace in economic growth and poverty reduction within the nation and has failed to balance both urban and rural development. This explanatory study was conducted to examine the disparity between rural and urban development initiatives and to identify the impacts of distorted development among rural people by selecting a development project 'Maternity Clinic Centre' that has been already implemented in a rural area with special reference to Ashraff Nagar village of Addalaichenai Divisional Secretariat division of Ampara district, Sri Lanka. Primary data were collected using interviews and focused group discussions while secondary data were gained through records, journals, books, articles, reports and websites. Collected data were analyzed by using qualitative analysis method. The study identified that people in Ashraff Nagar village are behind in basic development conditions such as education, health, road facilities, sanitation, market facilities and economic conditions. Though the development of 'Maternity Clinic Centre' project in the village has brought positive outcomes and people are satisfied with the service of it, this project does not benefit all the population of this village. Only maternity and child care services are provided in this clinic centre and people have to travel far to other distant places for other medical purposes. People of this village face numerous challenges without having proper basic developments and make complains about their current living condition. The study also highlighted that this situation of underdevelopment has created dependent mentality, conflict, powerlessness and social isolation among the people. As the general conclusion, it is vital to express that any community development project must make a wider focus across all walks of lives without demarcating rural-urban dichotomy.

Keywords: *development, health, poverty, rural*

Social exclusion and vulnerability encountered by women in Sri Lankan gypsy community

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The contribution of women to the development of any sector has been immeasurable throughout history. However, in general, the poorest and the most vulnerable people all over the world are women. Presently, there are 20 ethnic communities living in Sri Lanka. Compared to women in other major ethnic communities, women of the Gypsy community are marginalized, socially excluded, and vulnerable even in today's society. In this regard, this exploratory study was conducted to identify the key challenges and obstacles encountered by Gypsy community women, and to find out gender discrimination against them that lead to further social exclusion and vulnerability. A Gypsy community dwelling in Aligambe village of Alayadiwembu Divisional Secretariat of Ampara district, Sri Lanka was selected as the study population. Primary data were collected via interviews, focused group discussions, and observations while secondary data were obtained through related records, journals, books, articles, reports and websites. Collected data were analyzed using qualitative analysis methods and presented in a descriptive manner. The study identified that the women in the Gypsy community are socially excluded and underprivileged from receiving basic facilities that are commonly available to other community members. These include the lack of water, health care, proper housing, sanitation, road, transportation, vulnerability to diseases, challenges in education, poverty, and difficulties in gaining social status. Women in the Gypsy community are also subjected to gender discrimination such as domestic violence, lack of control over the economic resources, lack of participation in decision-making, and are deprived of in administration roles and involvement in community organizations. This situation should be addressed immediately because being a developing country, Sri Lanka needs to consider the well-being of marginalized and disadvantaged communities, particularly the women. Comprehensive measures, effective policies and planned interventions are essential to improve women's status, to close the gender gap, to promote gender equality, and to empower women in disadvantaged communities in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *gypsy community, social exclusion, vulnerability, women*

Facing the faceless authorities: A comparative study of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Franz Kafka's *The Trial*

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The timeless classic *Madame Bovary* by the French writer Gustave Flaubert portrays the life and trajectory of the protagonist Emma Bovary. In the backdrop of Rouen in Normandy, Emma Bovary appears to be constricted in a loveless marriage with a mundane, provincial doctor Charles Bovary. Emma Bovary constantly struggles to search for love in a loveless world, and her quest ends tragically. Mostly her unsatisfied desires and an unquenchable thirst for love are studied on countless occasions. Therefore, this study attempts to gain a new perspective towards this ageless narrative by reading it through the perspective of Franz Kafka, a German-speaking writer born in Prague, Bohemia, Austria-Hungary. One of his celebrated novels, *The Trial*, traces the life of Joseph K., who is accused of a crime though the nature of it is never revealed to him. The novel revolves around Joseph K.'s trial and showcases the labyrinth passages towards justice. This study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the two texts Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Franz Kafka's *The Trial* and identifies similarities and contrasts. It is a contention that though the two novels represent different genres, the trajectories of the protagonists are similar as they resist constrictive authorities. The methodology consists of content analysis in the design of a descriptive study. A careful examination of the said novels, employing the Kafkaesque and existentialist theories, allowed the researcher to realize that Emma Bovary's and Josef K.'s tragedies do not significantly differ from each other as the former fights against patriarchy and the latter battles to seek justice. In summation, both protagonists strive to pursue liberation from obstructive establishments and their attempt to transgress societal norms come with a cost.

Keywords: *Gustave Flaubert, Franz Kafka, Kafkaesque, Existentialist Theories*

Resurgence of infectious diseases: An analysis of the fifth stage of the epidemiological transition with COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka

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Changing disease pattern from communicable diseases to non-communicable diseases has been well documented in the Epidemiological Transition Theory. The eruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, a deadly disease, has already given rise to the fifth stage of the transitional stages, which is called 'potential resurgence of infectious diseases due to globalization'. This study examines the methods countries used to contain infectious diseases, routes of the spread of the diseases, essential socio-economic links with other countries, and how spread of the diseases within the country is managed by Sri Lanka. This study utilized a mixed-method approach, while obtaining data on international travel restrictions imposed in response to COVID-19 in 185 countries. The analysis was mainly based on time-to-event analysis. Further, relevant literature related to factors that influence enforcing travel restrictions in Sri Lanka was analyzed in order to supplement the quantitative analysis performed in this study. Data on each country's international travel policy in response to COVID-19 is taken from the Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker (OxCGRT) database. The analysis suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the vast differences in methods used to contain infectious diseases all over the world. It shows their differing degrees of success in lessening the transmission of coronavirus. It was found that Sri Lanka was comparatively in a disadvantaged position because of its inability to impose strict travel restrictions due to the heavy dependence of its economy on tourism, export market crops, garments, and most importantly on un-skilled or semi-skilled foreign employment opportunities. However, there is an urgent need to redesign the policies which could contain the spread of the disease across countries without placing pressure on welfare and wellbeing of the people in each country.

Keywords: *infectious diseases, health transition, globalization, COVID-19*

Optimizing the impact of digitalization on education

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Digitalization makes the information sharing and the communication among human beings, machines, and multiple structures easier, faster, and cheaper while making time zones and geographical locations of the participants as insignificant as they could be. Though it is evident that digitalization has been instrumental in accelerating globalization efforts of individual countries and international organizations, the impact of it on education, social movements, rights of individuals and nations in protecting their identities, cultures and tangible and intellectual properties is still being debated among various segments of the society. Vast amount of data gathered by users at every level of security, and the very same information superhighways are being used by people in tracking behaviour and communications of other users. The impact of digitalization on education therefore is twofold. It requires: i) the curriculum within the formal education systems to be rearranged so that learners will clearly understand all different aspects of the effects of digitalization on the society and ii) the teaching/learning methods to be redesigned so that the transformation of knowledge becomes more efficient through the usage of appropriate digital technologies. This study provides a systematic review of existing literature on the topic and it also analyses a random sample of undergraduate students from the University of Colombo. The aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of digitalization on education as well as the social aspect of student life. Hence, the research expects to achieve the following objectives: i) to understand the level of awareness of undergraduates on the effects of digitalization on their lives and on the society in general and ii) to discuss their experience about the constraints they had to face and ways to optimize their learning experience through the usage of digital technology. Results show that about 80% of the respondents have not been concerned about the digitalization's impact on issues such as: unemployment, net exports of the country and invasion of privacy. While the opportunity to follow lectures online during the pandemic was also appreciated by about 80%, an overwhelming majority, which consists of over 90% of the respondents, have shown their dissatisfaction about online testing and evaluation procedures.

Keywords: *digitalization, impact, education, society*

An approach of conserving two-dimensional (2D) artefacts through digitization

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Conservation is an area in science. It is one of the main areas in the context of cultural heritage. The cultural heritage includes two main categories: tangible cultures such as buildings, monuments, landscape, books, work of arts, 2D artefacts, and intangible cultures such as traditions, language, and knowledge in society. This paper will focus on the conservation of two-dimensional (2D) artefacts. This research aims to propose a better approach for the digitization of conserving 2D artefacts. A survey was conducted in the conservation unit of the Colombo National Museum to identify conservation techniques to safeguard the artefacts through a literature review to observe the issues in this area. Based on the findings, it was observed that all objects can be classified into two broad categories as inorganic and organic and that conservation is a complex process. Furthermore, it was identified that digitization is a crucial area for conservation and image stitching was recognized as one of the main techniques in the area of computer vision, which is used for the digitization of 2D artefacts for conservation. Therefore, authors evaluated the image stitching technique using available software tools to propose a better algorithm for the conservation of two-dimensional artefacts using digital technology. The proposed algorithm consists of five steps: reading input images, creating an array of digital images, creating panorama using a standard stitching method, fine-tuning the panorama, and displaying the panorama. Authors evaluated the quality of 5x3 panoramic images developed using the three main algorithms: Photoshop, Hugin, and the developed software of the proposed algorithm by using a Likert scale questions with image demonstrations. The proposed algorithm shows higher accuracy in the quality than the algorithms in Photoshop and Hugin for panoramic image creation. Further, it can be concluded that the proposed approach is not a complex mechanism for 2D conservation.

Keywords: *conservation, two-dimensional artefacts, digital technology, image stitching*

The double-edged sword of the body positivity movement: 4th digital wave of #feminism

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The body positivity movement has gained significant popularity in the past decade - what we now identify as the fourth wave of feminism - primarily existing within the parameters of social media and trickling down into real-life changes, including fashion marketing, talk shows, and even academia. It is a social phenomenon that stems from the notion of challenging beauty standards, prioritizing mental health, embracing, and accepting oneself including those that are considered 'flaws' by society as a whole with a special focus on socially marginalized persons, such as people of color, fat people, people with disabilities and LGBTQI+. The controversial movement sparks much debate online, throughout the world, and often comes into contact with a significant amount of cyberbullying. This paper will explore the way the body positivity movement is a double-edged sword. I will take into account the misconceptions related to feminist theory and the body positivity movement and misuse of the movement in the world of capitalism, some legitimate arguments against the movement such as health concerns of bystanders, lack of diversity and intersectionality, and the barriers the movement faces when attempting to achieve its objectives such as cyberbullying and sexual harassment predominantly experienced online. Aside from drawing inspiration from a few case studies and academia, this paper will depict the findings from a series of discussions and interviews surrounding the notion of body positivity with Colombo's own influencers and advocates of the movement, including a doctor, disabilities rights activist, and their experiences of the movement within social media as well as real life. The movement, like any other phenomena fueled by well-meaning activists, is far from perfect. It is meant to inspire and empower a radical form of self-love. Instead of canceling out the movement and dismissing the good work it has done or attempted to do, let us constructively criticize, learn more about body and mind acceptance and unlearn our own personal, be free from ignorance and engage in a more inclusive, diverse society full of kindness, encouragement, and respect.

Keywords: *body positivity, feminism, equality, digital*

Identifying the issues in planning green cities in Sri Lanka: A case study of Gampaha Municipal Council area

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The green city concept is a new response in sustainable city development (Brilhante & Klaas, 2018). It addresses the problems caused by the dispersed model of city development and helps cities to become more sustainable, less dispersed, and more liveable. When planning green cities in Sri Lanka, a number of issues are encountered and it is necessary to address them since the identification of issues is highly important in making the task a success. Planning green cities is important for achieving some sustainable development goals as well. The study area is Gampaha Municipal Council (MC) area and the main objective of this research is to identify the issues encountered in planning Gampaha MC area as a green city. This study used primary data collected through the questionnaire survey and the field visits. This sampling scheme is based on the land-use features in the study area. Due to the time constraints, considering the total number of households, 10% sample was selected from each selected GN division. This study uses qualitative and quantitative data. There are a number of social, economic, and environmental issues in the study area, when it is planned as a green city. This study gathered information on a number of urban environmental issues, such as fumes/smoke and dust from vehicles, the noise of traffic, flooding, rats or insects, sewerage overflowing, garbage disposal, and odour. There are some social issues, such as crime and violence, prostitution, and drugs; some economic issues, such as financial constraints. This collected information is presented through charts, maps, and diagrams. Finally, this study presents some solutions to minimize these issues, which are important for planners and stakeholders.

Keywords: *green city, sustainable development, planning, issues*

A study on the use of Sri Lankan English(es) in select news bulletins aired on the English service of the State Radio in Sri Lanka

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Despite the advent of the television and social media, the radio still remains a popular mass media avenue for the dissemination of information and the provision of entertainment in Sri Lanka. The National Radio of Sri Lanka currently possesses only a single FM Channel in English, thereby placing it as a central disseminator of State information in the English language via the airwaves in Sri Lanka. The case of Sri Lankan English(es) having been argued for by linguists, this study analyses if any Sri Lankan English(es) nuances are prevalent in select news bulletins aired on the State airwaves for a period of 11 months. The study is thus, a discourse analysis of, and simultaneously, an identification if any, of the argued Sri Lankan English(es) in relation to the dissemination of news in English on the State radio. The data collection was by virtue of analyzing the recordings of select News bulletins as aired on the English channel of the State radio with the intended outcome of the tabulation of the occurrences of Sri Lankan English phrases/ words/expressions. This study, while being an initial tabulation/ascertaining of select discourse, stands as an impetus for further study of the usage of English in broadcast (radio) media in Sri Lanka in a rapidly changing context of language usage on-air.

Keywords: *discourse, Sri Lankan English(es), broadcast*

Socio-demographic characteristics of permanently celibate women

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In Sri Lanka, female mean age at marriage has been rising since 1981. Permanent celibacy is defined as still being single at the time of death and having survived at least until age 50 (Engelon & Kok, 2003). It is usually discussed more in relation to females than males. Permanent celibacy from a demographic perspective is when women remain unmarried till the end of their reproductive age span, usually measured in relation to women who have never been married in the age group 50-54. The main objective of this study is to examine the demographic and social status of permanently celibate women, principally based on secondary data obtained from the Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016. There were 2834 females in the age group of 50-54. Among them 123 women were never married out of whom the majority were Sinhalese. Ethnicity, religion, level of education, and occupation play a major role in the current study. When it comes to permanent celibacy among women by ethnicity, 4.4% of women among the Sinhalese aged 50-54 are celibates. There are 1955 Buddhist women in the 50-54 age group and 4.5 % of them have never been married. As far as the proportion of women who have never been married in each religious category is concerned, the highest proportion is observed among the Christian/Roman Catholics followed by Hindus. Depending on the level of education, among the women aged 50-54 who have never received formal education, no one could be identified as permanently celibate. A relatively large proportion (8.5%) of women with a degree or higher education, remain unmarried until the age of 50-54. Also, it is possible to identify that there is a high proportion of permanent celibacy among the women who have received a higher education. This study attests that such social and demographic factors directly influence the determination of the marital status of a woman.

Keywords: *permanent celibacy, never married, life expectancy*

Conscription as a means of enhancing national security and nation-building in Sri Lanka

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Three decades of brutal terrorism and ethnic violence which crippled Sri Lanka's economy and social structure ended in the year 2009 giving Sri Lankans a ray of hope and opportunity to embrace peace and pursue prosperity. However, a decade of peace was shattered by the Easter Sunday attack by religious extremist group in 2019. In the changing security context of Sri Lanka, we can foresee ethnic separatism and religious extremism being a significant security threat in the future. This demands the government to establish a system of countering such threats by building unity among diverse ethnic and religious groups in Sri Lanka. United Sri Lankan identity is important in confronting potential national security challenges posed by external forces looking to exploit such disparities. Conscription is a centuries-old labor sourcing policy for military that several governments still employ today. Several nations including Singapore is conducting conscription and compulsory military training as a means of nation-building, state protection and unite various ethnic groups in the state. However, some states and scholars which believe in the civil-military dilemma argue that if the military is used for nation-building for an extended period of time, it can lead to authority and eventually, militarization. Hence, many developed nations have reduced or abolished conscription and have been moving toward to all-volunteer forces concept as they shift toward stable, democratic late-modern prosperity. Therefore, this research intends to examine whether state sponsored compulsory military training implementation for youths in Sri Lanka would enhance national security and how best the concept of conscription could help nation building. This study intends to draw lessons from Singapore by analyzing how they have been using conscription for their nation building and ethnic reconciliation process. Case of Singapore can be used to have a better understanding of why countries continue to use conscription. Moreover, this research observes whether this concept pose a threat to the state or country's civil military relations. This study is based on qualitative secondary data derived from reputed books, online journals, media reports, existing literature and academic research on this wider topic. Some broader academic and policy implications will be extracted for the civil and military leadership of Sri Lanka from a realistic point of view.

Keywords: *conscription, civil military relations, national security, nation-building*

British and French colonialism: Is it a mere act of dominance?

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It is a popular belief that colonialism is largely associated with the oppression and exploitation of the freedom of natives in colonized nations. Undoubtedly, the brutal and violent historical events make any individual agree with this popular notion. However, when studying Commonwealth and Francophone literature which have origins in Britain and France respectively, it is quite captivating to observe the lasting cultural impact of colonization which has resulted in both positive and negative outcomes. This research is conducted in order to analyze the strong cultural impact of colonization on the lives of natives in colonized nations. To elaborate this further, firstly we should study cultural globalization, which is a subordinate branch of globalization. The influence of foreign ideologies led to unprejudiced thinking and intellectual enhancement. Secondly, although cultural globalization had a positive impact, the same could not be said of cultural colonization. The cultural identity crisis, clash, and the gap between the two cultures, and failure to fit in the culturally nuanced society are portrayed as frightful outcomes of colonization. Although societies realized the enrichment of culture during the contemporary period, both Commonwealth and Francophone literature discuss the emergence of a disoriented nation during the colonial and post-colonial era. In this research, I used *Far Cry from Africa* by Derek Walcott, and *Cahier d'un Retour au Pays natal* by Aimé Césaire, representing Commonwealth and Francophone literature respectively, to discuss the two unpopular byproducts of colonization - cultural globalization and cultural colonization - and to provide evidence that colonization had more weight than mere dominance over other states.

Keywords: *cultural colonization, cultural globalization, Commonwealth literature, Francophone literature*

සන්දේශවලින් හෙළිවන කෝට්ටේ යුගයේ ආහරණ භාවිතය පිළිබඳ විමර්ශනයක්

ඩබ්. එම්. කේ. විජේසුන්දර

සිංහල අධ්‍යයනාංශය, කොළඹ විශ්වවිද්‍යාලය, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව.

සිංහල සන්දේශ සාහිත්‍ය කෘති කෙරෙහි අවධානය යොමු කිරීමේ දී එකල පැවති සමාජය පිළිබඳ අවබෝධයක් ලබා ගත හැකි ය. සිංහල සන්දේශ සාහිත්‍ය කෘති කෙරෙහි අවධානය යොමු කිරීමේ දී තත්කාලීන මිනිසුන්ගේ ආර්ථික, දේශපාලන, ආගමික තොරතුරු පමණක් නොව ඔවුන්ගේ සිතූම් පැතුම්, සිරිත් විරිත්, ඇදුම් පැලඳුම් ආදිය පිළිබඳ තොරතුරු ද එමඟින් දැනගැනීමට අවකාශ සැලසෙයි. මෙහි දී 'ලක්දිව ආහරණ ඉතිහාසය', 'ආහරණ කලාව', 'මහනුවර යුගයේ ඇඳුම් ආයින්තම්', 'පුරාණ සිංහල ස්ත්‍රීන්ගේ ඇඳුම්' සහ 'ලක්දිව පුරාණ ඇඳුම් ආයින්තම්' යන සාහිත්‍ය කෘති විමර්ශනය කළෙමි. සාහිත්‍ය විමර්ශනයේ දී සාහිත්‍යයෙන් හෙළිවන ආහරණ භාවිතය පිළිබඳ සෘජු අධ්‍යයනයක් සිදු වී නොමැති බව ගම්‍ය විය. ඒ අනුව සාහිත්‍යයෙන් මේ පිළිබඳ හෙළිවන තොරතුරු සන්දේශ ආශ්‍රයෙන් සාකච්ඡා කිරීම පර්යේෂණ අරමුණ විය. සන්දේශවල ඇඳුම් පැලඳුම් වර්ණනා කිරීමේදී දේව ආහරණ කෙරෙහි වැඩි අවධානයක් යොමු කළ ද රාජ වර්ණනා සහ ස්ත්‍රී වර්ණනා ඇසුරෙන් එකල භාවිත ආහරණ පිළිබඳ අවබෝධයක් ලබාගත හැකි ය. ඒ අනුව කෝට්ටේ අවධියෙහි රචනා වූණ පරෙවි සන්දේශය, හංස සන්දේශය, ගිරා සන්දේශය, සැලලිහිණි සන්දේශය සහ කෝකිල සන්දේශය යන සන්දේශ ප්‍රාථමික මූලාශ්‍රය වශයෙන් යොදා ගනිමින් ඒ හා සම්බන්ධ ව ප්‍රාමාණික විද්වතුන් විසින් රචනා කරන ලද කෘති ද්විතීයික මූලාශ්‍රය වශයෙන් යොදා ගනිමින් ගුණාත්මක පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමවේදයට යටත්ව ග්‍රන්ථ පරිශීලනය කරමින් පර්යේෂණය සිදු කෙරිණි. සුසැට ආහරණ, නළල් පටි, කර්ණාහරණ, උර පලඳනා, අඟුල පලඳනා, පාදාහරණ, මෙවුල්දම්, මාල වළලු ආදී ආහරණ පැලඳි බවට සන්දේශ ආශ්‍රයෙන් තොරතුරු සොයා ගත හැකි විය. ඒ අතුරින් ඇතැම් ආහරණ වර්තමාන සමාජයේ අභාවිත බව ද සමහර ආහරණ විශේෂිත අවස්ථා සඳහා පමණක් සීමා වී ඇති බව ද අනාවරණය විය. සමාජයේ උසස් යැයි සම්පත් රජවරුන්, ඇපා, මාපා ආදී තනතුරු දැරූ සමාජ සම්මතයට අනුව වැදගත් පුද්ගලයන් කර්ණාහරණ පැලඳි බවටද තොරතුරු ලැබිණි. ගෙල පැලඳි ආහරණ කෙරෙහි සාවධාන වීමේදී තත්කාලීනව මුතු පබළු මාල සඳහා අවධානයක් එදා තිබුණද අද වන විට ඒ තත්ත්වය වෙනස් වී ඇති බවද කාන්තා ආහරණ අතර එදා ප්‍රචලිතව පැවති මෙවුල්දම් වර්තමානයේ අභාවිතව ඇති බවද කිව හැකිය. මෙම කරුණු අනුව සමකාලීන සමාජයේ භාවිත ආහරණ පිළිබඳ සන්දේශවලින් හෙළිවන තොරතුරු අනාවරණය කළ හැකි ය.

ප්‍රමුඛ පද: සන්දේශ, ආහරණ, තත්කාලීන සමාජය

Socio-economic and governance implications arising from climate change impacting the coastal built environment in Sri Lanka

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Climate change is predominantly driven by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emission. The resulting rise in global temperature and Sea Level Rise (SLR) are already increasing the intensity and number of climatic catastrophes. SLR and climate induced hazards have made coastal built environments highly vulnerable to destruction. The main objective of the present study is to investigate the socio-economic and governance implications arising within the coastal built environment from climate change, viewing Sri Lanka as a case in point. This study is based on the secondary data of a country specific literature review conducted to achieve the main objective of the present study. Socio-economic implications can be discussed under various themes. Salinization of soil and changing seasonal and weather patterns are already affecting the agricultural industry. Many other industries, businesses and livelihoods will be affected by the destruction and inundation of infrastructure. Results of disasters the include loss of lives, livelihoods, and property. In the worst cases, people may have to permanently migrate, leaving their homes. Disasters often bring about secondary impacts such as breakdown of institutions, cascading failures of critical infrastructures, increased cost of resources, food and water scarcities, increase in health issues, and economic crises. In terms of the governance implications, Sri Lanka has a national policy framework and action plan on climate change that are aligned with the post 2015 global standards including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). However, there is a lack of interest in implementation, monitoring, awareness building and transparency. Hence, in conclusion, the study suggests the need of integrating the concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), to bring about better mechanisms to address existing disparities in line with the SDGs and to prevent the foretold drastic impacts.

Keywords: *climate change, built environment, socio-economic impacts, governance*

A paradigm shift in preserving Intangible Cultural Heritage: A framework for culture-mapping of the *Dalada Thevava*

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Traditions and rituals have evolved over millennia. Although the Tangible Cultural Heritage (TCH) of Sri Lanka has been well documented, the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has not enjoyed the same status. With changes in social and economic conditions over time, some components of this living heritage may get lost or varied. The research explored the domains of oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices and rituals, knowledge and practices concerning ancient knowledge, histories, identities, and traditional craftsmanship of the *Dalada Thevava*, as an example of ICH in Sri Lanka. The *Dalada Thevava* is a daily ritual performed at the *Dalada Maligawa* in Kandy in honour of the Tooth Relic of the Buddha, which forms a part of the living heritage of a religious community in the country. The aim of the research was to culture-map the various components of the *Dalada Thevava* to formulate a framework for its preservation. The methodology used for data collection included literature reviews, personal interviews, lineage tracking, and onsite observations. The literature reviews were the primary data sources, while onsite observations and interviews were used to identify discrepancies and establish authenticity. Culture mapping was chosen over other tools due to the complexities involved in identifying traditional knowledge, identities, practices, histories, relationships and performing arts of the ICH of the *Dalada Thevava*. The data was qualitatively analyzed and proposals for preservation were identified using audio/video technologies and legal enactments. It was found that the protection offered by the present legal framework was inadequate for the proper preservation of the ICH of the *Dalada Thevava* as a national asset. The research demonstrates a people-centric culture mapping framework that can be used as a structure for preserving the ICH at a national level. A paradigm shift is required to formulate scientific methodologies to research, document and record the ICH of the country.

Keywords: *Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), Dalada Thevava, culture-mapping, traditional knowledge*

Conversion of womanism and lesbianism into Sri Lankan culture: A comparative study on Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple* and its Sinhalese translation by Amali Boralugoda

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The complex and contradictory situation which is largely visible on the ground of culture for the acceptance of womanism and lesbianism is witnessed in most of Asian countries including Sri Lanka. Based on the cultural sensitivity, these concepts are rarely taken for open discussion. While gender and sexuality emerges a controversial situation within the Sri Lankan culture, literature and translation is there to uplift this challenging task of intercultural communication. Focusing on this scenario, the researchers attempt to study the conversion of womanism and lesbianism from western culture into Sri Lankan culture by comparing Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple* and its Sinhalese translation *Dampta Kathwa* by Amali Boralugoda. This case study continued as a descriptive qualitative research, where both primary and secondary data were referred. Along with the English novel and its Sinhalese translation and other available reading materials on gender and sexuality, data collected from the interview conducted with Amali Boralugoda were also referred. As per the findings, the researcher found that in order to overcome the cultural barriers, the translator has used the strategies of omission and adaptation to translate womanism and lesbianism oriented cases in the source text and this was further confirmed by the translator. Further, the toning down of the writing has been investigated in few cases in the target text, especially where details of womanism and lesbianism were included. In conclusion of this study, it shows that the use of the strategies of omission, adaptation and toning-down have negatively affected the quality of the translation. Therefore, the conception of womanism and lesbianism has not been directly and completely converted into the Sri Lankan culture. This shows that still there are some barriers in the Sri Lankan literature when translating works on gender and sexuality.

Keywords: *culture, lesbianism, translation, womanism*

Endogenous peacebuilding approach in Sri Lanka: An analysis of contributions of major international development partners, 2009 -2020

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Among the many gaps identified in the peacebuilding initiatives undertaken by both Government and Non-Government actors in Sri Lanka, researchers have outlined some important approaches to address the gaps. Wakkumbura outlines on decentralization of funding and recognition of grassroot level engagement as important and prerequisites for sustainable peace (Wakkumbura 2021, p.5). Mel and Venugopal suggest inclusive local governance (Mel & Venugopal, 2016) while Upali describes that the peacebuilding in Sri Lanka took a negative approach in line with the Galtung's theory, therefore, it needs a positive peacebuilding approach (Upali. P 2017 p.7). These recommendations look at the positive peacebuilding approaches that address the root causes of conflict in Sri Lanka. Despite the efforts made to address the root causes of conflict in Sri Lanka, communal riots resurfaced in 2014 and 2019 causing heavy casualties of lives of people and properties. Morrison describes this as the result of the creation of politico-religious by ideologies of ethnonationalists in conflict prevention (Morrison.C. 2020, p137). Therefore, there is a greater need to identify the grey area where Sri Lanka neither falls under positive nor negative peacebuilding approaches and is in need of a national level transformation through a multi-dimensional, multi-ethnic contextualized endogenous approach. Hence, this study will investigate through a mixed research method with quantitative data from organizations and government using a snowball sampling to identify approaches to peacebuilding efforts from 2009 to 2020, on the other hand, a qualitative data to corroborate an in-depth understanding of the implication within the community. This brings John Paul Lederach's theory on three layers of social structure and helps for a triangle cross comparison and contrasting the data from aforesaid three categories. The analysis will explore shortfalls in past peacebuilding approaches. Further, it will bridge the current gap in the literature on an endogenous peacebuilding approach.

Keywords: *positive peacebuilding, negative peacebuilding, endogenous, ethnonationalist*

