

**3rd International Research Symposium on
Social Sciences and Humanities (IRSSSH)-2020
Advances in Social Sciences and Humanities:
Challenges and Opportunities**

22-23, January 2021

**Auditorium, University Grants Commission
Sri Lanka**

SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

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CONTENTS

	Page No
Message from the Acting Director and Symposium Chair	XIII
Senior Professor Janitha A. Liyanage	
Message from the Visiting Research Fellow and Symposium Co-Chair	XIV
Senior Professor (Chair) H. D. Karunaratne	
Keynote Speaker	XV
Emeritus Professor Siri Hettige	
Plenary Speakers	XVI I-XVIII
Track 01 : Professor Kelum Jayasinghe	
Track 02 : Emeritus Professor Marie E.S. Perera	
Track 02 : Dr. Komali Yenneti	
Panel of Reviewers	XIX-XX
Track Chairs	XX
Session Chairs	XX
Panel of Discussants	XX
Symposium Organizing Committee	XXI
Abstracts	1-99

ABSTRACTS

Session 1 A Accounting and Management	1-6
Effect of Discretionary Accruals on Firm's Corporate Dividend Policy: Evidence from Sri Lanka	1
<i>Lakshan, R.P.S., Perera, H.A.P.L.</i>	
Potentiality to Achieve Financial Well-Being through Financial Literacy among Employees in Public Sector Enterprises in Sri Lanka	2
<i>Senevirathne, W. A. R., Weerasekara, C. P., Nilwala, W. M., Silva, G. A. J., Kuruppuarachchi, Y.D.R., Gunasekara R.P., Nisansala, D.W.</i>	
Relationship between Working Capital Policies and Profitability of Manufacturing Firms in Sri Lanka	3
<i>Pathirana, V. P. S. M., Dissanayake, K. Y. G. S. S.</i>	
Impact of Board Characteristics on Firm Performance: A Study of Listed Companies in the Industry Sector	4
<i>Nihuma, M.A.F.</i>	
Advertising Practice of the Beauticulture Industry in Sri Lanka: with Reference to Beauticulture Industry in Kurunegala City and Suburbs	5
<i>Jayasinghe, R.A.N.M., Thennakoon, T.M.S.M.</i>	
Innovations to Empower Value Chains: A Case of Mushroom Value Chain	6
<i>Bandara, A.M.S.M.R.S.G. , De Silva, D.A.M.</i>	
Session 1 B Management and HRM	7-14
Role of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and Organizational Success	7
<i>Sivanjali, M.</i>	
Vulnerabilities of Interest-free Loan Scheme in Sri Lankan Higher Education: A Study on Selected Non-state Higher Education Sector Entities of Sri Lanka	8
<i>Kurukulaarachchi, V.K.</i>	
"Negotiation" as an Effective Method to Resolve Conflicts: An Analysis with Industrial Disputes	9
<i>Jayarathna, D.M.N.M.</i>	
A Case Study on Internal Quality Failures of ABC Apparel Company in Sri Lanka	10
<i>Lekamge, L. R. G., Ekanayake, E. M. N. N.</i>	

Impact of Stigmatization on Job Retention of Apparel Workers in Sri Lanka: A Psychological Analysis 11

Gunawardana, V.

The Impact of Characteristics of Employees in Generation 'X' and 'Y' on Turnover Intention 12

Walpola, M.D.C.P., Piyasiri, A.D.W.D., Jayamal, I.A.U.M., Wijenayaka, T.H.P.C., Pathirana, G. Y., Weeraratne, R.S.

The Impact of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Satisfaction: A study on Sri Lankan Private Banks 13

Dilrukshi, N.

Study on Financial Literacy and Investor Behaviour in the Colombo Stock Exchange 14

Edirisinghe, E.A.B.P., Senevirathne, W.A.R.

Session 1 C Economics and Marketing 15-20

Factors Associated with Online Purchasing Intention in Sri Lanka 15

Liyanage, L. N.

The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment Inflows on External Debt Service in Sri Lanka 16

Weerakoon, A. M. K.

Analyzing the Proportion of Economic Growth with Reference to the Trade Balance and Exchange Rate 17

Langappuli, S. S., Gunasekara, A. N. N. M.

Impact of Samurdhi Programme on Household Food Security in Sri Lanka 18

Jayaweera, R.

Consumer Information and Food Labeling: A Case of Beverages in the Sri Lankan Market 19

Nipunika, M.L.D., De Silva, D.A.M.

Impact of Changes in Imports on Balance of Trade in Sri Lanka: A Statistical Analysis 20

Karunaratne, H. D. M. T.

Session 1 D Banking and Finance 21-27

Acceptance of Fintech Driven Banking in Sri Lanka with Special Reference to private Commercial Banks 21

Nayanajith, D. A.G., Damunupola, K. A.

Unfolding the Story of Bank Corporate Governance in Sri Lanka: A Grounded Theory Analysis 22

Ekanayake, E. M. N. N.

Effectiveness of Internal Audit Reporting in the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka 23

Anojan, V.

Audit Committee Characteristics and Financial Performance: A Study of Insurance Companies Listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange 24

Panuja, E.

Quality of Management Graduates in Sri Lanka 25

Jeewanthi, O. K. C., Mallika, J. K.

Determinants of Strategic Sourcing in Apparel Industry of Sri Lanka 26

Wickramasinghe, T. K. C. L. , Rathnayake, W.

Reward system and Employee Motivation: A Study on Banking Sector in Northern Province 27

Sanjeevakumar, K., Nirojan, J.

Session 1E Micro, Small and Medium Size Enterprises 28-33

How does COVID-19 influence the MSME Sector in Sri Lanka? 28

Indika, M. G. N., Perera, H. A. P. K., Abey Siriwardena, N. K.

Impact of Market Orientation and Performance Measurement Orientation on Firm Performance 29

Abeygunasekera, A. W. J. C., Thennakoon, T. M. N. D., Razik, R. , Madhuhansi, W. H. T.

Changing the Dimension of SME-led Business Model in the Context of Covid-19 Pandemic: Evidence from Agro-based SMEs in Sri Lanka 30

Prasanna, R. P. I. R., Gamage, S. K. N., Jayasundara, J. M. S. B., Ekanayake, E. M. S., Rajapakshe, P. S. K., Abeyrathne, G. A. K.N. J., Bandara, K. B. T. U. K.

Survival Challenges of Traditional SMEs with Cultural Heritage in Contemporary Sri Lanka 31

Ekanayake, E.M.S, Prasanna, R.P.I.R, Jayasundara, J.M.S.B., Gamage, S.K.N., Rajapakshe, P.S.K., Abeyrathne, G.A.K.N.J., Gunasena, K.A.K.I.C.

Impact of Internet Usage on Export Performance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Sri Lanka 32

Herath, N.H.M.S.M., Kapiyangoda, K. K.

Effect of Internal Control System on Employee Performance: With Special Reference to Small-Scale Manufacturing Enterprises in Hambantota District, Sri Lanka 33

Priyadarshani, S. A. S.

Session 2 A Education 34-42

ESL Teacher-trainees' Reading and Writing Competence: An Empirical Study 34

Samarakoon, H. H. S. U., Abeywickrama, K.R.W.K.H.

A Study on the Impact of Age in Language Acquisition 35

Pallewatta, P.G.D.S. , Epitawala, E.A.Y.P.

Academic Literacy-oriented Structural Arrangements in English Medium Degree Programmes in Sri Lanka 36

Mahawattha, M. D. N. M. U.

Eye Tracking to Assess the Use of Reading Strategies 37

Chandrasekara, C.M.N.M

Alter Ego 1 and General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) Syllabus: An Analysis of Objectives 38

Kalansuriya, H. A.

Challenges in Fostering Autonomy in an English Language Classroom: A Review 39

Batuwatta, S., Satharasinghe, S.A.A.K.

Challenges and Opportunities faced by Undergraduates using E-learn Facilities in Education: Special Reference to Students in the Communication Stream of the Open University of Sri Lanka 40

Karunadasa, K. L. E., Liyanahetti, D. D., Fernando, G.D.T.D.K.

Sentiment Analysis on YouTube Comments: A Glimpse 41

Nanayakkara, A.C.

Challenges and Opportunities in Using Mobile Learning to Continuation of Learning Process During Lockdown for Selected Secondary School Students in Sri Lanka 42

Naleen, V. G. C.

Session 2B Education 43-48

A Study on the Efficacy of Online French Language Teaching via Zoom at the French Language Institute of Alliance Française de Kotte 43

Samarasinghe, R. S.

Flipped Classroom Model for 21st Century Teacher Education	44
--	----

Gurunada, J.P.

Job Satisfaction of Graduate Teachers in Secondary Schools of North Central Province	45
--	----

Wanasinghe, W. A. M. G. P. K., Wanasinghe, W.M.S.

An Exploratory Study on Knowledge Acquisition in Work-based Learning	46
--	----

Balasooriya, B.M.S.S.

An Investigation of the Impact of Undergraduates' Perception of Online Learning among Distance Learners: Evidence from Global Disaster	47
--	----

Jayathilaka, S.S.R., Senevirathne, W.A.R., Nilwala, W.M., Gunasekara, R.P., Nisansala, D.W.

Classroom Space and Creative Student Engagement: A Focus on the Sri Lankan Drama Classroom	48
--	----

Irugalbandara, A.

Session 2C Religion and Culture	49-55
--	--------------

Gandharan Buddhist Narratives: Have Greek Mythology influenced the Narration of Buddhist Stories in Gandharan Art?	49
--	----

Biyanwila, A.

Physical and Mental Well-being of Human Beings: A Religious View	50
--	----

Ven. Gnanaoka Penaboda

Depiction of Sri Lankan Cultural Identity in Sri Lankan English Novels: A Study Based on the Novels <i>Paduma Meets the Sunbird</i> by Nihal De Silva and <i>Reef</i> by Romesh Gunasekera	51
--	----

Ihalagama, I. H.

The Cultural Impact of Indian Mega Drama's to Sinhala Society	52
---	----

Wimalarathna, N.M.L.

Using lighting in cinematography for character portrayal in Cinema with special reference to "The Godfather (1972)"	53
---	----

Manamperi, S., Fernando, C.

Cultural Borrowings and Core Borrowings	54
---	----

Ilankoon, S.R. , Wijeratne, W.M. , Senaratne, C.D.

Study of Buddhist Temples in <i>Nam Potha</i> and the Relationship between Man and Environment	55
--	----

Marasinghe, M.M.S.A., Dilanjan, H.U.K.I. , Sameera, A.K.R.

Session 2 D Language and Literature	56-60
Translation of Person Names: A Study based on Gustave Flaubert's <i>Madame Bovary</i> and its Sinhala Translation, <i>Emma Bovary</i> by Cyril C. Perera	56
Senevirathne, S. A. T. A.	
The Impact of Using Drama Activities in Improving Chinese Language Vocabulary acquisition among the Chinese Language Special 1st year Students in University of Kelaniya Sri Lanka	57
Wijethunga, W.A.P.C., Ranasinghe, R.M.T.B.	
A Contrastive Analysis of Tamil and Sinhala Languages Based on Person Deixis	58
Rathan, N. T.	
The Language of Covid-19 in the Sri Lankan context: A Morphological Analysis	59
Galagoda S.T.B., Hakadewaththe N.P., Senaratne, C.D.	
A Study on Fansub Translation from English to Sinhalese	60
Nanayakkara, A.	
Session 2 E Culture and Visual Arts	61-66
Madness, Sexual Desire, and the Silenced: A Theoretical Analysis of Dharmasiri Bandaranayake's <i>Thunveni Yamaya</i>	61
Jayasinghe, R.	
Using Chinese Films to Enhance the Comprehension of Chinese New Year Customs and Rituals among General 2nd year Undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka	62
Kodithuwakku, K.G.N.L., Kumarasinghe, K.S.L.	
A Study on How Dress is Misused in the Context of Nationalism	63
Weerasuriya, W. L. A. B. J., Abeykoon, S.A.M.K.P.	
An Analysis of the Understandings of the Sri Lankan Tamil Theatre in Making Theatre Criticism	64
Thavachchelvi, R.	
Driving to Lexical Proficiency via Cognitive Scaffolding	65
Rathnayake, W. M. P. Y. B.	
Juvenalian Satires and Editorial Cartoons as Mirrors of the Societal Issues	66
Dambagolla, K.	

Session 3A Sustainability	67-72
Evaluation of Heavy Metals Contamination in Tender Tea Leaves Due to Chemical Weeding	67
<i>Piyathilake, I.D.U.H. , Udayakumara., E.P.N.</i>	
Elephant Detection System for Reducing Human-Elephant Conflict Based on Convolutional Neural Networks	68
<i>Premarathna, K.S.P., Rathnayaka, R.M.K.T., Charles, J.</i>	
Extent of Incorporating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Corporate Sustainability Reporting (CSR) of Firms in Sri Lanka	69
<i>Soyza, R.N.K., Pallegedara, A., Kumara, A.S., Jayasena, D.M.</i>	
Designing and Introducing 'GREEN' Model to Lead Sri Lankan University Library System towards Green Library Concept: With Special Reference to the Library, University of Kelaniya	70
<i>Warnasooriya, W. W. S. T.</i>	
The Environmental Impacts of the Central Expressway Project in Sri Lanka: The Residents' Perception	71
<i>Pathirana, K. P. D. N. V., Rathnayake, W.</i>	
Factors Affecting Attitudes on the Green Purchase Intention of Eco-friendly Products in University Students	72
<i>George, H. I. C., Silva, H. P. T. N.</i>	
Session 3B Law, ICT, GIS and Sustainability	73-80
Constitutional Recognition of Implementing International Treaties in Domestic Contexts: A Comparative Study with Special reference to Sri Lanka	73
<i>Seneviratne, W., Thilakarathna, K.A.A.N.</i>	
Human Intervention Affecting the Degradation of Floral Diversity of Freshwater Swamp Forests in Sri Lanka: Preliminary Study of <i>Walawuwaththe Wathurana</i> Freshwater Swamp Forest	74
<i>Fernando, P.W.S., Hewage , P.</i>	
Modelling of Crop Yield with Climate Changes: Optimization Using Machine Learning: A Survey	75
<i>Kumarapathirana, K. P. S. D.</i>	
Use of Geographic Information System (GIS) as a Public Library Management Tool in Identification of Potential Users: A Case Study in Uva province, Sri Lanka using Location-allocation Model	76
<i>Siyambalapitiya, S.C.D. , Gamage, R.C.</i>	

Challenges and Panacea in Online Learning amidst COVID-19 Pandemic: Empirical study of Higher Education Sector in Sri Lanka	77
Chandrasena, S., Senevirathne, W.A.R.	
Simulator Based Visuospatial Training for Maritime Cadets at CINEC	78
Disanayaka, S. M., Sedrick, P., Perera, H.	
A Study on the Application of Digital Technology for Film Restoration	79
Ravindra Priyantha Lal	
Do We Live Upside Down? Decolonising Geography through World Maps	80
Jayasinghe, R.	
Session 3 C Sociology and Psychology	81-86
Importance of Traditional Communication in Rural Development	81
Warnakulasooriya, A. A. S.	
Importance of Counseling for Mental Disorders in Elderly Hood	82
Silva, S.H.N.M., Thabrew, K. C. K. de	
The Role of Risk Perception and Socio-Demographic Characteristics in Determining COVID-19 Related Stress among University Undergraduates in Sri Lanka	83
Hettiarachchi, N., Gunawardena, T.J., Dissanayake, G.R.K., Perera, P.Y.O., Rathnayake, R.M., Nirmani, P.M.G.U., Bulathwatta, A.	
Social Impacts of Covid-19 Lockdown Period in <i>Kirkoswald</i> Grama Niladari Division	84
Pasdevan, N.	
Social Distancing as a Precondition of Self-realization: <i>Beer without Alcohol</i>	85
Adikari, A. A. S. D., Dahanayake, S. S., Ranepura, R. D. N. E.	
A Study of the Impact of Rajagiriya Flyover on Neighboring Communities	86
Nisansala, K.K.H.P., Manawadu, L.	
Session 3 D Health and Well-being	87-94
An Investigation of Distal Factors on Fertility Behaviour of Reproductive Aged Women in Sri Lanka	87
Amithani, R.P.G., Rodrigo, D.S., Jayasinghe, C.L.	
Anthropometric Factors Associated with Diabetes among Children in Sri Lanka	88
Assalla, A.D.N.P.	
Economic Burden of Diabetes Mellitus in Sri Lanka: A Gendered Analysis	89
Dilrukshi, N., De Silva, A.	

Mental Well-being of the Aging Population in Elders' Homes: Special Reference to Kesbawa AGA Division 90

Perera, P. G. T. N., Serasinghe, K. H. P.

Exploring Ageing as a Social Issue: A Case Study of Elderly Women in Cleaning Services of University of Colombo, Sri Lanka 91

Madushanka, M.A.D., Siriwardhana, W.S.N., Rathnayaka, S.

Lived Experiences of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Patients in National Infectious Diseases Hospital (NIDH) 92

Sewwandi, K.N., Wijesinghe, Y.G.N., Perera, K.M.O.N., Munidasa, K.G.P.K.

Health and Well-being of Sri Lankan Population during COVID-19 Outbreak 93

Subasinghe, Y., Karunaratne, M., Sumathipala, N.

Analysis on Future Training Needs in Health Sector of Sri Lanka 94

Rajapakshe, W., Weeraratna, R. S., Pathirana, G., Malage, M.H., Balachandran, B.

Session 3 E Health and Well-being 95-99

Nursing Students' Stress and Coping Strategies during Clinical Training in College of Nursing Anuradhapura 95

Wijayasundara, W. M. S. K., Bandara, E.K.N.C., Madhumali, U.N.M., Ariyananda, P.G.S.N.

Sector Differentials of Health and Well-being Among Gay Men in Sri Lanka 96

Karunaratne, M.

The Distribution of Externally Observable Congenital Anomalies in Relation to Fetal Sex and the Period of Gestation of Stillborn Babies in Hospitals in Kandy District, Sri Lanka 97

Alahakoon, A. M. S. S. , Ratnayake, C. J. , Karunakaran, K. E. , Tennakoon, S. U. B.

Knowledge Related to Delay in Seeking Medical Advice among Sri Lankan Adults with Chickenpox 98

Amarasena, N.C.K., Wickramasinghe, W.A.A.S., Munasinghe, M.A.L.T., Athukorala , T.S.P.P., Senanayake, K.I.D.F.

The Impact of Work-Family Conflict on Problematic Alcohol Use among Private Sector Employees in Sri Lanka 99

Chandrasekara, W.S.



**Message from the Acting Director, Symposium Chair,
National Centre for Advance Studies in Humanities and
Social Sciences, Senior Professor Janitha A. Liyanage**

It gives me great pleasure to invite you to the 3rd International Symposium on Social Sciences and Humanities (IRSSSH) 2020 with the theme “Advances in Social Sciences and Humanities: Challenges and Opportunities” to be held on 22nd and 23rd of January 2021 at the auditorium of the University Grants Commission, Colombo. It is a great challenge for us to conduct an International Conference under the COVID 19 pandemic situation where all functions should be conducted according to the health regulations.

The proceedings contain 99 research papers that are mainly the research findings of NCAS beneficiaries. There were over 300 research papers submitted to the IRSSSH 2020 and after a peer review by experts in the relevant field, 180 papers were accepted for oral presentation at the symposium. I strongly believe that innovative research culture should be introduced to all sectors including Humanities and Social Sciences blended with other branches in order to improve the quality of life of human beings. We at the NCAS promote and open its windows for innovative research ideas that will address the social problems in the country. This conference will be a good platform for innovators to disseminate their findings and receive feedback from their peers. Dissemination of Knowledge is another platform that transforms the “generated Knowledge” to the destination where it is actually required and implemented.

I express my sincere gratitude to the Hon. Minister of Education, Professor G.L. Peiris for all the support extended to the NCAS in all our activities and to Professor K. Kapila C.K. Perera, the Secretary of the Ministry of Education for his assistance and guidance. I would also be thankful to Senior Professor Sampath Amaratunge, the Chairman, University Grants Commission for his valuable contribution and sincere thanks to the Keynote Speaker, Emeritus Professor Siri Hettige for reserving time to be with us and sharing his valuable experience. My heartfelt gratitude to Senior Professor H.D. Karunaratne, the Conference Chair of the Symposium for all the hard work, dedication and commitment towards the success of this event. I am thankful to the symposium committee and all the members of staff at the NCAS for their great contribution towards making this event a reality and my big congratulations to all presenters of this symposium.



Message from the Visiting Research Fellow, Symposium Co-Chair, National Centre for Advance Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, Senior Professor (Chair) H.D. Karunaratne

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, I would like to cordially welcome distinguished guests, keynote speaker, plenary speakers, delegates, track chairs, session chairs, discussants, presenters, and participants to the 3rd International Research Symposium on Social Sciences and Humanities (IRSSH-2020) organized by the National Centre for Advances in Social Sciences (NCAS). Theme of this year's international symposium is 'Advances in Social Sciences and the Humanities: challenges and opportunities', which has drawn the attention of academia, businesses, and policymakers. The world is in a new normal situation, and the higher education programs, institutions, and researchers face challenges related to literacy and skills, employability, inadequate entrepreneurship, and sustainable development goals. These challenges can be overcome by means such as innovative thinking, acceleration of quantity and quality of research, collaborative works, and sharing resources among individuals, scholars, organizations, and nations. The new normalcy has generated negative outcomes; however, we should focus on the opportunities generated by the situation. Therefore, the impact of the Covid-19 health crisis on Social Sciences and Humanities is set as the theme of the keynote speech of the conference and a distinguished researcher on Social Sciences Em. Prof. Siri Hettige was invited to deliver the keynote speech by considering his expertise in these fields. I should be thankful to Prof. Siri Hettige for acceptance of our invitation. Besides, three speakers were invited to deliver plenary speeches at the inception of three parallel tracks on: Social Sciences, Education and Humanities, and Sustainable Development. I was appointed as the Visiting Fellow from August 2020 to lead the team conducting this International Symposium and to publish the Journal of the NCAS. We called abstracts for this symposium in September 2020 and received more than 300 abstracts. After implementing a rigorous blind review process by connecting almost all universities and research institutes in Sri Lanka, we accepted around 200 abstracts. We notified authors to submit the revised abstract with full papers, and finally, we accepted and published 102 abstracts in this Volume. Any reader can request access to full papers from NCAS. I guarantee that majority of the research articles submitted to this International Symposium can be further developed and published in indexed journals. However, proper acknowledgment to this symposium should be given. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Senior Professor (Mrs) Janitha A. Liyanage, Acting Director of NCAS, and Mr. Sampath Chandrasena, Coordinator of the Symposium and his team at NCAS for providing excellent support to make this symposium a reality. Even though the Covid-19 health crisis impacted to delay of the symposium by one month, we were able to follow our rigorous academic screening processes and publish 102 research papers. I must thank all authors, the keynote speaker, plenary speakers, reviewers, session chairs, and discussants for their support in conducting this symposium. Also, I would like to appreciate the immense support provided by the editorial and the organizing committee, as this symposium would not have been held without their excellent support under the prevailing Covid-19 situation. I wish a radiant future for paper presenters of this symposium.

Keynote Speaker



Emeritus Professor Siri Hettige

Former Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo

Siri Hettige is presently Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Colombo. Earlier, he held the positions of Senior Professor and Chair of Sociology, (1992-2016), Senior Student Counsellor (1989-92), Dean, Faculty of Arts, (1999-2002), Director of Social Policy Analysis and Research Center (2005-2009) at the same University. Beside his substantive positions held in University Colombo, he held visiting appointments in several other Sri Lankan Universities. He also has wide international experience, commencing from his Post Graduate Studies at Monash University, Australia, followed by research and teaching assignments at a number of Universities between 1988 and 2019 in such countries as Switzerland, U.K., U.S.A., Germany, Finland and Australia. His most recent overseas academic appointment was at RMIT University, Australia where he held the position of Adjunct Professor from 2015 to 2018 and, at University of Heidelberg where he held the position of Sri Lanka Chair in the South Asia Institute during 2016-17. In addition to his extensive research and publications in a number of areas such as social inequality, poverty, migration, education, youth, health policy, governance, development, social and political conflict, social protection, disaster mitigation and local government, Professor Hettige has considerable experience in a number of areas of public policy in his capacity as a member of a number of Sri Lanka government appointed Commissions, committees, task forces and other statutory bodies over the last three decades. He functioned as the Chairman of the National Police Commission from 2015 to 2016. He was also the Commissioner of the Presidential Commission on Local Government Reform in 1998. Professor Hettige has been active in several civil society initiatives for public policy reforms over the last several years. Sound national policies program launched under his leadership in 2015 with the support of the UNDP was intended to convince the newly elected government to embark upon a program of evidence based public policy formulation to address persisting issues in a number of important areas. He has been closely associated with and held leadership positions in scientific associations such as Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science, National Science Foundation committee on Social Sciences and the Sociological Association of Sri Lanka for over three decades since the mid 1980's. He has published both nationally and internationally with reputed national and international publishers over several decades in such areas as social inequality, social policy, migration, ethnic and social conflict, youth, governance and development, alcohol policy, social issues, education and sustainable development. His most recent publication is *Towards a Sane Society* by Sarasavi Publishers, Sri Lanka in 2015. Other more recent publications include: *Globalization, Employment and Education*, London: Routledge, 2013, (co-authored with Angela Little), *Governance, Conflict and Development*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2014 (co-edited with Eva Gerhard) and *Sri Lanka at Crossroads*, London: Macmillan (co-edited with Markus Mayer), 2000.

Plenary Speaker



Prof. Kelum Jayasinghe,

Chair in Accounting and the Director of Employability Development at Essex Business School; and Director of Centre for Environment and Society (CES), University of Essex, United Kingdom.

Kelum Jayasinghe joined the Essex Business School, University of Essex in September 2008 having previously held positions at the University of Wales (Aberystwyth); University of Bradford (UK); and University of Colombo (Sri Lanka). Kelum's teaching interests include Management Accounting; Financial Decision Making; and Research Methodology. His academic career is complemented by three years industrial experience in professional accounting and five years experience in providing consultancy services to private and public sector agencies in Sri Lanka. He has worked as an expert panel member of the working group established for the development of UN's Sendai Framework Words into Action implementation guides for accountability and governance, UNSIDR, 2016-2021.

Abstract of Plenary Speech

Impact of COVID-19 Health Crisis on Accounting, Management, and Economic Research

Catastrophically, many global states have failed to handle the magnitude of COVID-19 disaster, as their public and private institutions found struggling to 'adapt' its existing institutional orders and logics to face this 'new normalcy' (Thankom, Jayasinghe and Ashraf, 2020; Upadhaya et al., 2020). In many countries, the government has provided extraordinary resources to protect the vulnerable, the homeless and those in precarious work; in others, the government has tried to stimulate businesses presuming this will drive public welfare whereas in other settings, governments have been unable or unwilling to respond. As the COVID-pandemic continues to evolve, there has never been a more pressing need for organisations to rethink and reconfigure their businesses for a changed world. Organisations globally are experiencing workforce disruption at an unprecedented scale and speed. Virtually all companies are still determining how we will work in the short- and long-term. Now the time for organisations to focus on supporting key areas of their businesses that help them to stabilise in the new environment and strategies for what's next. Already, many businesses are rapidly adjusting to the changing needs of their people, their customers and suppliers, while navigating the financial and operational challenges. The future accounting, management and economics research in emerging economies, therefore need to focus their attention into this 'new normalcy' of post-COVID context and explore the new challenges the organisations and governments would be facing when rebuilding their businesses and economies to suit with new global and national political economic orders. Amongst other things, we need to analyse the new programs and calculative practices (Miller and Rose, 1990, Rose and Miller, 1992; Jayasinghe and Wickramasinghe, 2007) undertaken by organizations and governments, sometimes in tandem with or through 'hybrid organizations', e.g. PPPs (Johanson and Vakkuri, 2017, Kurunmäki and Miller, 2006, Grossi et al., 2020). It is important to consider the implications of these responses and rebuilding efforts on the shaping of possible futures after COVID-19. These unique circumstances invite novel investigations from Accounting, Management, and Economic Researchers, particularly through critical and interdisciplinary approaches.

Plenary Speaker



Emeritus Professor Marie E.S. Perera

Former Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Colombo

Dr. Marie Perera was a Senior Professor in Humanities Education and the Director of the National Education Research and Evaluation Centre of the University of Colombo. She has also held the positions of Dean of the Faculty of Education, Head of the Department of Humanities Education and Director of the Staff Development Centre of the University of Colombo. Professor Perera has contributed to many areas in Education such as teaching of English and the Second National language, bilingual education, education for social cohesion and on student learning outcomes through teaching, research and dissemination. She has over forty research publications and several book chapters in internationally recognized publications. She has won several research grants and awards including the prestigious AILA Solidarity Award at the World Congress on Applied Linguistics in 2011. In recognition of excellence in research, she won a University of Colombo excellence in research award in 2016, Senate award for Research excellence in 2017 and Vice Chancellors award for Research excellence in The Faculty of Education in 2018. She also won the Zonta woman of achievement award in the Education category in 2017.

Abstract of Plenary Speech

The need for research based intervention for the success of envisaged curriculum reforms.

According to Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour 2020, comprehensive reforms will be undertaken to establish quality education system in accordance with international standards. Accordingly, curriculum reforms are now being planned. It has been claimed that the last major curriculum reforms that took place in Sri Lanka was in 1972 and other reforms since then have been basic and patch work type reforms (Sedere, 2021). If so, this paper argues that the envisaged reforms which aims for a paradigm shift should be evidence based and consist of practices that have been vetted through rigorous research.

Plenary Speaker



Dr. Komali Yenneti

Lecturer and Program Leader in Geography, Urban Environments and Climate Change at the School of Architecture and Built Environment, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom.

Honorary Fellow at the Australia-India Institute, University of Melbourne, Australia.

Dr. Komali Yenneti is an Architect, Environmental Planner and a Geographer. Dr. Komali is also the Chair of Cool Building Solutions Policy Workgroup at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Program Officer at Energy Geographies Research Group, Royal Geographical Society and the founding Chair of the International Geographical Union's Young and Early-Career Geographers Task Force. She has published widely on sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific and has made policy contributions to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Environment Programme and Australian Governments. Her work has frequently appeared in international media, such as The Hindu, Business Standard, The Conversation, Morning India and Indian Observer Post. She was noted as one of the World's Top 25 Young Scientists (Green Talents) in Energy by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany and the '100 Great Minds' by the Falling Walls Foundation. She has served in research, advocacy and advisory capacities for several international organisations including LandCom University Roundtable, Green Building Council of Australia, Smart Cities Taskforce - Committee for Sydney and the Commonwealth Youth Climate Network (CYCN).

Abstract of Plenary Speech

Cooling for Sustainable Cities and Communities

The history of urbanisation is often defined as the history of human development. Today, more than 50% of the world's population lives in cities, and UN-Habitat forecasts suggest that this number will rise to 70% by 2050. The burgeoning urban population growth and subsequent urban expansion will greatly affect the local and regional climates, urban environmental quality and sustainable development. What's worse, dark colored urban surfaces, vehicle emissions and reduced urban green spaces are already contributing to increased atmospheric heat, extreme temperatures, frequent and extended heat spells, and thermal stress. Urban overheating is generally the consequence of the urban heat island (UHI) effect, a local phenomenon caused by city characteristics, building and paving materials, anthropogenic heat released by vehicle exhausts and building energy use, and the loss of natural features. Urban overheating and heat waves can have a significant impact on energy, health, thermal comfort, environment, and the economy. Advanced technologies and strategies have been developed to mitigate urban heat. The implementation of mitigation strategies, such as urban greenery, green roofs, vertical gardens, cool roofs, and cool pavements, can help governments and other stakeholders manage urban overheating in the natural and built environment, save health, energy and economic costs, and help achieve sustainable cities and communities.

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Ven. Professor Nandalagamuwe Dhammadinna Thero	Dr. Janitha Abeygunasekera
Ven Dr. Meemure Gunananda Thero	Dr. Tishani Herath
Ven. Professor W Wimalaratana	Dr. Tharanga Weerasooriya
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 Professor K G P K Weerakoon
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Mr. H S B Karunarathna

ABSTRACTS

Session 1 A

Accounting and Management

Effect of Discretionary Accruals on Firm's Corporate Dividend Policy: Evidence from Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Earnings management is becoming an area of interest to many stakeholders, including researchers, after several accounting scandals. Also, it is an important duty of a financial manager to formulate the company's dividend policy that is in the best interest of the company. The study aims to identify the impact of earnings management measured through discretionary accruals on the dividend policy of listed companies in Sri Lanka. The study uses annual data of 57 non-financial companies listed in the Colombo stock exchange representing five sectors based on the highest market capitalization during the period from 2015 to 2018. Discretionary accruals (DA) were used as a proxy for earnings management obtained from the cross-sectional modified Jones (1995) model, while dividend payout ratio is taken as a proxy for dividend policy. Firm Debt (DEBT), Liquidity (LIQ), Operating Cash Flows (CFO), Return on Equity (ROE), and firm Size (SIZE) have been introduced as control variables to make the model stronger. The data were analyzed using correlation and regression analysis. The results reveal that discretionary accruals have a negative impact on the dividend payout policy of Sri Lankan companies listed in the Colombo Stock Exchange. In addition to that LIQ, ROE, CFO show positive significant impact on the dividend payout while DEBT shows an insignificant impact on the dividend payout policy of Sri Lankan Companies. In an environment whose reported earnings are viewed with some extent of skepticism, cash dividends will provide a strong signal to investors of true financial strength and the credibility of earnings reports.

Keywords: *Discretionary Accruals, Dividend Policy*

Potentiality to achieve Financial Well-Being through Financial Literacy among Employees in Public Sector Enterprises in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to assess the potentiality to achieve financial well-being by professionals and employees attached to public sector enterprises in Sri Lanka. Quantitative research approach based on cross-sectional research design was used in the study where data were collected before Covid-19 pandemic using an online Google form based structured questionnaire. Two standard scales were used to develop the conceptual framework between financial literacy and financial well-being. A Sample consisted of 230 employees in the public sector enterprises in Sri Lanka, drawn using a simple random sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling. Finding reveals, a positive and significant effect of financial literacy on their financial well-being of employees in public sector enterprises in Sri Lanka. Empirical findings prove that money management skills, ability of financial planning, financial knowledge and understanding have the highest impact on financial well-being ($p < 0.05$). However, contrary to previous findings, ability to choose appropriate products was against financial well-being ($p > 0.05$). The findings of this research confirm the theoretical integration among the variables of financial literacy with financial well-being. According to the prospect theory, people are not fully rational, even though they assume they are rational. Majority of them are risk averse. Further, according to the theory of heuristics, people use mental shortcuts for financial decision making and most of them may not be correct. The theory stated people try to get decisions based on limited information. This is further confirmed by theory of herding as many people are followers. However, practical application still has some deviation irrespective of previous empirical arguments. Financial well-being seems to be a difficult goal for many people as there is no passive income for them. This study encourages rigorous further investigation of the direct and indirect relationships between financial literacy and financial well-being among the different cohorts of the population in the future in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Financial Well-Being, Financial Literacy, Public Sector Enterprise*

Relationship between Working Capital Policies and Profitability of Manufacturing Firms in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Working Capital Management (WCM) is a key component of financial management since it effectively manages current assets and current liabilities to minimize the risk of inability to meet short term obligations while avoiding excessive investment through aggressive working capital policy and conservative working capital policy. The manufacturing sector in Sri Lanka has to place significant attention on Working Capital Policies (WCPs), and practices since those affect the profitability, which highly contributes to the economic growth of Sri Lanka. The main objective of this research is to investigate the relationship between WCPs and profitability in the context of listed manufacturing firms in Sri Lanka. 31 manufacturing firms were selected as a sample and employed a quantitative research approach. We have done secondary panel data analysis using E-Views by gathering data mainly from annual reports from 2015 to 2019. The descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and empirical model have been estimated to derive the findings of the study. Results depict that there is a statistically significant relationship between WCPs and firm profitability. Preliminary investigation shows that manufacturing firms in Sri Lanka have followed a moderate WCP. This means firms aggressive in the management of current assets while conservative in current liabilities. Both ROA and ROE have a negative relationship with aggressive financing policy and CCC while aggressive investment policy has a positive relationship. Empirical evidence suggest that a conservative investment policy increases the firm's overall return whilst an aggressive financing policy decreases the return. However, findings have provided important implications for managers in stabilizing the balance between conservative and aggressive WCPs to improve profitability.

Keywords: *Working Capital, Profitability*

Impact of Board Characteristics on Firm Performance: A Study of Listed Companies in the Industry Sector

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Abstract

Due to various corporate scandals and failures that have occurred around the world, there is a renewed interest on the role of boards in the performance of firms. The core aim of this study is to examine the impact of board characteristics on the firm performance of companies listed under the industrial sector in the Colombo stock exchange over the period 2014/2015 to 2018/2019. To achieve the objectives of the study, the whole industrial sector is selected as a sample where it consists of 36 companies. Five companies are excluded from the sample, which leaves a final sample of 31 companies. Board characteristics considered in this study include board size, CEO duality, board meetings, gender diversity, and board composition. Firm performance is measured by employing the return on assets (ROA). According to the descriptive statistics, the average number of persons on the board of directors is 8. The overall sample of this study shows 19.35% of the sample of firms has CEO duality. Gender diversity is represented by way of the presence of women in the board which shows 60% of the sample of firms has gender diversity. And the average frequency of board meetings in a year is six times. The result of regression analysis suggests that board meetings significantly affect the ROA of the firms in the industrial sector. And also, board size, CEO duality, gender diversity, and board composition does not significantly affect ROA. Correlation analysis indicates that board meetings have a significant positive relationship with ROA while other variables have an insignificant positive relationship. The outcome of the study will help the interested parties of the firms to know the level of compliance of corporate governance best practices, and it will be useful to economists and government policy makers. Future research can be extended by choosing different industries and more years of data by including other aspects of board characteristics and firm performance.

Keywords: *Board Size, Board Meetings, CEO Duality, Firm Performance, Gender Diversity*

Advertising Practice of the Beauticulture Industry in Sri Lanka: with Reference to Beauticulture Industry in Kurunegala City and Suburbs

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Abstract

The beauticulture industry is one of the major revenue generated industries in Sri Lanka. The industry has been expanded from eyebrows plucking to complex plastic surgeries. There is evidence that beauticulture was popular in the past as well. Nowadays, especially the young generation is willing to build their career as professional beauticians. Beauticulture courses, institutions have been initiated, and each year a large number of students graduate as beauticians. At present, beauticulture industry has become very competitive. Therefore, these beauticians have to create awareness about their business in the community. Advertising plays a vital role to fulfill that requirement and various methods use to achieve maximum publicity. The main objective of this research is to identify the advertising practices of the beauticulture Industry in Kurunagala City and suburbs - Sri Lanka. A quantitative research method was used to collect primary data from 50 beauticians with a valid and reliable questionnaire. Newspaper articles, News journals, Internet journals were used to collect secondary data. The analysis shows that 96 percent of the beauticians have used Social Media for advertising, while newspaper advertising was the least. Five percent of them have used customer's bridal photographs for advertising, and 75 percent have used photographs of models. Thirty-nine percent of the beauticians have spent (25,000 – 50,000) Sri Lankan rupees on beauticulture advertising. Sixty-four percent of the beauticians in Kurunagala city and suburbs have used their own logo for advertising. All beauticians have used direct and indirect advertising methods to promote their beauticulture business in Kurunagala City and suburbs - Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Beauticulture, Social media, Radio, Television, Beautician*

Innovations to Empower Value Chains: A Case of Mushroom Value Chain

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Abstract

Agri-food value chains face many interlinked challenges, which jeopardize their sustainability, such as changing climate conditions, deteriorating natural resources, increasing power imbalances, changing demographics, and dietary habits. The study was designed to investigate product, process, market, and management innovations along the mushroom value chain and to explore the role of innovations in the mushroom value chain in the household wellbeing. The mixed method approach was instrumental in obtaining the data from 100 mushroom value chain actors in the Weeraketiya DS division through a simple random sampling technique. Value chain actors included 87 producers, 13 retailers, and 03 collectors that were instrumental in providing primary data. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis was performed to identify the role of innovations in value chain development. Product, process market and management innovations were identified as strategic interventions of the value chain actors. Process and product innovation were identified only among farmers. Both farmers and collectors had market and management innovation while retailers had recorded only with management innovations. Mushroom farmers showed improved household wellbeing status through the income generated from mushroom cultivation. Household wellbeing of retailers and collectors were not improved from the mushroom business because mushroom business is their secondary income-generating activity. Females were more innovative compared to their male counterparts, and they were more involved with product development.

Keywords: *Innovation, Mushroom, Research and Development, Value Chain*

Session 1 B

Management and HRM

Role of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and Organizational Success

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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays a significant role in creating leadership skills and making an effective workplace. The positive work environment will enable everyone to understand each other, manage their own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, and help to manage relationships within the organization. The objective was to explore the association of emotional intelligence in leadership and organizational success among the study participants. An observational study was done among participants for six months. The study was conducted among healthcare professionals, bank employees and self-employed workers in the city of Batticaloa, Sri Lanka (n=9). Two physicians and one nurse were considered in Health care workers. Among bank employees, two of them were in the manager positions and one of them worked in the customer service. In self-employed workers' different categories and stages of employees were considered. One of them was a lawyer, one private tutor and one retail businessman. Content analysis was done manually. Themes identified were career satisfaction and having a work-life balance. In all categories of career, stage and nature of career had an influence on career satisfaction and work-life balance. Career satisfaction was measured by achieving the targets and feeling peaceful at workplace. When we considered career satisfaction 100% of self-employed workers had it and 70% of Health-care workers and Bank employees expressed it. When considering the work-life balance 70% of the self-employed workers had work life balance and in other professions less than 50% of them had a good work-life balance. It was proved that employees with higher Emotional Intelligence had career satisfaction, good work life balance and they could successfully lead the organization.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Skills, Organisation Success*

Vulnerabilities of Interest-free Loan Scheme in Sri Lankan Higher Education: A Study on Selected Non-state Higher Education Sector Entities of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

An Interest-Free Student Loan Scheme (IFSLS) is approved by the Government of Sri Lanka in 2017 and declared by the budget proposal in the same year to follow degree programmes offered by the Non-State Higher Education Institutes. ABC Non-State Higher Education institute currently admits the IFSL students to a certain faculty though struggling with several issues related to students' performance concerned with the results, attendance, and language skills. The objectives of this mixed study are to assess the current performance of the IFSL students and to examine the challenges and issues of this process. Purposive sampling is used in the study with a sample size of 93 students. Data collection methods were questionnaire for students, key informant interviews, and documentary analysis. Findings revealed that 87% are female IFSL students in the faculty compared to 13% of male students. Majority of students (59%) believed their performance is good. However, year one semester one results revealed that only 18% of students indicate a very good performance while 30% and 52% indicate good and poor performance respectively. The study found that in year one semester one examination, 36% of BA English students from 2017 intake has failed to meet the 80% attendance requirement while 47% and 35% found the same lack in attendance in 2018 and 2019 intake. Meanwhile, BEd IT students have met the 80% attendance requirement in the same examination. 42% of students strongly agreed that absenteeism leads to poor performance in exams, leading to low Graded Point Average. Further, 46% of students agreed that students lack coordination with peers, and teachers tend to neglect the assignment deadlines. Despite the attendance and evaluation policies from the Ministry and the institute, some students were absent for the lectures consistently. Though the institute finds solutions reactively, they continuously face challenges as the majority of students' performance does not meet the requirements.

Keywords: *Loan Scheme, Higher Education*

“Negotiation” as an Effective Method to Resolve Conflicts: An Analysis with Industrial Disputes

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Abstract

Protection of industrial peace and stability is important to strengthen the national economy. There are various kinds of methods and mechanisms available to resolve industrial disputes. While the Industrial Disputes Act of 1950 provides multiple methods to resolve disputes in Sri Lanka, the said methods have not always achieved the desired results, and all stakeholders have not been satisfied with the outcome at times. Some of the recognized methods used to resolve industrial disputes have become very time-consuming, costly, and technical in nature at times, which put the ordinary worker at a disadvantage. Those methods are not focused on a ‘win-win’ approach, and apparently, one party or both parties have to bear resultant repercussions, ‘loss-win or loss-loss.’ To obtain effective results, there must be an effective method to resolve industrial disputes, which is guided by a ‘win-win’ approach. Negotiation is considered one of the best methods to resolve industrial disputes. Negotiation means “two or more interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals and engage in social interaction to reach a mutually satisfying outcome” This research seeks to determine the efficacy of negotiation as a method of resolving industrial disputes. This research is qualitative research, and books, journal articles, paper articles; e-resources were used to collect secondary data, and key informant interviews were used to collect primary data. Negotiation plays a vital role, and it creates pathways for the parties who engage in negotiation to acquire win-win outcome, which is acceptable to both parties. Thus, negotiation is an effective method to solve industrial disputes. However, to get optimum results and benefits, the negotiator should have brilliant and outstanding qualities and skills which can be applied to the specific situation and go beyond the barriers of the negotiation.

Keywords: *Negotiation, Industrial Disputes*

A Case Study on Internal Quality Failures of ABC Apparel Company in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Apparel industry as one of the most significant contributors of Sri Lankan economy has recorded a consistent development in the country advancing from the customary low-wage driven model into mind boggling worldwide recognized apparel hub in South Asia. Since quality holds a significant importance in the garment exports of developing countries, this research is a case based qualitative investigation to explore factors leading to quality failures in a medium-scale export-oriented apparel manufacturing company located in the Colombo district of Sri Lanka. Recognising the labour-intensive garment manufacturing sector, this study has adopted a qualitative research design and has employed thematic analysis to explore and analyse the inner experience of participants with regards to the quality aspects. The study has employed semi-structured interviews in collecting data with ten employees selected through purposive sampling, whom are directly responsible in the product line operations and for quality inspections. Thus, the data analysis comprised with three main phases; generating initial codes, searching and reviewing themes, and thematic mapping. The findings suggest that the quality assurance, quality control, and the operators' skill levels are vital in minimising the quality failures in the selected company. Besides these, workers' absenteeism, machine problems, and less awareness of quality standards contribute to quality failures. The findings further elaborate that the semi-skilled or un-skilled operators contribute to the internal quality failures of the selected apparel company. Findings of the study are beneficial to the practitioners of the apparel industry to enhance their understanding of factors which contribute to quality failures and would offer new insights on how to cater to the customers with high-quality apparel products.

Keywords: *Internal Quality failures, Apparel*

Impact of Stigmatization on Job Retention of Apparel Workers in Sri Lanka: A Psychological Analysis

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Abstract

Researchers have shown that apparel workers are stigmatized in society, although they play an important role in the Sri Lankan economy. As a result of the stigmatization, apparel workers tend to quit the job and maintain a negative self-perception. This study analyses the impact of social stigma towards apparel workers' job retention from a psychological perspective by using the qualitative research method. The total sample consisted of 15 participants belong to 3 categories, i.e., apparel workers who are currently working in the industry, executive employees of the apparel industry, and people from the outside of the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. Interviews (semi-structured open-ended questions) were conducted to collect primary data to examine job retention and ideas on stigmatization while using secondary sources for the psychological analysis. According to the study, the causes of stigmatization can be highlighted under vulnerability, treating as sex objects, lack of education of the majority, and low wages and facilities of the industry. Although the other causes such as work-life balance, marriage, looking after children, and job failure have an impact on job retention, stigmatization has affected the self-perception of the individuals by causing a long-term negative effect on them. The collected data was analyzed under Maslow's hierarchy of needs to emphasize the psychological impact of stigmatization on apparel workers. According to the analysis, it is evident that stigmatization has directly affected the apparel workers' stable relationships, love, and respect for society. Hence, the sense of not belonging to a respected group eventually leads to job turnover, which is the visible impact. Negative self-perception due to the stigmatization is the invisible impact on Apparel workers in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Stigmatization, Job Retention*

The Impact of Characteristics of Employees in Generation 'X' and 'Y' on Turnover Intention

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Abstract

The generation gap has impacted a much higher turnover in generation 'y' than in generation 'x' during the recent past. It has affected in achieving the corporate goals within organizations. Hence it is timely important to identify the causes for the high turnover rate in generation 'y' than in generation 'x' within organizations and to predict which employees will retain and leave from the organizations in coming years. The researchers were able to identify the different characteristics of the two generations separately. This study is based on a quantitative research type. A survey was used as the primary research strategy and, the study was based on the deductive research approach. The researchers collected data from a sample of 240 respondents and the collected data were analyzed through descriptive analysis using the SPSS software package. The researchers identified that the flextime, job performance and knowledge sharing among the employees in generation 'x' and generation 'y' in the Sri Lankan context are relatively similar in both the generations compared to other independent variables. Furthermore, the results show that generation 'x' employees prefer to remain within the same employer rather than generation 'y'. The 'y' generation has nevertheless shown a greater interest in leaving their current workplace.

Keywords: *Comparison, Generation 'X', Generation 'Y', Predictive Analysis, Workplace*

The Impact of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Satisfaction: A study on Sri Lankan Private Banks

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Abstract

Customer relationship management (CRM) is an important strategy for any service organization, including banks, to manage interactions with their customers. The key objectives of CRM are to enhance the profitability, income, and customer satisfaction of the organization. As the competition among the financial institutions is increasing in the global market, it is important for them to build and maintain a strong relationship with their customers to achieve their targets by understanding and satisfying the customers. Therefore, the research's main objective was to investigate the impact of CRM on customer satisfaction for private banks in Sri Lanka. Fifty customers from selected private banks in the Colombo district were chosen using the random sampling method as the survey sample. However, 45 questionnaires were completed, and the response rate was 90%. A self-administrated questionnaire was used to collect responses. Likert – scaled questions were used to measure the main variables of the study. The six major elements of CRM were used as predictor variables. They were services quality, solving customer problems, customer database, and behavior of bank employees, the physical environment, and social network interactions. Customer satisfaction was used as the outcome variable. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the set hypothesis of the study. This study found that five CRM elements have significant relationships with customer satisfaction.

Keywords: *Customer Relationship Management, Customer Satisfaction*

Study on Financial Literacy and Investor Behaviour in the Colombo Stock Exchange

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Abstract

Financial literacy has captured the attention of scholars as a green light of the economic wellbeing of a nation. The main purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between financial literacy and the behavior of the retail investors registered in the Colombo Stock Exchange in Sri Lanka. In addition to the major focus area, this research examines the demographic variables and their relationship with investor behavior. A cross-sectional research designed was done, and data was collected from a simple random sampling basis with the 150 respondents. The findings of the research revealed that there is a significant relationship between financial literacy and investor behavior ($p < 0.05$). Further, the investment value and gender did not show a significant relationship with the behavior of the investor. The results of this research reflect that the level of knowledge of the local investors in financial literacy affects their investment decisions and their level of participation in investing at the Colombo Stock Exchange. The study highlighted the importance of imparting adequate knowledge in financial literacy, especially on retail investors. The new study recommendations will drive the country forward economically and provide a conducive environment for prospective investors. The study is a novel addition to the financial literacy and investor behavior literature in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Financial Literacy, Investor Behavior, Colombo Stock Exchange, Sri Lanka*

Session 1 C

Economics and Marketing

Factors Associated with Online Purchasing Intention in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Online shopping is becoming gradually more popular globally, mostly in the developing countries given the freshly established infrastructure for advertising through the Internet. Day by day, the numbers of consumers who shop online to purchase goods, gather product information, and browse for enjoyment are increasing. So, the online shopping environments are playing a major role in the overall relationship between marketers and their consumers. Therefore, this study was intended to determine the factors associated with online purchase intention in Sri Lanka. In addition, this investigates the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable (e-shopping intention). Primary data were collected through an electronic survey questionnaire with 384 respondents. The reliability and the validity of the variables were tested using Cronbach's alpha test and KMO test. The literature review reveals that Website Factor, Perceived Risk, Service Quality, Convenience, Product Variety, and Product Guarantee are the factors associated with the online purchase intention of consumers. Multiple Linear Regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to test the hypotheses. The regression analysis indicates that all the independent variables derived are positively and significantly influencing the purchasing decision of consumers. And all of them are significantly correlated to the purchasing intention of online shopping. Though there are many factors that influence online purchase, Service Quality is the leading factor. Moreover, through the findings of this research, managerial consequences have been discussed to provide useful information to online vendors. In addition, retailers should guarantee a safe and precise transaction process, besides, make more efforts to web design and improve the return and reimbursement after-sales service. Online retailers need to guarantee that the online shopping process in their websites is intended to be as easy, simple, and convenient as possible for online customers to shop online.

Keywords: *Online Purchasing, E-shopping*

The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment Inflows on External Debt Service in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Foreign direct investment (FDI) has become a great importance to developing economies as they experience inadequate savings to a larger extent. The economic theory explains that external debt service identifies as a key determinant of foreign direct investment. The high level of external debt service resulted in harmful effects on the Sri Lankan economy. Reallocating of FDI to productive investments need to be undertaken to solve the problem. This research attempts to study the impact of FDI on external debt service. For this purpose, the study used time series data from 1978 to 2017. The study estimated Auto Regressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) and Error Correction Model (ECM) tests to check the relationship between FDI inflows and external debt service in Sri Lanka. External debt service was the independent variable and FDI, openness, GDP, inflation and interest rate were the explanatory variables. According to the findings of the study, there is a significant positive impact of FDI on external debt service at 1 % significance level while GDP and openness have negative impacts and inflation and interest rate have no impacts on external debt service in the long run. Therefore, the study confirms, 1% increase in FDI Inflows will enhance the external debt service by 54% in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the Sri Lankan Government should implement proper policies; maintaining the sustainability of external debt service and improve ways are vital to attracting FDI.

Keywords: *Foreign Direct Investment, External Debt Service, Sri Lanka*

Analyzing the Proportion of Economic Growth with Reference to the Trade Balance and Exchange Rate

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Abstract

This paper aims to determine the effect of net exports (Balance of Trade-BOT) towards economic growth in reference to the volatility of Exchange Rate (ER) and to examine whether net export income and net imports expenditure propels or hinders economic growth. It focuses on the impact of the ER movements and BOT on the country's GDP. Economies that board on export-led economic growth attempt to maintain a competitive exchange rate policy as an important macroeconomic management measure. The secondary data was collected from the central bank of Sri Lanka, for the first quarter of the year 2008 to the end quarter of the year 2019. GDP treated as regress and, BOT and ER as regrassors. According to the descriptive analysis, lowest BOT was -654.20 in the third quarter of year 2009 while the maximum -2982.3 trade balance occurred in 2018 first quarter. ER dramatically increases year on year, and it has reached its highest 180.94 in last quarter of 2019. In order to overcome the violation of multiple regression assumptions, log transformation of each variables is been taken into account. Results emphasized that from one percent increase in BOT is associated with a 0.231 percent increase in GDP while in all other the multicollinearity between the BOT and ER has minimized, and the VIF value was almost one. Overall, the findings of the study confirm that increase of BOT that decreases the deficit of BOT motivates average economic growth, and the ER and GDP demonstrate a pragmatic relationship. Sri Lanka's export trading actions could be prolonged by maintaining a stable competitive Real ER and higher concentration on Productivity in the exports, encourage two-way trade in each industry, liberalize trade gradually to avoid inter-industry disruptions and establishment of firm-specific modernization programs.

Keywords: *Economic Growth, Trade Balance, Exchange Rate*

Impact of Samurdhi Programme on Household Food Security in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The Second Sustainable Development Goal is to achieve food security by 2030. Malnutrition indicators, stunting and Sri Lanka's place on Global Hunger Index indicate that achieving food security is a challenge for Sri Lanka. Government poverty alleviating programme, 'Samurdhi' has a direct food assistance component with the objective of enhancing the food security among lower-income households. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to examine the impact of Samurdhi programme on household food security, measured by monthly food expenditure, daily calorie consumption, food diversity in terms of expenditure and calorie consumption. The propensity score matching (PSM) technique was applied to household income and expenditure (2016/17) data to achieve this objective. Findings of the study reveal that food expenditure and calorie consumption of the Samurdhi beneficiary households is significantly less than the non-Samurdhi beneficiary households. Although Samurdhi programme does not affect food diversity in terms of expenditure and calorie consumption in Sri Lanka, it positively and significantly affects food diversity in the estate sector of Sri Lanka. Therefore, Samurdhi programme needs to be tailored and directed to enhance food security in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Food Diversity, Food Expenditure, Food Security, Impact evaluation, Samurdhi Programme*

Consumer Information and Food Labeling: A Case of Beverages in the Sri Lankan Market

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Abstract

Consumers' preferences and nutritional needs are diverse with the increase in global trade, and as a result, it creates a demand for variety in beverages and offers a wide range of choices for consumers to meet their demand. Therefore, a clear and trusted labeling system is essential as the most direct communication platform, which presents information of product's identity, quantity, and quality to the consumers. The present study attempts to identify the consumer information and food labeling of beverages available in the Sri Lankan market. Key concerns were to investigate the present status of beverage labeling and to find out the level of legibility of the label information, label claims, and label architecture in line with food labeling regulations of Sri Lanka. The study sample comprised of 85 beverage products available in the Sri Lankan market, and products were grouped into 5 categories, namely fruit base, herbal, tea and coffee, dairy, and carbonated. Labels of both local and imported beverages were considered for the analysis. Photographs of the front of the pack label and back of the pack were obtained, and labels were analyzed to find out the clean status, transparency, and authenticity. Study shows that 100% of the beverage labels were according to the brand name declaration of the food act, and 68% were in line with common name requirement. Further, 33% of beverage labels that were not in line with regulatory requirements, where 28% were imported brands and 5% were local brands, highlight the common name declarations, not in the main panel. Regulatory requirements on net quantity declarations followed 74% of the brands. 79% of labels indicated the name of permitted food additive or INS number. 88% of labels were provided the storage and or usage declarations. All the imported brands were of country of origin. 89.5% of labels are with ingredient declarations and labels exempted mostly related to coffee and tea beverages. Health claims, the traffic light system, and nutritional declaration were appeared only 43% of the beverage labels and highlighting sugar levels only. Nutrition declarations were available in 76% of the labels, but nutrition declarations were not considered in Sri Lankan regulations.

Keywords: *Food Labeling, Beverages*

Impact of Changes in Imports on Balance of Trade in Sri Lanka: A Statistical Analysis

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Abstract

International trade is an important sector for any economy due to various reasons. Among them, earning and saving of foreign currency, creation of jobs, and consumption of foreign goods, as well as escaping from the balance of payment crisis and debt crisis play a crucial role within small island economies. Imports are essential to maintain not only consumption and production activities, but also to gear up infrastructure development projects and enhance logistic facilities to upgrade the distribution pattern of emerging market economies like Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka has been facing negative trade balances over the long run due to high import levels and low growth in the exports sector. Much of the available researches are concentrated on export promotion and other foreign currency earning methods of Sri Lanka. Therefore, this study was designed to find the impact of imports and gross domestic product on the trade balance of Sri Lanka for the 2008-2017 period. Macro-level statistics published by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka used to estimate multiple regression on imports, GDP, and trade balance for this period. According to our findings, 97 percent of the variation of imports of Sri Lanka can be explained by changes in imports and GDP. There was a significant positive correlation ($r=0.98$, $p = 0.00$) between imports and GDP I Sri Lanka. This finding is very important for policymakers. Therefore, import control is a limited option for Sri Lankan trade policymakers. Both imports and GDP negatively and significantly impact the trade balance of Sri Lanka due to the high marginal propensity to imports. Both R^2 and $AdjR^2$ of the fitted model is almost the same (97 percent). The errors of fitted models were found to be identically independent, normally distributed with mean zero. The percentage of errors varied from -13% to 10%. The fitted model can be used for better and efficient planning for Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Imports, Trade Balance, Sri Lanka, Import Control*

Session 1 D

Banking and Finance

Acceptance of Fintech Driven Banking in Sri Lanka with Special Reference to private Commercial Banks

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Abstract

Fintech refers to technology applied to financial services encompassing diverse products and services, which has resulted in novel business models, applications, processes with a substantial effect on financial markets/institutions alongside banking services with omni-channel banking. Facilitating mobile, contactless, social-media, QR related payments/settlements while strengthening cyber-security simultaneously ensures greater public trust while encouraging innovation. Present research analyses the effects of innovation (INNOV), e-trust (ET), and interaction effects towards the adoption of fintech driven banking products and services (AFBPS). The sample was drawn from Kelaniya University students. Data analysis was performed with 287 questionnaires using the hierarchical linear model (HLM). The technology acceptance model was adapted in formulating the conceptual framework by amalgamating the innovation and e-trust variables. HLM with random slopes, random intercepts with provisions for the covariance of random intercepts, and random slopes demonstrated that INNOV, ET, and interaction of motive towards innovation (M) and INNOV, all predict AFBPS. Interaction effect highlights that for those who had innovation concerns considering perceived ease of use (PEOU), fintech banking adoption has perhaps added ease, and thus, their adoption increase while those had innovation considering perceived usefulness (PU) would have later understood that usefulness was not the inducement for their AFBPS, and their respective AFBPS is comparatively lower. Findings are beneficial for banks, fintechs, telcos, and banking technology developers, regulators towards formulating policies, strategies to promote affordable, innovative, easy to use fintech banking services to reach unbanked and under-banked segments by facilitating financial inclusion, while emphasizing more on relative advantage, compatibility, simplicity and trialability characteristics in view of capitalizing on perceived innovation aspect. Correspondingly, findings indicate the necessity of safeguarding public trust towards fintech driven banking by successfully managing primarily the operational risks involved in providing such banking services and other challenges such as financial and personal data security/privacy concerns and uplifting e-service quality while concurrently improving the usability.

Keywords: *Fintech, Banking*

Unfolding the Story of Bank Corporate Governance in Sri Lanka: A Grounded Theory Analysis

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Abstract

The story of bank corporate governance (BCG) in Sri Lanka is peculiar compared to the global convergence trends. The main objective of this paper is to explore how BCG practices are influenced by distinctive social, cultural and political processes at organizational and society levels which go beyond economic rationality as advocated in traditional corporate governance models, i.e. shareholder and stakeholder. Using grounded theory methodology, this study employed 33 semi-structured interviews, four focus-group discussions, and document analysis in data collection. Participants of the study were approached as informed by theoretical sampling and consisted of executive level bankers, regulators, an economist, a financial journalist, officers from international rating and auditing companies. A pilot study was conducted to enhance the sensitivity to the BCG phenomenon and to enlighten the formulation of an interview guide. This paper comprehensively discussed the ten core categories developed in the open coding stage of the main study by abstracting 2,339 open concepts. These open categories are: pressure groups, cultural features, social obligations, ownership concentration, market structure, enforcement, board performance, employee affiliations, managerial opportunism, and disclosure bias. These open categories were further abstracted into broader categories in the axial coding stage namely: path dependent identity, socio/economic change, market condition, accountability, and transparency. These sub-categories, which represent paradigm model components, were then linked to the phenomenon 'political clientelism in BCG', which formed the basis of substantive theory development. Findings implicate the importance of exploring BCG with due sensitivity to the diversity and context in which they are embedded. The paper offers useful insights for policymakers in identifying context-specific factors that influence the governance practices in banking institutions in Sri Lanka and will support in deciding the most appropriate corporate governance model which will impede unethical corporate behaviors to make banking institutions as responsible social entities in the economy.

Keywords: *Grounded Theory, Banking Sector*

Effectiveness of Internal Audit Reporting in the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study is to find out significant factors affecting the effectiveness of internal audit reporting in the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka. Factors cover accountability & transparency, audit evidence, competence of internal auditors, independence of internal auditor, materiality, performance audit, true and fair view, and usage of resources and facilities. Primary data was used in this study, were collected from heads of the departments or divisions and internal auditors of the Northern Provincial Council through a Likert scale questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics were performed with the help of SPSS. Mean analysis confirmed that internal audit evidence and internal audit reporting is above satisfaction level in the Northern Provincial Council of the Sri Lanka. Regression analysis confirmed that factors tested in this study significantly impact the effectiveness of internal audit reporting in the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka, those factors have 67.5% impact. Further, correlation analysis revealed that accountability and transparency, independence of internal auditors, true and fair view, and performance audit have significant positive relationships with the effectiveness of internal audit reporting in the Northern Provincial Council of Sri Lanka. According to the findings of the study, top management and internal auditors should consider accountability and transparency, independence of internal auditor, performance audit, true and fair view, and usage of resources and facilities, to increase the effectiveness of internal audit reporting in the Northern Provincial Council and other similar government sector institutes in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Internal Audit, Reporting*

Audit Committee Characteristics and Financial Performance: A Study of Insurance Companies Listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange

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Abstract

This research investigates the influence of the audit committee's characteristics on the financial performance of Insurance companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange from 2015 to 2019. Recent economic crisis and accounting outrages create the audit committee as a continuous investigative topic. However, there are still few studies examining the relationship between audit committee characteristics and firm financial performance, especially within Asia. Hence, this study aims to fill this literature gap by analyzing the above mentioned relationship and contributing to the existing literature. This study constructed audit committee characteristics as the independent variable measured by Audit Committee Independence, Audit Committee Size, Audit Committee Competency, and Frequency of Audit Committee Meeting. The financial performance was taken as the dependent variable which was measured by Return on Assets and Return on Equity. To analyze the data, this study utilized the panel data methodology with STATA software. Findings of the study show that Audit Committee Independence, Audit Committee Size, Audit Committee Competency, and Audit Committee Meetings are positively correlated with financial performance. Linear regression technique revealed R² value of 40.84%, which indicates 41% of the observed variability in the firm financial performance (ROE) is explainable by the Audit Committee characteristic while R² value of 43.24% indicates 43% of the observed variability in the firm financial performance (ROA) is explainable by the Audit Committee characteristic, which implies that 60% of the variation in financial performance can be explained by some other factors/variables not considered in this study.

Keywords: *Audit Committee, Financial Performance*

Quality of Management Graduates in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Graduates are the main output of the universities, and higher education institutions (HEIs) and graduate qualities (GQ) are highly concerning when they are recruiting for a job. In the job market, employers cannot absorb all graduates, and they willingness is to recruit most qualified graduates according to their level of competencies, skills, and attributes. Most employers argue that graduates lack necessary skills, competencies, and due to that graduates' employability become a critical problem in the society. To address this problem, the current study was designed to identify and analyze the factors affecting the quality of management graduates in state universities in Sri Lanka. This study considers the quality of management graduates as the dependent variable while knowledge, business skills, personal attributes, and work experiences are considered as independent variables. This research was done based on Quality of management graduates in Sri Lankan Apparel Industry. Sample size comprises 77 managerial level employees in the Colombo district apparel industry. The data was collected through a questionnaire using convenience sampling method. Linear regression model, correlation analysis, descriptive analysis was used in the analysis process. The findings revealed that knowledge, business skills, personal attributes, and work experiences significantly affect the quality of management graduates in state universities of Sri Lanka. Personal attributes and work experiences were found relatively strong, whereas knowledge and business skills were at a moderate count. The study found that managerial level employees from the sample of apparel industry pointed out that they were not fully satisfied with the quality of management graduates in state universities in Sri Lanka for all four factors.

Keywords: *Quality Management, Graduates*

Determinants of Strategic Sourcing in Apparel Industry of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Supply chain effectiveness is achieved mainly through efficient sourcing function and this study aimed to determine the factors affecting strategic sourcing, impact of each determinant and to identify the ways of improving the sourcing process in Apparel industry of Sri Lanka. The study population was targeted to those who are engaged in sourcing of five top ranked players in the industry. A sample of 300 respondents were considered under stratified sampling method and Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 used to analyze the gathered data. Through a factor analysis, seven factors have been identified as the determinants of strategic sourcing such as supplier's business growth, supplier's economic, supplier's commercial, quality, environmental, reliability and cost factors. A linear regression analysis was undertaken to distinguish the impact of each identified determinant on strategic sourcing and resulted all the components were positively influenced on strategic sourcing. Furthermore, summarized supplier's reliability factor is the most important factor in decision making when considering the coefficient value of strategic sourcing. Thus, it is recommended to policy makers of the companies to observe this concept wisely to identify where the policies should be inserted and loosen accordingly. According to the descriptive statistics results, it was found that the most successful ways of improving the sourcing process in Apparel industry of Sri Lanka as Strategic supplier relationship management, Vertical Integration, Ready-made or Semi-finished, Vendor Managed Inventory and Alternative sourcing.

Keywords: *Strategic Sourcing, Apparel Industry*

Reward System and Employee Motivation: A Study on the Banking Sector in Northern Province

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Abstract

Motivation is fundamentally the underlying drive of individuals to accomplish tasks and goals and is the most vital thing in any organization for uninterrupted operation which means the process of stimulating people to actions to accomplish the goals. Though there are many elements that can influence employee motivation including, organizational structure, the integrity of company operations, and company culture, one of the best ways to heighten motivation is through an effective reward system. In the workplace, it is especially important to motivate employees so that they meet their full potential. This motivation is an internal and cognitive thing that can either given by financial or non-financial rewards. This reward system consists of wages & salaries, bonus and promotion, advancement opportunities to completion of tasks, working condition, recognition and career development. The bond between reward and motivation is relying upon in many countries to induce changes in organizations in a positive way. Nowadays, organizations are motivated to establish an equitable balance between the employee's contribution to the organization and its contribution to the employee. Among other things, establishing a balanced provision of rewards and reward management systems in an organization is one of the basic factors that optimize employees' motivation. Rewarding good performance is a challenging task. A less number of studies were addressed about the motivation and reward system in the banking sector especially in Northern Province. Banking employees should be available on all days due to the competitiveness in the banking industry. Hence the reward system should be designed according to the motivational level of employees. Thus, this research is aimed at identifying the impact of a reward system on employee motivation in the banking sector. The independent variable is reward system and employee motivation is the dependent variable. The Survey method was used as the method of data collection and the population comprised of the employees representing both the government and private banks in Northern Province. The sample includes 150 employees. Data processing and analysis were facilitated by the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study used Regression analysis for data analysis purpose. The study established that there is a significant impact of reward system on employee motivation that is 0.623 and the findings are in accordance with previous research. Therefore, this research also proved that the impact of reward system on employee motivation in the banking sector employees in Northern Province is existing as the reward is one of the prime factors which boosts to work to employees in the banking sector.

Keywords: *Reward System, Employee Motivation, Banking Sector, Northern Province*

Session 1 E

**Micro, Small and Medium Size
Enterprises**

How does COVID-19 influence the MSME Sector in Sri Lanka?

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Abstract

Micro Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector is considered to be the backbone of an economy where a strong MSME sector contributes towards the economic stability and well-being of a country. More importantly, technology plays a critical role in developing business performance as technological know-how is vital to surviving amidst COVID-19 outbreak. Hence, it motivates the entrepreneurs to improve their awareness of technology and use new technology to improve business performance. Further, it has been identified that entrepreneurial competencies are important to ensure higher business performance, where most successful entrepreneurs utilize their competencies to improve business performance. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate the changes in technological literacy, entrepreneurial competency, and business performance amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka. The study was conducted as a quantitative, cross-sectional study while the data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 48 entrepreneurs of micro and small enterprises. The results of the study reveal that there is a significant difference in technological literacy, business performance, and entrepreneurial competency amidst COVID-19. The level of commitment of the entrepreneurs is found to be improved significantly after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, technological literacy is found to be less developed among micro and small entrepreneurs. Therefore, policymakers need to focus on developing suitable strategies to improve their technological know-how.

Keywords: *Business performance, COVID-19, Entrepreneurial competency, Micro and Small Enterprises, Sri Lanka, Technological literacy*

Impact of Market Orientation and Performance Measurement Orientation on Firm Performance

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Abstract

Effective management of Small and Medium Enterprises' (SME) performance is a crucial task as SMEs are recognized as the backbone and national economies' growth engine. They play an important role in many directions such as economic growth, job creation, innovation, and sustainable development. Prior research discuss links between market orientation (MO) and firm performance, and between performance measurement system (PMS) and firm performance. However, studies on the reciprocated influence of the two perspectives on SME performance is limited. Empirical data were collected through a survey from Sri Lankan SMEs, and the instrument included 59 five-point Likert scale statements. Pretest data from 35 respondents were analyzed to identify the relationships between MO, Performance measurement orientation (PMO), and SME performance. According to the pretest results, MO as well as PMO, has a positive relationship with SME performance. However, a post-study with a larger sample of 73 responses did not establish the relationship between MO and SME performance but established the relationship between PMO and SME performance. The novelty of the study stems from three angles by (1) being the first study explaining performance orientation, which consists of adoption of PMS and use of performance information; (2) providing insights on how SMEs performance can be influenced by managing MO, PMO, and other factors; and (3) listing the factors that influence MO and PMO.

Keywords: *Market Orientation, Performance Measurement, Performance Measurement Orientation, Firm Performance, Small and Medium Enterprises*

Changing the Dimension of SME-led Business Model in the Context of Covid-19 Pandemic: Evidence from Agro-based SMEs in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the Sri Lankan economy is tremendously regretful. It is estimated that economic growth of Sri Lanka will decline to 2.2% in 2020 due to the adverse impact of Covid-19 pandemic. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are to be considered as the most affected sector from the Covid-19 pandemic due to their specific features. Specifically, the second circle of the crisis in the SME sector is expected owing to non-acknowledgement of changes in specific features of SME-led business models in the crisis environment, such as changes in demand and supply sides of the goods and services markets, and changing behavior of the financial markets due to increased uncertainty and risk in production. Thus, this investigation attempts to recognize the changing features of an SME-led business model to minimize the impact of the second circle of Covid-19 based economic crisis on the SME sector in Sri Lanka. In this connection, the study applied a case study method, as it is an in-depth investigation technique. Five case studies in different sectors in agro-based industries – Dairy Products, Spices Products, Green Products/Organic Agro Products, Handicaps, and Cashew Products - were selected, and in-depth interviews were held with owners of the selected SMEs in August 2020, the period of removing Covid-19 restrictions. The results first revealed specific features of the SME-led business model – high dependency on local material suppliers with strong business confidence, high dependency on local buyers, lack of entrepreneur developed distribution network, and high social contacts with workers. Second, the findings exposed the changes in consumer demand schedule, damages in a distributional network, deterioration in welfare status of workers, issues in financial liquidity management, and positive perception towards the environment. The study concludes that SMEs' readiness to face changing business environment in the context of Covid-19 pandemic is essential to survive in the market to confront the second circle of the crisis.

Keywords: *Small and Medium Enterprises, Business Models, Covid-19 pandemic*

Survival Challenges of Traditional SMEs with Cultural Heritage in Contemporary Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a significant role in any country irrespective of its development level by generating employment opportunities, contributing to the GDP, poverty reduction, and stimulating innovations and other economic dynamism. Sri Lanka, as a developing country, has applied many development strategies to gain socio-economic development. The country is still grouped into the “developing” category. Therefore, as a possible solution to address the issues in achieving development in Sri Lanka, the SMEs’ improvements are a highly required aspect in the competitive and efficient market today. As a change agent of the country’s economy, the Sri Lankan SMEs weakness rate is as high as 45%. Hence, this research’s primary purpose was to shed light on challenges faced by traditional SMEs within the Sri Lankan context and recognize the impact of structural adaptation for their networking success. Primary qualitative data were collected via 12 case studies, employing a random sampling method, and the data were analyzed under the thematic analysis method. The study revealed that the traditional SMEs are recognized for their generationally inherited opportunities; they intricately connect with their inborn knowledge to start up their businesses. Primarily, in the initial phase, culturally inherited generational knowledge, and the cultural identity of the country have positively impacted traditional SMEs to survive in the current market. The most perceived obstacles of the study were categorized into five components as financial difficulties leading to lack of further investments, insufficient raw materials, lack of trained labor, inability to access the market, and legal sanctions adversely affecting the overall business growth. Moreover, inadequate technology innovations and the increase of import substitutes change the customer preference, middle-men involvements corresponding with marketing issues, stagnation of the youth interest towards the traditional ventures impacting on prolonging the tradition, and inadequate attention of the relevant agencies associated market exclusion. Thus, the study highlights the necessity of policy reforms, emphasizing traditional entrepreneurs’ needs, and strengthening via structural adaptation concerning the tourism industry.

Keywords: *Challenges, Market, Sri Lanka, Traditional SMEs*

Impact of Internet Usage on Export Performance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The use of the internet in improving business performance is an area that has been widely studied globally. However, there are significant limitations in how this has been studied in the Sri Lankan context, particularly in the case of exports and imports. Therefore, this study aims to explain the relationship internet usage has on the impact of perceived trade barriers and perceived export performance of Sri Lankan Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Using a sample of 72 local businesses, the study will explain the direct relationship between internet usage and the perceived export performance of Sri Lankan exporters while also looking at the mediating role of perceived export barriers. This study incorporates a quantitative methodology and adopts a survey approach for data collection. The sampling frame consisted of micro as well as small and medium enterprises based on the number of employees employed. All firms selected for the study were currently engaged in the export business in Sri Lanka and the analysis was conducted incorporating SPSS. The study illustrates that internet usage has a positive relationship with perceived export performance while internet usage has a negative relationship with perceived export barriers. These findings are in line with much of the findings of other studies conducted internationally. Further, the study's results reveal that perceived export barriers do have a mediating effect on the relationship between internet usage and perceived export performance in case of MSMEs in Sri Lanka. This mediating effect reveals that perceived export barriers can be mitigated by the use of the internet resulting a higher export performance.

Keywords: *Export Barriers; Export Performance; Internet Usage; Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); Survey Method*

Effect of Internal Control System on Employee Performance: With Special Reference to Small-Scale Manufacturing Enterprises in Hambantota District, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Internal Controls are viewed as the actions undertaken by an organization to realise its vision and mission using a set of policies and procedures that prevent wastage and fraudulent activities. Employee performance may be delineated as the life wire of an organization. The main purpose of the study was to examine the influence of the internal control system on employee performance in small scale manufacturing enterprises in the Hambantota district of the Southern Province. Out of registered small-scale enterprises in the Small Enterprise Development Division of Hambantota district, 100 randomly selected small-scale manufacturing enterprises formed the sample for the study. Primary data was collected through self-administered 5 points Likert scale questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis. Descriptive analysis revealed that all the five components of internal control system which the Control environment, Risk assessment, Control activities are implemented to a large extent while Information and communication and the monitoring implemented to a moderate extent in the selected small-scale manufacturing enterprises. Four components of the perceived employee performance which are; employees complete their work timely is showed great extent while employees do their work properly, employees are punctual to work, and employees are loyal to the organization are showed little extent in the sample. Regression analysis found that the components of internal control system that had a positive significant effect on the employee performance inclusive control environment and monitoring. Correlation analysis confirmed that there is a positive significant relationship between two components of internal controls (control environment and monitoring) and employee performance. The study concluded that an internal control system has a significant influence on employee performance of small-scale manufacturing enterprises in Hambantota district.

Keywords: *Internal Controls, Employee Performance, Small Enterprise*

Session 2 A

Education

ESL Teacher-trainees' Reading and Writing Competence: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

National Colleges of Education (NCoE), being the pioneering teacher-trainers in Sri Lanka are responsible for producing prospective ESL (English as a Second language) practitioners through meaningful pre-service training. The study aims to examine to which extent the ESL teacher-trainees achieve the expected reading and writing skills at the end of their pre-service training. To this end, a purposive sample of eighty prospective teachers of English in four NCoEs were tested on reading and writing skills through a standardized test, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to identify their reading and writing levels. The findings indicate that 47.5% of the total sample obtained less than 40 marks for the TOEFL writing while 41.3% of participants' TOEFL reading results were also significantly very low. Notably, there was a positive correlation between the external final examination marks for reading and writing conducted at the NCoEs and the TOEFL test results where the correlation-coefficient value was 0.65 in reading and 0.62 in writing. This validates that teacher trainees in NCoEs have not achieved the required reading and writing competence in English. Thus, their capability for strengthening the English language teaching and learning in the primary and secondary education system in Sri Lanka is a question. However, the findings ensured that by standardizing the English curriculum at NCoEs, learner outcomes can effectively be enhanced, and thereby NCoEs may produce qualified English teachers with accepted professional standards. The study has implications for all stake holders involved in designing and delivery of English teacher education programmes at NCoEs.

Keywords: *Reading and Writing Competence, ESL Teacher Training*

A Study on the Impact of Age in Language Acquisition

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Abstract

Language acquisition is the process by which humans acquire new languages. A child starts acquiring a language at six months after birth, and it is known as child language acquisition. The objective of this study is to explore whether age plays a role in acquiring a new language. One Sinhala family residing near a Tamil neighbourhood and one family living in Japan and two families living in United Kingdom with children between 10-18 years were taken into concern in gathering data. The language fluency of the participants was examined with the participation of native speakers. Direct interviews were conducted with the family residing in Sri Lanka, and virtual interviews were conducted with families living abroad to find the language fluency of each member of the family. Further, discussions with linguists were conducted in gathering data. Linguistics books related to this field were also studied in the process. After a comprehensive study of the collected data, several factors were revealed. Children below the age of ten, residing near the Tamil community proved more fluent in the Tamil language than their parents'. Moreover, the children and youth living abroad, irrespective of age, showed fluency in handling their respective languages. Additionally, the parents' language fluency compared to the children was weak. Yet one family from the United Kingdom was exceptional compared with other families in which parents possess the same language competency as the children. Thus, the data as a whole elucidate that children irrespective of age are more vigilant in acquiring a new language while parents, in the presence of necessity and motivation, have the same capacity to acquire a language like the children.

Keywords: *Age, Language Acquisition*

Academic Literacy-oriented Structural Arrangements in English Medium Degree Programmes in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Mainstreaming academic literacy is viewed as the best approach to develop undergraduates' academic literacy in English Medium Degree Programmes (EMDPs) (Jacobs, 2006; McKenna, 2014). This study examines academic literacy practices in EMDPs in undergraduate management, science, and social sciences/humanities. The academic literacies framework of Lea and Street (2006) which discusses three models - study skills, academic socialization and academic literacies has been used as the basis for identifying academic literacy practices in EMDPs in three state universities of Sri Lanka. A qualitative research design was employed in this study, and data collection was done through lecturer interviews and official documentation in the form of curricula and pedagogical practices. Findings reveal that the study skills view of academic literacy as an autonomous list of transferable General English skills in the mode of English as a Second Language (ESL) is the commonest practice in the three institutions. The next commoner practice is the academic socialization model in the form of English for Academic Purposes (EAP)/ English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in which students are inducted into a set of standard norms uncritically (McKenna, 2014). The third model – the academic literacies model or mainstreaming

Keywords: *Academic Literacy, Second Language*

Eye Tracking to Assess the Use of Reading Strategies

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Abstract

Reading is known as a complex cognitive process and a challenging area especially, in the context of English as a Second Language. Among the language skills, reading is considered one of the most important skills for English as a Second Language learner obtaining higher education to explore information for their studies. Regarding the reading process, the readers should master comprehension to construct a representation of the text. English reading comprehension is essential for the academic setting and future career, with reference to undergraduate students. However, still second language (L2) readers struggle to comprehend authentic texts even though reading proficiency can enhance a learner's academic improvement. Thus, this quantitative study attempts to investigate the use of reading strategies during reading by English as a Second Language undergraduates using eye-tracking technology. The study employed eye-tracking technology, which is a window into language and cognition. The setting for this study was the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Moratuwa. Fifty-six first year undergraduates with the same language proficiency who were selected by their test scores obtained from the general English course participated in this study. The data were gathered using a pretest and a post-test with regard to the University Test for English Language (UTEL) benchmarking scheme. The sample of the research study was divided into two groups, experimental and control group, consisting 28 in each. The results of the data analysis showed that P-value (*Sig.*) was smaller than alpha ($0.000 < 0.05$). The mean score of the experimental group (75.57) was higher than the control group (55.17). This demonstrates that both the reading strategies; skimming and scanning have a positive impact on assessing reading comprehension during reading. This study will contribute to the field of English language teaching in Sri Lanka and further research studies are needed to be conducted.

Keywords: *Reading Strategies, English Language*

Alter Ego 1 and General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) Syllabus: An Analysis of Objectives

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Abstract

In Foreign Language Teaching, including Teaching French as a Foreign Language, we are faced with the challenge of adapting foreign manuals according to local students' needs. It is questionable whether the said manuals which are designed according to foreign pedagogical approaches, contribute to developing the desired language competencies among Sri Lankan students. The present research was an attempt to review the correspondence between the oral communicative and cultural objectives of the G.C.E. Advanced Level Syllabus of French Language and those of *Alter Ego 1*, manual prescribed by the curriculum for Grade 12 students of French Language. It was also expected that the research would help to understand, to some extent, the students' and teachers' reluctance to use the prescribed manual in the classroom since its introduction in 2009. Thus, the present research analyzed in detail the manual *Alter Ego 1* to understand to which extent its content corresponds to the oral communicative and cultural objectives of the Advanced Level Curriculum. The findings showed that the said manual correspond well with the objectives of the curriculum except for the fact that the themes proposed are limited to France and Francophone countries and are, therefore, too distant from the realities encountered by local students. To overcome this problem, teachers of the French language could utilize supplementary pedagogical materials that are best adapted to the communicative needs of local students. Further, the research showed that the adaptability of foreign manuals could not be determined only by theoretical analysis of documents. It is important to carry out an analysis at a practical level to observe if and how the aforementioned objectives are achieved by students with the help of these manuals.

Keywords: *Alter Ego, Syllabus*

Challenges in Fostering Autonomy in an English Language Classroom: A Review

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Abstract

It is a challenge for teachers to create an autonomous language learning environment to make learners aware of the importance of autonomy in the lifelong learning process. Encouraging learners to reflect and take responsibility for their learning has become crucial in language teaching in the recent past. The objective of this paper was to determine the challenges and constraints experienced by English teachers to enhance autonomy among learners. Eleven research studies conducted from 1996 to 2018 were taken into consideration for this review paper. The review findings revealed that many of those studies focused on teachers' attempt to change the attitudes of the learners' lethargy, low relationship/interaction with teachers, over-dependency on teachers, low motivation levels, and lack of skills. Situations both in and outside the classroom indicate that teachers are mainly affected due to insufficient language teaching aids like textbooks, technical equipment, resource personnel, mixed ability groups, traditional classroom settings, exam-oriented work plans, and institutional rules and regulations. Further, a little exposure to the target language among teachers and lack of innovative teaching methodologies pose a challenge to teaching. Teachers are further challenged by administrative rules and regulations, textbook-based syllabuses, including lessons with rote learning, limited time allocations, and lack of parental interactions with the teacher. Primarily, the studies, especially in Arabic contexts, highlight cultural reasons and teachers' attitudes like self-esteem and fear of giving control of the learning process to learners as a mark of losing power matters in this situation. As reflected in the review, it can be concluded that fostering autonomy is essential in learning situations in classrooms with a large student population where teachers are unable to attend to every learner individually and also for the learners who lack English language exposure outside the classroom with less supportive parents.

Keywords: *Autonomous Language, Classroom*

Challenges and Opportunities faced by Undergraduates using E-learn Facilities in Education: Special Reference to Students in the Communication Stream of the Open University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The COVID 19 pandemic transformed many aspects around us, including human lifestyle, education and the overall functioning of economies around the world. Stakeholders in education, most importantly, students and teachers, had to explore novel ways to disseminate knowledge as the global pandemic forced schools and universities to close down. This was a challenging situation for students as well as for teachers, which made them adapt to new contexts. The primary objective of this study seeks to examine the challenges and opportunities faced by second-year undergraduates following a compulsory course in the Communication Studies stream of the BA Degree in Social Sciences programme offered by The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). The Technology Accepted Model (TAM) was used to form the theoretical framework of the study. Due to the pandemic situation, students had to engage in their studies using ICT tools/facilities and with very minimal (or no) physical contact sessions. Reflections of 85 students were gathered through written feedback where the researchers attempted to examine the challenges/opportunities faced by them when learning through Elearning facilities. The data gathered was coded and then analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. Lack of training at the initial stage, poor infrastructure, poor access to internet facilities, and Income and social disparities stood as the main challenges faced by students when they used e-learn platform in this study. Cost effectiveness, flexibility and skill development, and confidence are the main opportunities students can obtain through E-learn. However, many students believed that E-learn facilities enabled them to continue with their studies without long delays. This study suggests that students should be given proper awareness and training on these different E-learning facilities before commencing studies. Therefore, although internet-based learning is useful, it is hereby proved that this prospect can be considered for the future endeavor in designing programs for students in higher education. However, government and institutional support are fundamental for the effective implementation in designing E-learn for the undergraduates.

Keywords: *Undergraduates, E-learn*

Sentiment Analysis on YouTube Comments: A Glimpse

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Abstract

The uplift of social media websites has conjointly attracted the users nearer to video sharing sites, like YouTube. The on-line users precise their opinions or sentiments on the videos that they watch on those sites. Sentiment analysis or opinion mining is the area of learning about the way to analyze opinions, sentiments, evaluations, attitudes, and feelings of users, which they express on social media and different online resources. This challenge provides a quick survey of ways to investigate opinions denoted by customers about a specific video. Detection of Sentiment Polarity of user comments on YouTube may be a difficult task for researchers to date. Plenty of labor is finished during this regard; however, still have a protracted thanks to head to overcome this downside. Text Blob is a Python library for processing textual data. It provides an easy API for diving into common natural language processing tasks. The study has taken a dataset from a YouTube video named "Is There Intelligent Life on Other Planets" through running a Python script. Perform sentiment analysis on them, showing the results of its polarity either positive (1), negative (-1), and neutral (0) response and the accuracy of the model. This work presents a brief survey of techniques to analyze opinions denoted by users on an explicit video. It has not used subjectivity, solely targeting the polarity of the comments, how Polarity and subjectivity play a role and works. The projected logistic regression offers 90% accuracy, 90% precision, and 91% recall. The study had limitations in YouTube comments with information like validity, clearness, Language barriers, and sentiment dictionary limitations. And also, this text blob technique solely provides polarity to support the text and not in relation to the context of the video.

Keywords: *Sentiment Analysis, YouTube*

Challenges and Opportunities in Using Mobile Learning to Continuation of Learning Process During Lockdown for Selected Secondary School Students in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Shifting the prevalent conventional teacher-centered classroom into an Open and Distance Learning (hereafter ODL) platform with the use of Mobile Learning Environments (hereafter MLE) and Social Network Services (hereafter SNS) was the recommendation of the world bodies such as UNESCO, as well as the local authorities during the lockdown. This study was conducted as a part of a major study which seeks the feasibility of mobile learning for school children, to find out the challenges and opportunities of using MLE and SNS to continue the education process during the lockdown. Data collection was done using the teachers' comments through an online survey and students' feedbacks using telephone and SNS based interviews. According to the findings, the significant challenges for the students were the inability to meet the infrastructure requirements needed to set up an MLE and data usage. The majority of the students face difficulties as they do not possess a suitable device as well as the low network coverage, which make it challenging to participate in live online teaching sessions. According to the information received by the teachers, participation in online sessions was around thirty per cent or less in the live sessions. As a solution, most of the teachers shift from live sessions to SNS based sessions using recorded sessions and e-document based activities. Another significant challenge was the digital literacy of the teachers in most, as well as the students. However, the teachers (81.7 %) and the students (85 %) were positive and willing to adhere to m-learning pedagogy and stated the necessity of proper awareness of the platform and the tools. Further research is needed to find out the feasibility of implementing a Learning Management System using Open Educational Resources as a mean of scaffolding the students as well as a repository for teachers.

Keywords: *Challenges, Lockdown, Mobile Learning, Secondary School Students*

Session 2 B

Education

A Study on the Efficacy of Online French Language Teaching via Zoom at the French Language Institute of Alliance Française de Kotte

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Abstract

The technological component of French language teaching is constantly growing with zoom technology. The objectives of this research are to examine the efficacy of French language teaching through zoom application at the French language institute of Alliance Française de Kotte and to identify the challenges faced by the students. The study is based on the data collected from a pre-test, and a post-test to measure the progress of the students, and a student questionnaire to examine the attitude of the students towards the zoom sessions. The sample consisted of seventeen students of the intermediate level. The method applied for the analysis is descriptive qualitative research. The results of the analysis indicate that online learning presents challenges for many students even though it enhances the language level of the students. Learners' issues included learners' expectations, readiness, identity, and participation in online courses. It is found out that the lack of collaboration on online instruction turns students into passive observers rather than active participants and the lack of visible body language of their teacher and the other students reduces their motivation. Moreover, it is proven that without the classroom setting and the company of their friends, some students begin to feel a strong sense of isolation that slowly erodes their desire to learn. In conclusion, the study shows that teaching the French language via zoom is not as effective as conducting classes face-to-face. Thus, it is necessary to blend with classroom-based approaches rather than simply making zoom a substitute for classroom courses. Based on the findings, it is recommended to coordinate virtual group activities using chats, discussion boards or cloud tools for collaboration and to schedule regular check-ins with students via email or chat to maintain the classroom dynamic in a digital environment.

Keywords: *Efficacy of Online Teaching, French Language Teaching*

Flipped Classroom Model for 21st Century Teacher Education

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Abstract

The core of teaching is the pedagogical skills that enable the teacher to disseminate knowledge, relevant skills, and good attitudes to the students effectively and smoothly. Poor presentation skills of student teachers affect the scores of their internal assessments and the teaching practicum. During the two-year academic training at Colleges of Education, they are given four teaching practicum spells in different schools and are exposed to real learning teaching situations. This action research was conducted for 22 student teachers with the intention of improving their presentation skills. The objectives in conducting this action research were to identify the reasons for scoring less marks at the teaching practicum spells, to identify a model to improve their presentation skills, and to implement the model for a period of one year. Thus, students were engaged in collaborative activities such as forums, mini-dramas, roleplays, and presentations in the intervention process using the flipped classroom model. According to a considerable amount of related literature, it is evident that the flipped classroom model has been used in different disciplines in many countries to make teachers fit the 21st century teacher education. Here, the student teachers gained first exposure to audio, video, and e-learning outside the classroom. Data were collected through focus group discussions with the student teachers, the records of marks given to them at three-block teaching spells, and the questionnaire given to the lecturers during the last block teaching spell. Paired sample t -Test was used to analyze block teaching marks. A conclusion was drawn after the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. Accordingly, student teachers showed a gradual increase in their marks for the consecutive spells of teaching practicum. Therefore, it is evident that the flipped classroom model can improve both the speaking and presentation skills of student teachers.

Keywords: *Flipped Classroom, Teacher Education*

Job Satisfaction of Graduate Teachers in Secondary Schools of North Central Province

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Abstract

Education is one of the broad indicators of development. One of the primary objectives of education is to produce skilled human resources that can overcome developmental barriers. The role of the teacher in achieving that objective cannot be underestimated. Teachers who play an important role in developing knowledge, attitudes and skills of youth can be considered as the pillars of the nation. The effect of teacher's job satisfaction is directly interrelated with the quality and productivity of the job and it is responsible for the organizational and emotional feelings of the teachers which leads to a worker-friendly atmosphere. This study aims to explore the nature of job satisfaction of the graduate teachers who work at secondary schools of North-Central Province. The sample of the study which selected randomly consists of 700 graduate teachers who work at 1AB and 1C secondary schools in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa districts in the North central Province. Further, quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire selecting randomly. 'Statistical Package for Social Sciences' (SPSS) 21 version has been used to analyze the collected data. Mean score of ten variables were calculated and t-test was also applied in comparison of job satisfaction according to the gender and school type. Research findings showed that the secondary school teachers were satisfied slightly with student relationship and their promotion but not satisfied with salary. There was a significant difference in job satisfaction between the national school & the provincial school graduate teachers. No significant difference was found between male & female teachers relevant to job satisfaction. And also, there was no difference in job satisfaction between 1C school & 1AB school graduate teachers. Finally, it can be concluded that it is important to implement measures to increase the job satisfaction of the graduate teachers by the relevant authority to reap the maximum harvest from the education as expected by the government, educational administrators and principals.

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Education, Graduate Teachers*

An Exploratory Study on Knowledge Acquisition in Work-based Learning

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Abstract

This study is an inquiry into the nature of trainees' knowledge and skills during the teaching practicum, which provides the trainees with exposure to the prospective working situations to gain professional knowledge. This knowledge is criticized at times when the scenario of learning through work is held questionable. Therefore, the study aims to explore the nature of the knowledge acquired by the teacher trainees relating to identifying types of knowledge, means of knowledge acquisition, and ways the trainees use the knowledge. As the study is explorative, a qualitative case study methodology was adopted. Data were obtained through semi-structured interviews from a purposive sample of 25 teacher trainees undergoing the teaching practicum of the Higher National Diploma in English program. In the analysis of the findings using the thematic analysis technique, two major global themes were devised i.e., the potential for knowledge acquisition and potential for effective knowledge use, that are illustrated using thematic networks. The first global theme comprised two sub-global themes, 'acquisition of a variety of knowledge' and 'variety of means for knowledge acquisition', each containing three sets of organizing themes identified from the basic themes emerging from data. They are service requirement, exposure, feedback, work culture, professional knowledge, trainee attitude based on the means and types of knowledge acquisition. The second global theme was deduced from eight organizing themes representing the ways the knowledge is used. They are teaching-learning process, students' evaluation, extra-curricular works, dealing with pupils and co-teachers, handling special need pupils, classroom management, office works, and survival in the field. A comparison of the two global themes on potential for knowledge acquisition and the potential for effective knowledge use concludes the study with an implication to the complementary nature of the relationship between the acquisition and the use of knowledge and skills during the practicum.

Keywords: *Work-based Learning, Teacher Trainees*

An Investigation of the Impact of Undergraduates' Perception of Online Learning among Distance Learners: Evidence from Global Disaster

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the largest disruption of education systems by affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries. This crisis has stimulated innovation within the education sector and different innovative approaches in support of education and training continuity. The best alternatives for distance learning were strengthened. Therefore, the study investigated the impact of undergraduate's perception on online learning among distance learners during the global disaster. The factors of social interactions, administrative, instructor issues, technical problems, technical skills, learner motivation, and academic skills were selected for the study. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. A random sample of 40 undergraduates who are currently studying in the second year at the Open University of Sri Lanka was taken, and data were analyzed using SPSS 23rd version. Reliability was tested with Cronbach's alpha, and multicollinearity was tested with the statistic of Tolerance and Variable Inflation Factor (VIF). Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire was 0.837. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. Finding reveals a positive and significant impact of Undergraduate's perception of online learning among distance learners. $R^2 = 0.681$. Results revealed that administrative, instructor issues, technical problems, and technical skills are the most influential and high impact of online learning. Social interactions and academic skills have less impact on online learning. However, contrary to previous findings, undergraduates were generally satisfied with online learning. Nevertheless, unifying face-to-face learning with e-learning models may help distance learners to cope better with their studies.

Keywords: *Undergraduates, Online Learning*

Classroom Space and Creative Student Engagement: A Focus on the Sri Lankan Drama Classroom

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Abstract

Educational researchers world-wide are committed to exploring ways of promoting student creativity, student engagement and developing effective relationships with students and challenging them to participate actively and take risks in the classroom (Goss & Sonnemann, 2017). However, in order to participate actively and to take risks, students need an appropriate physical classroom space in which to explore. In Sri Lankan classrooms, the pedagogical approaches that teachers employ have significant ground to make up in terms of fostering creative engagement; the traditional talk-and-chalk approach, which is still in vogue, does little to actively engage students' interest. Classrooms, including drama classrooms, continue for the most part to be places where students take notes, acquire content knowledge and memorise facts which they are required to reproduce for examination (Irugalbandara & Campbell, 2020). Effective drama teaching and learning need physical space: space for performance, expression, interaction, and exploration. However, the Sri Lankan classroom environment remains mostly unexplored in investigating the relationship between the physical classroom environment and the teaching and learning of drama when process drama is the method of instruction. This article is based on the findings of a non-randomised control group intervention study, which involved forty teacher interviews, forty classroom observations and two student focus group discussions in secondary schools in Sri Lanka. The observations, interviews and focus groups showed that students who were able to use the school's open-air theatre for the entire intervention period engaged in far more collaborative, energetic, performative and creative behaviours than other classes who were in a confined classroom space with desks and chairs crammed closely together. Implications for the teaching of drama by different methods are discussed in the Sri Lankan context.

Keywords: *Engagement, Drama, Space, Teaching-learning, Sri Lanka*

Session 2 C

Religion and Culture

Gandharan Buddhist Narratives: Have Greek Mythology influenced the Narration of Buddhist Stories in Gandharan Art?

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Abstract

Gandharan Art evolved in the North-Western region of Ancient India. The region, after the conquests of Alexander the Great, came to be ruled by Greeks, Indo-Greeks, Parthians, Bactrians, and Yu-e-zhi, who were also known as Kushans. This political atmosphere made the above region a place of shared culture. The art which was born under this, came to be known as Graeco-Buddhist art: the term denotes the co-presence of Greek and Buddhist elements in a singular form of art. Generally, the Gandharan art or the Graeco-Buddhist art uses popular Greek motifs in depicting Buddhist stories. The Gandharan art has been studied widely, most popularly the emergence of Buddha statue/image under the rule of Kushans at Gandhara. This study explored if the depiction of Greek mythology in Gandharan art has influenced the depiction of Buddhist mythology in Gandharan art. The aim of this paper is to identify Greek mythological motifs, present in Gandharan Art. The Greek motifs will be then compared with their use in depicting Buddhist stories. Methodology of this paper is a historical discourse analysis and an analysis of Sculptural objects found in Gandara. As an example, the depiction of Herakles in Gandharan art may have influenced the depiction of Vajrapani, the protector of the Buddha, thus, the paper analyze the use of the image of Herakles and other motifs in Gandharan art to find out if the use has influenced the early Buddhist mythology. The study also shows the inspiration of iconography of Apollo on the sculptural form of Buddha. Previous scholarly findings and sculptural artefacts in museums will be used to identify the close connections between the Greek mythology and Buddhist mythology. This study argues the presence of Greek mythological influences in the early depictions of Buddhist stories in art.

Keywords: *Gandharan Art, Graeco-Buddhist*

Physical and Mental Well-being of Human Beings: A Religious View

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Abstract

We can see thousands of religions around the world as Buddhism, Christianity, Islamic, Hinduism. Day by day, these religions grow up. The religions had done a significant duty to the world. In this life lot of problems are faced by human beings due to various physical and mental reasons. Some people suffer from mental issues and do harmful and antisocial activities due to at; for instance, they suicide, rape, murder, etc. On such occasions, religions can bring some relief; activities such as meditation, counseling, and practicing mindfulness etc. can be a solution to a great extent. Through this study concentrate on aspects on two points. Religions views and mental well-being. These points mainly relevant with all Animate and Inanimate things. This critical examination aims to investigate characteristics of teachings and methods of ancient religious activities. And here indicate interconnection of clergy and devotees. Far the more here point out the world religious and religion practices for the physical and mental well-being. The research is conducted by mean of worldviews, scarified places, stanza and verses (sutta) other religions literature sources, book and journals. Secondary sources are collected from interviews with some scholars who are practicing religious ritual and sacrificed. The research mainly discussion on problems through investigate what is the value of religions as a tool for humanity and well-being from the suffer world. Religions will positively influence on humanity and happiness. Religion mean not only respecting and praying, It has great philosophical themes. Here religions philosophical points can be used as an excellent strategy for humanity. As well as for the physical and Mental well-being. Here, Address on the aspects of happiness of human being. Find out the relevancy of religion actins for the problems. As well as Discovering the practical usage of religious duties. The research mainly discussion on problems through investigate what is the value of religions as a tool for humanity and well-being from the suffer world. Religions will positively influence on humanity and happiness.

Keyword : *Discourses, Harmony, Rites and rituals, religion, Scripture*

Depiction of Sri Lankan Cultural Identity in Sri Lankan English Novels: A Study Based on the Novels *Paduma Meets the Sunbird* by Nihal De Silva and *Reef* by Romesh Gunasekera

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Abstract

This research study is conducted to determine different techniques used by Sri Lankan English authors to depict Sri Lankan cultural identity in Sri Lankan English novels. Sri Lankan English novels can be considered one of the major media used to stress Sri Lankan identity to a large audience, including local and foreign readers. This study provides the answer to the research question; what sort of techniques are used to depict Sri Lankan culture, and how are they used in the novels. This research study aims to find out different techniques used by the authors to depict Sri Lankan identity in their novels. Further, a qualitative research approach is used when conducting this research study considering two novels namely, *Paduma Meets the Sunbird* and *Reef* written by Nihal de Silva and Romesh Gunasekera, respectively. The terms and phrases which carry a Sri Lankan flavor are identified and classified under four main categories, namely, cultural aspects, equivalence, metaphors and similes, and Sri Lankan English. Then, a content analysis is conducted to identify their contribution to the depiction of Sri Lankan identity. According to the findings of the research study, the authors have used terms and phrases related to social aspects, religious aspects, and myths and beliefs. Moreover, equivalent phrases from Sri Lankan milieus are used throughout the novels. Furthermore, metaphors and similes directly connected to Sri Lankan contexts together with features of Sri Lankan English have been used in the depiction of Sri Lankan identity. The authors have used these techniques instead of terms and expressions from the English language in order to familiarize the story to the readers of every level in Sri Lanka and also to make the story more realistic as the stories are set in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Cultural Identity, English Novels*

The Cultural Impact of Indian Mega Drama's to Sinhala Society

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Abstract

Television and the teledrama have become the dominant indoor recreation source among the Sri Lankan society. And the mega drama has become an addiction to television instead of given freedom of selection to the audience. Especially Sinhala dubbed Indian mega drama plays a significant role in the television and has impacted Sri Lankan media democracy and cultural diversity. It makes a cultural tragedy in Sri Lankan society. The primary objective of the study was to identify the cultural impact of Indian mega dramas on the Sri Lankan society. The secondary objective was to identify the reasons for the over-broadcast of the Indian dramas in the Sri Lankan media as the epidemic and to understand the consequences on the Sri Lankan industry. Primary data was collected from a selected sample of 20 families in Rathnapura using the questionnaire and observation methods. Collected data was analyzed using excel office. This study was limited to concern about the effect of Indian mega dramas on Sri Lankan cultural diversity. And it has only considered the channels that are broadcasted the Indian dramas as Hiru, Sirasa, Derana, and Swarnavahini. This study concluded that a significant proportion has addicted for the Indian dramas and are allured to imitate the outcome of these dramas. As well as most of the private channels in Sri Lanka broadcast the Indian mega drama only for commercial objectives. Furthermore, the outcome of these dramas is not suitable for our culture and it is parallely contrast. The essence of these dramas created a new subculture and violate the customs and tradition of the Sri Lankan culture. Hence, this study will be a significant and timely worth research contribution to the cultural diversity in Sri Lanka.

Key Words: *Indian Mega Drama, Culture, Sri Lanka, Tradition, Television*

Using lighting in cinematography for character portrayal in Cinema with special reference to “The Godfather (1972)”

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Abstract

Portraying the nature of humanity is the challenge of cinema. Lighting in cinema is not only a technical thing or a basic element in a film, but there are more important things behind the cinematic lighting. It creates a more dramatic look and generates depth and atmosphere to the story. Portraying the nature of the humanity using cinema lighting is a challenge cum opportunity in filmmaking. Through this study, my objective is to analyze the use of cinematic lighting to emotions and it defines the psychology of the character with special reference to “The Godfather (1972)” by Francis Ford Coppola. The cinema lighting gives direction to the eyes and tells the audience where to look. The amount, size, color, harshness, and shadows help to develop emotions and it defines the psychology of the character. According to film theory, a film presented in low key lighting will cause more feelings of suspense, mystery, and intrigue, and a film presented in available light will elicit feelings of realness. Francis Ford Coppola’s “The Godfather (1972)” is a movie that used cinema lighting to uncover character psychology symbolically. There are two main paths to study in our research which are film theory and criminal psychology. According to the study, the use of Light as a psychoanalytic symbol to unveil the character’s unconsciousness is visible in the Godfather movie. The use of the harsh contrast of light and dark in the shadow of the Corleone world creates a battle between good and evil within the soul of everyone. Therefore, in conclusion we can see that cinema lighting is the key for character portrayal.

Keywords: *Criminal Psychology, Film criticism, Lighting Technique, Realism, Signs and symbol*

Cultural Borrowings and Core Borrowings

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Abstract

According to the literature on the phenomena of borrowing in languages in contact, a two-way classification is posited to classify them as cultural and core borrowings. This paper aims to examine whether these two categories are sufficient to classify all borrowings and explain the reasons and processes of borrowing. Borrowings are words copied or transferred from a donor language and linguistically integrated into the recipient language and have gained widespread acceptance. As part of an on-going PhD study, this paper examines the naturally occurring written data of Sri Lankan English compiled in the International Corpus of English (ICE). The corpus analysis software, LancsBox, was used to extract an initial word list from which borrowings were manually searched and extracted. The etymology of each borrowing was examined through a google search to ascertain whether speakers resorted to cultural borrowings that filled a lexical gap or core borrowings for which words already exist. The data indicated that words were borrowed from Sinhala and Tamil, the two official languages, and other regional languages such as Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi Portuguese, Dutch, Gujarati, and Malayalam. The multiple origins of the borrowings indicate the rich multilingual history of the country and the lifestyle of the people living in language contact situations. These borrowings that are not captured in the British English lexicon have made in-roads into Sri Lankan English (SLE) through borrowings from these languages to denote concepts and physical objects and concepts that are a part of the lives of the speakers. This paper concludes that a binary categorization of core and cultural borrowings is unable to capture the complex variation found in the borrowings and instead proposes the four categories of core, core-extension, local-cultural and regional-cultural borrowings to fully capture the nuanced meanings in core borrowings and the regional and local influences on cultural borrowings in SLE which is one of the World Englishes.

Keywords: *Cultural Borrowing, Core Borrowing*

Study of Buddhist Temples in “*Nam Potha*” and the Relationship between Man and Environment

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Abstract

It is included that the Buddhist Places *Nam Potha*, which are built up to the 18th Century. *Nam Potha* is a book written in the 18th Century and includes all *Rajamaha vihara* temples and Buddhist places in Sri Lanka. Very few studies have been conducted to identify the *Nam Potha* and its original places. Therefore, this study aims to identify places in *Nam Potha* and its relationship between the man and the environment revealed in those places. With this background, only 98 temples and monasteries were mentioned in *Nam Potha* mapped using the Geographical Information System. The secondary sources were used to explore how the natural environment was used for Buddhist temples; in this sense, the culture nurtured by Buddhism reveals the connection between the environment and man through ancient buildings and shrines. The result shows that the land allotted for temples has been created in a sustainable manner taking into account the topography, land use patterns, roads and water sources. It is clear from the observation of these places that the places of worship have been constructed by making good use of natural locations. Besides, these monasteries have also helped to protect the environment. In the past, Buddhists do not consider overexploitation of forest areas, *Bodhi tree*, *Nagas* and its surrounding areas for their economic activities as well as residence. Ancient people and temples were also built at the beginning of the forest as a strategy to protect the forest. Importantly, we need to understand the underlying principles and mechanisms of the ancient concept of establishing temples. This concept can be used in modern society to protect the environment.

Keywords: *Geographic Information System, Land Use, Nam Potha, Natural Environment, Rajamaha Temples*

Session 2 D

Language and Literature

Translation of Person Names: A Study based on Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and its Sinhala Translation, *Emma Bovary* by Cyril C. Perera

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Abstract

Translating literary texts can be more challenging since most of the literary texts include many terms which are deeply rooted in culture. Person names are a type of such terms which represent the culture of the source text. Person names can simply be defined as the terms that are used to address individuals. These terms can be different from one language to another. Thus, the translator has to apply various strategies to translate these terms into the target language. Many scholars have commented on the translation of person names and most of them have recommended the strategy of transliteration. Yet, there are few other strategies that can be applied in translating these terms. Consequently, this research was conducted to find out how the person names can be translated. Data was collected from the French novel *Madame Bovary* and from its Sinhala translation *Emma Bovary*. The person names in the source text and the target text were identified through the process of content analysis and then, those names in the source text and the target text were listed out for the purpose of comparing them and finding the strategy of translation. As a result, it was discovered that strategies such as naturalization, substitution, expansion, and reduction can also be employed to translate person names in addition to the strategy of transliteration. Furthermore, it was encountered that most of the person names are naturalized according to the morphological pattern of the target language. Similarly, many names were substituted by the kinship terms and it helps the reader to understand the story well. Thus, this research will provide information to address the issue of translating person names.

Keywords: *Cultural Terms, Person Names, Source Text, Strategies, Target Text*

The Impact of using Drama Activities in Improving Chinese Language Vocabulary acquisition among the Chinese Language Special 1st year Students in University of Kelaniya Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Vocabulary is an essential part in foreign language teaching. Drama is one of the approaches which can be applied in enhancing vocabulary and also make students directly participate in a practical learner centered method where the students are able to actively practice vocabulary definitions through physical movement. Educators such as (Cox, 1988; Moffett & Wagner, 1976; Ross & Roe, 1977; Wood & Algozzine, 1994) have recommended supplementing vocabulary instruction with drama activities. The presented research focused on obtaining a thorough understanding about the impact of drama Activities in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and the role of imitation in accelerating vocabulary acquisition among the Chinese special 1st year students in University of Kelaniya. Chinese language special 1st year students have been selected as the research group and all of them have acquired the basics of Chinese language during their 1st year in 2019. Before starting the experiment, the research participants were given a prequestionnaire to evaluate their vocabulary level. In executing the research some selected short video clips have been shown and the students were instructed to make scripts and do short dramas in the class based on the video clips. In the end of this research a posttest has been given to the students. When analyzing the test results the students are more likely to remember new words and were able to communicate with the use of new words in the correct grammatical structures. In conclusion there is a clear difference in between students' previous vocabulary knowledge and the current knowledge. And also, students have actively participated in the drama activities and they have shown a clear improvement during the post test.

Keywords: *Drama Activities, Chinese Language, Vocabulary Acquisition*

A Contrastive Analysis of Tamil and Sinhala Languages Based on Person Deixis

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Abstract

Tamil and Sinhala languages are being used as major languages in Sri Lanka. Both languages come from different language families; while Tamil is classified as a Dravidian language and Sinhala is classified as an Indo Aryan language. This research is a Contrastive analysis of Tamil and Sinhala Languages based on Person Deixis. Person Deixis refers to expressions referring to the speaker, listener and to other persons who may or may not be present in the discourse situations or a participant role of a referent. This research attempts to describe types of Deixis in Tamil and Sinhala languages and to find out the differences and similarities between person deixis of the two languages through a contrastive analysis using descriptive and qualitative methods. The primary data were collected through participatory observation and the secondary data for this research were obtained from related books, journals, articles and websites. Both languages are largely distinct from one another. Accordingly, a number of similarities and dissimilarities are identified. As far as the similarities are concerned; pronouns in both languages are mostly similar when they are used in their root/ basic form except in few cases. As far as the dissimilarities are concerned, person deixis in Tamil and Sinhala languages tend to change their form when they are combined with other grammatical parts of the language. As a result of this, it causes complexities for second language learners to grasp the languages. This research will be an in-depth analysis of such differences and similarities. The Identification of a clear distinction on how the person deixis of the two languages differs from one another will guide to an easy understanding for second language learners.

Keywords: *Tamil Language, Sinhala Language, Person Deixis*

The Language of Covid-19 in the Sri Lankan context: A Morphological Analysis

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Abstract

The pandemic has influenced our lives in many ways. Linguistically, it has transformed our daily discourse by adding a plethora of new words and phrases that will remain with us for quite some time. As a result, many words and phrases have been added to the vocabulary as new. At the same time, many more have been added by simply combining old forms using a variety of morphological strategies. This study will attempt to analyze the new forms that have emerged in the daily discourse of Sri Lankan English speakers. The data for the present study was gathered through an initial survey on print and electronic media conducted from January 2020 to June 2020. The survey was based on electronic media, social media, and selected websites and newspapers. Words were gathered from both print and electronic media to substantiate the findings of the study and to emphasize the popularity and functional usage. The main theory which was used in this research is taken from the book under the title *The Study of Language: Third Edition* by George Yule (2006), to categorize and identify the morphological processes in the new forms that have emerged and to describe the functionality and usage in the Sri Lankan context. The analysis was based on several morphological processes. The finding of the study reveals that users created new words at the outset of the pandemic, mainly through social media websites. The study shows many morphological processes as productive processes used during the period mentioned. New forms are brought into the discourse on the pandemic in Sri Lanka. Many new terms are added as neologisms. The neologism interconnected with the corona virus was portrayed using various lexical items which are found in day to day social interactions as well as in news items in the printed media. Morphological processes such as coinage, acronyms, code-mixing, clipping, reduplication, blending, compounds, direct and indirect borrowings, suffixation are analyzed as the most used processes in the Sri Lankan corpus. In addition, numerous words have acquired semantic change to portray and fit in with the pandemic situation. The findings reveal language change and morphological processes used by speakers to reflect those adjustments in society.

Keywords: *Morphological Processes, Covid-19, Language Use, Sri Lanka*

A Study on Fansub Translation from English to Sinhalese

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Abstract

Fansubs are a new form of audio-visual translation that emerged through the advancements of multimedia and internet technologies where fans of a particular movie would provide translated subtitles that are readily accessible via the internet for other intrigued audience members. This study focuses on the Sri Lankan context of such fansubs to assess the nature of the presentation and the quality of translation by specifically concentrating on English to Sinhalese fansub translations. The methodology follows a qualitative approach where the Sinhalese fansub translation of the movie “Norbit” and its English source script are comparatively analyzed. Analysis of the gathered data suggested that the said fansub translation carries some of the commonly established features of presentation in fansubs, including the use of different font colors throughout the same program, use of subtitles of more than two lines, use of additional notes in different colors, and adding of information regarding the fansub translator. As far as the quality of the translation is concerned, several erroneous facets could be identified on grammaticality and acceptability of translator’s language usage, which include grammar and spelling errors due to absence of proofreading, imprecise translations and inaccurate transference of idioms and culture-specific items, lack of coherence due to direct translation which altogether resulted the movie to reach an international audience without the conveyance of its meaning. The language style of the translation stands out due to the raw translations of vulgar terms, the usage of instantaneous web language, and day-to-day colloquial Sinhalese register, which at times offers the audience a sense of closeness to the movie. In conclusion, this study proves that while an inexperienced translator can follow the common features of subtitle presentation, his/her in-expertise in translation can affect the most integral parts of an audio-visual translation product; the audience, the source, and the translation itself.

Keywords: *Fansub Translation, Audio-visual*

Session 2 E

Culture and Visual Arts

Madness, Sexual Desire, and the Silenced: A Theoretical Analysis of Dharmasiri Bandaranayake's *Thunveni Yamaya*

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Abstract

Thunveni Yamaya, a 1983 film written and directed by Dharmasiri Bandaranayake, does not conform to its contemporary mainstream cinematic episteme. Classified as a Drama/Horror film, the plot revolves around a newly married young couple attempting to, but failing at, consummating their marriage. The objective of this paper is to subject the film *Thunveni Yamaya* to a theoretical discourse analysis with special emphasis on the concepts of madness, sexual desire, and the space of the silenced. The film was watched and reviewed by the author, and an accompanying interview was conducted with Bandaranayake. An insightful analysis of the above-mentioned concepts was made possible using the theoretical frameworks of principally Michel Foucault, Laura Mulvey, Susan Sontag, and Gayatri Spivak. As the analysis reveals, the presentation of psychopathology is intricate and multifaceted. There is no constant called 'madness' that gets authoritatively defined. In fact, the discourse invoked on psychopathology is such that what feels like an obviously deviant form of mentality suddenly becomes rational if we lead ourselves to be taken in by the perspective of the character(s) portrayed as 'mad'. Sex, sexual desire, and the fear of sex are pivotal in the film. Bandaranayake explores how the childhood trauma of being privy to parental sexual intercourse can lead to the adult fear of sex and the paradoxical fantasising of other adults engaging in sexual intercourse. Pervasive gender stereotypes pertaining to sexuality are also admirably defied. The film likewise hosts plays of power among the characters and delves into the impossibility of articulation without a platform; one begins to wonder if any of the characters possess agency or a voice to articulate themselves. A discussion of its controversial themes renders *Thunveni Yamaya* a cinematic masterpiece which requires of the spectator, consistent deconstruction and destabilizing of accepted societal norms and perspectives.

Keywords: *Discourse Analysis, Film Critique, Psychopathology, Sex, Subaltern*

Using Chinese Films to Enhance the Comprehension of Chinese New Year Customs and Rituals among General 2nd year Undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

China is a nation that inherited a profound history beyond 5000 years. During this period, many cultural characteristics have been developed among Chinese citizens. Comprehending culture is also essential in improving the four abilities in a foreign language. Educational Researchers such as Turner (1999), Peter D. Groves (1996) pointed out that watching films is a window into a culture. They highlight particular sectors from the general cultural life of a society. The illustrated research mainly contemplates the topic of the research. The main objective of this research is to analyze how watching movies impact the awareness and understanding about Chinese New Year festival rituals and customs. This is because learning about spring festival customs and rituals can give a clear Introduction to some parts of Chinese cultural values and ethics. In this research, the General 2nd year students studying the Chinese language were selected as the research participants. And all the specified Chinese movies are screened after the year 2009. Before doing the experiment, a pre-questionnaire was given to the undergraduates to recognize their mastery regarding the Chinese spring festival. In conducting the research, we let them watch Chinese movies that comprise information about the spring festival. After the session, the undergraduates were given a post-questionnaire to receive feedback. In evaluating the post-questionnaire with the previous questionnaire, they answered the post-questionnaire with a greater understanding of the customs of the Chinese Spring Festival than with the previous questionnaire. According to this process, undergraduates increased a great deal of insight and a whole knowledge of the Chinese Spring festival rituals and customs.

Keywords: *Chinese Films, Undergraduates*

A Study on How Dress is Misused in the Context of Nationalism

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Abstract

Nationalism can be defined as the practical politics of nations make. Throughout history, nationalism has been promoted using various elements to captivate the general public and the concept of 'Nationalism' and its usages have been diverted from the original meaning. The research problem mainly focuses on how the national dress has been overly misused in the Sri Lankan context and, also, it aims to bring out how influential people, specifically politicians, are promoting a false image of nationalism through the 'borrowed' national dress of Sri Lanka. The objective of this study is to critically analyze how the national dress which is used as an element to promote nationalism is also used to promote racism in the contemporary era. Under the methodology of this study, firstly, primary data were collected to understand the pre-colonial perceptions of dresses and how the dress was adopted as an element to represent nationalism. Secondly, arguments are brought out through critical analysis of post-colonial usage of national dress. National dresses of both genders have become an icon of nationalism even though it does not have any native origin as they were borrowed from the neighbouring India. Even though the national dress has become an element of representing nationalism, it is evident that Sinhala-Buddhism was also promoted along with it. This concept is now highly misused in various areas, including politics, religion, and society. Not only dresses but all other elements related to nationalism have diverted from their original meanings due to the misuse of personal intentions.

Keywords: *Misuse, Nationalism, National Dress, Racism*

An Analysis of the Understandings of the Sri Lankan Tamil Theatre in Making Theatre Criticism

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Abstract

This study deals with the notion of criticism in Sri Lankan Tamil theatre, talks about which is not that much popular unlike the world theatre. No remarkable studies with the aim of assessing the Sri Lankan Tamil theatre's understandings in making theatre criticism have been conducted so far though theatre criticism is the subject of globally academic interest. Thus, finding answer for the unanswered research question "To what extent, does the Sri Lankan Tamil theatre have understandings of making theatre criticism?" is the key objective of this study. Theatre personalities in various departments of the theatre productions were interviewed and the critiques written on popular theatre productions were assessed by making use of the knowledge gathered through Literature Review. In most critiques written on Sri Lankan Tamil theatre in the name of theatre criticism, much attention is paid to discuss the play in detail, doing which is drama criticism that comes under the literary criticism. In newspapers, in the name of theatre criticism, critiques are written as a subjective discourse which reflects the instant reaction of viewing the theatre production, doing which is Theatre Review. Also, critiques written on theatre productions as the newspaper articles are based on philosophical, political and moral grounds, which are non-theatrical. Whilst the theatre criticism is an academic critique in which overall deep analytical discourse of each department of theatre production should be done, most critiques are not written by theatre academics that have knowledge in theatre theories and its applications. From the findings of this study, it has been concluded that the understandings of the Sri Lankan Tamil theatre in making theatre criticism are poor as the role of critic and academic sense of theatre criticism are not understood properly; nevertheless, it has been happening in some form of theatre criticism.

Keywords: *Tamil Theatre, Theatre Criticism*

Driving to Lexical Proficiency via Cognitive Scaffolding

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Abstract

The extensiveness of the vocabulary (breadth), together with the magnitude of the vocabulary (depth) espoused with the efficiency of retrieving and processing the vocabulary (access) altogether constructs the lexical proficiency of a learner. In a context where English is a second language, lexical proficiency determines a great deal of the achievement of outcomes of a degree programme offered in English medium. The study proposes a framework assistive of cognitive scaffolding easing the acquisition of vocabulary grounded on a cognitive-linguistic base. Cognitive skills and knowledge dimensions required for attaining different proficiency levels of vocabulary pyramid are conceptualized as steps of the prospective taxonomy. The strategy for achieving greater lexical proficiency is embedded in a case study based English as Second Language (ESL) input delivered and assessed on an online gaming scenario. Exposition of the dynamics of words is set as the spine of the input executed and validated with a sample of seven self-motivated ESL students studying for language-related disciplines in a state university of Sri Lanka. Aptitude in Averil Coxhead's High-Incidence Academic Word List (AWL) was considered as the index of the intended lexical outcome, instructed via input tested with the assistance of online exercises together with online quizzes created by the researcher. The acquisition of English lexicon was proven effective through the exploration of the extents of dynamics inherent to the lexemes. Knowledge of the dynamics of the word and word-formation was affirmed as the crucial requisite that assisted the learners. The study affirms the timeliness and originality of the online approaches and games on assisting the acquisition of vocabulary. The viability of proposed taxonomy of cognitive skills and knowledge dimensions in vocabulary acquisition prompts avenues for research in lexical.

Keywords: *Lexical Proficiency, Cognitive Scaffolding*

Juvenalian Satires and Editorial Cartoons as Mirrors of the Societal Issues

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Abstract

An editorial cartoon is considered as a primary source that expresses underlying social assumptions and attitudes towards significant events and trends of that society. Similarly, Juvenalian satires, named after Juvenal, a Roman satirist who lived during 60-127 AD, can be considered as reports or expressions of social issues in Rome. The sixteen satires attributed to Juvenal, have different themes to criticize Roman life in a changing political condition of early 2nd Century AD. By connecting these two genres, this study's objectives are to examine the use of satires and editorial cartoons as mirrors or the reports of the societal issues and their common features. The content analysis research method is used to analyze the selected editorial cartoons on social issues and their comparative study with Juvenalian satires. The common features are discussed underplot, exaggeration, colloquialism, topicality, use of myths or folklore, and dramatic incidents. The key findings indicate that both genres report everyday life by highlighting the follies and foibles of the respective society. Even though these two genres belong to different eras, trending topics such as homosexuality, racism, and religious extremism are commonly reported according to their perspectives. However, the standpoint of Juvenal as a satirist and editorial cartoonists show a significant difference when discussing topics such as homosexuality and racism. Generally, the plot is chosen by whatever is amazing and shocking in day-to-day life. Both cartoonists and satirists see a little good in their societies, and therefore, these forms are a way of protest and depicting indignation. The study concludes that there are considerable resemblances between these two genres as social criticisms. Juvenalian satires and editorial cartoons juxtapose with the contribution to the social history and their function as mirrors of the societal issues.

Keywords: *Juvenalian Satires, Editorial Cartoon*

Session 3 A

Sustainability

Evaluation of Heavy Metals Contamination in Tender Tea Leaves Due to Chemical Weeding

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Abstract

Weeds, when present in tea lands, could interfere with the growth of tea by competing with light, nutrients, and water resulting in lowered productivity levels. A dense weed cover could also interfere with routine field practices, viz. fertilizer application, pruning, forking, and hosts for some tea pests and disease organisms. Various practices are adopted for weed management in tea, and these include manual, chemical, cultural, ecological, and biological methods. Integrated Weed Management (IWM) refers to a combination of some or all the above methods and their management to achieve cost-effective and eco-friendly weed control. The chemical weed control (CWC) method is the most convenient and effective method among the various weed management techniques. Unlike manual weeding with implements, chemical weed control minimizes soil erosion and largely eliminates the loss of plant nutrients, which are carried away in the weeds removed from the field. Hence, the CWC method is the most popular method among tea plantations in Sri Lanka now. Thus, the prime objective of this study was to assess Potassium (K), Magnesium (Mg), Copper (Cu), Zinc (Zn), Iron (Fe), Manganese (Mn), Lead (Pb), and Cadmium (Cd) levels in tender tea leaves due to chemically weeded (using Glyphosate) and non-chemically weeded tea lands in Dambetenna tea estates, Sri Lanka. Tender tea leave samples were collected using a simple random sampling technique (n=36), representing both chemically and non-chemically weeded tea lands. The Microwave digestion system and Atomic Absorption Spectrometer (AAS) were mainly employed to analyse the levels of metal concentrations. The collected data were statistically analysed using the student's t-test (95% confidence interval) to compare the metal concentrations of collected tender tea leave samples from chemically and non-chemically weeded lands. Results revealed that the concentration of Pb is significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) in chemically weeded lands. However, the concentration of K, Mg, Cu, Zn, Fe, Mn, and Cd have not exhibited any significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between chemically and not-chemically weeded lands during the six months. Finally, it can be concluded that the level of Pb in the above plantation has presently exceeded its permissible level (0.01 mg/Kg).

Keywords: Tea, Weeding

Elephant Detection System for Reducing Human-Elephant Conflict Based on Convolutional Neural Networks

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Abstract

Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) has been a major concern in forest boundary areas, where wild elephant intrusion threatens the human environment. This conflict is based on both humans and elephants. Conflict also occurs over access to water and competition for land and food. Economic losses happen during predation due to agricultural destruction. The study's main goal is to reduce the HEC in forest border areas. To minimize this dispute humans use different technological and non-technical approaches. As this research is using neural networks and image processing technologies, forest authorities can detect how many elephants are in the nearby forest border areas and distinguish elephants from other animals easily. Then authorities will warn villagers and visitors thus that the dispute between the human and the elephant. The Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) plays a significant role in the identification of elephants by promoting effective image recognition. Increasing the data set will result in making our neural network to learn more feature and perform more accurate identification. The file contains 5000 images of elephants. The models are trained and designed to identify the elephants. We got a very good accuracy after 50 epochs, 92% of the correct sample classification.

Keywords: *Human-Elephant, Conflict, Convolutional, Neural Network*

Extent of Incorporating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Corporate Sustainability Reporting (CSR) of Firms in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were formulated by the United Nations member states in 2015 to ensure prosperity for all nations by 2030 while protecting the planet. Firms possess a major role in achieving these internationally accepted goals as a means of ethical and sustainable investment strategies or practice them as a means of achieving competitive advantage in the long term. In Sri Lanka, although sustainability concepts have been embedded in most of the established companies, communicating their sustainability efforts based on global SDGs using Corporate Sustainability Reporting (CSR) remains at a lower level. The objective of this study is to examine the extent of using SDGs in CSR practices of companies in Sri Lanka. The study further investigates the influence of firm characteristics on this corporate decision. The dataset is compiled from annual reports from 2015-2019 of 25 companies with the highest market capitalization as at June 2020, listed in the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE). Panel data regression model is applied for the data set compiled using Content Analysis to examine the effect of firm characteristics on SDGs reporting. Findings reveal that the number of disclosures incorporating the concepts of SDGs increases gradually through the years from 2015 to 2019, signaling a higher extent of SDG incorporated disclosing in future. Further, the results concluded that firm revenue is a significant factor that affects the use of SDGs in CSR, among Sri Lankan firms. The results further conclude that firms having a higher revenue communicate more of their sustainability performance concerning SDGs in their disclosures. The attitude of firms' top management could encourage firms in building an organizational culture which contributes more towards achieving SDGs and trade regulatory bodies could mediate in the process by designing policies to enhance the quality and content of the sustainability disclosures.

Keywords: *Corporate Sustainability Reporting, Content Analysis, Firm Characteristics, Panel Data Regression, Sustainable Development Goals*

Designing and Introducing 'GREEN' Model to Lead Sri Lankan University Library System towards Green Library Concept: With Special Reference to the Library, University of Kelaniya

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Abstract

As community centers and knowledge hubs, going green has become a great concern in every field including the libraries. Although some green implementations can be evident in some libraries in Sri Lanka, they are not been systematically functioned. This is an extension of previous researches related to green library concept which followed the research framework with five major areas namely, library building, operations and practices, programmes and services, information systems and library collection. Those five areas were covered by 23 indicators. Therefore, designing and introducing a green library model was a current necessity for Sri Lankan library system to regulate their green movements. On the other hand, primitive attention has been given on designing a green library model for universities in many countries including Sri Lanka. Therefore, the sole objective was to design and introduce a green library model for the library, university of Kelaniya which is known as the first state green university in Sri Lanka to go green. After identifying existing green features through self-observation, green implementations which are possible to be practiced in the library were identified and defined through the interviews had with sectional heads of the library. Accordingly, the model was named as 'GREEN' indicating green library practices. The indicators for respective letters depicting G–Gardening, R–Resource sharing, E–Efficiency, E–Environmental friendliness, N–Natural resources. Each factor includes related green implementations which can be practically functioned in the library at present condition. The followings could be identified as the conspicuous, existing green features at present. Indoor and outdoor gardening were concerned in category one. Resource sharing means resource sharing through digital platforms, minimizes physical visits, purchasing, sharing and promoting more e-resources. Efficiency stands for efficient use of office stationery, efficient use of machinery items and equipment, efficient use of telecommunication equipment or having verbal communication and use of cyberspace. Besides energy sources such as water, electricity should be effectively used and a water purifying system as well as a rainwater harvesting facility can be implemented. Under environmental friendliness, Waste management including reduction of plastic, polythene, papers and processes such as composting, recycling papers were highlighted. Natural resources criterium includes the maximum use of natural daylight, air, ventilation to enhance the interior quality and user convenience, local purchasing, energy saving practices, purchasing LCD monitors, LED bulbs etc. in addition to the existing indicators, new possible green implementations could be recommended to be practiced in the library. If this GREEN model was followed and practiced, the green concept can be systemically practiced in the library. As a result, the library can be nominated as a green library in near future.

Keywords: *University Library, Green Library Practices*

The Environmental Impacts of the Central Expressway Project in Sri Lanka: The Residents' Perception

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Abstract

The transportation industry is currently confronting immense changes, and this brings both risk and opportunities. There are many ways the sector could develop to meet these challenges, some evolutionary, others more revolutionary. This research study was conducted on the issues related to the environmental impacts perceived by the local residents' perception resulting from the construction of the Central expressway Project, Sri Lanka. This study was based on survey data collected among the Mirigama Divisional secretariat living within 500m from the central expressway construction. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire based on the random sampling technique. 90% of valid responses were used for the data analysis, and SPSS V.16.0 was used to analyze data. Reliability of the data set was checked through Cronbach's alpha, and 86.9% level of reliability was with the data set. Majority of the responses were males having a secondary education level. On average, many of the respondents reported being affected by environment impacts of the construction project. The factors; water quality and quantity ($r = -.135$), air dust ($r = -.429$), and general lifestyle ($r = -.315$) are comparably important and seemed to have a direct impact on resident perception. However, other factors such as noise and vibration level, flood/water supply and drainage pattern, and soil erosion, and earth stability are important as their impact is long term. People react differently to environmental impacts driven by highway construction. The R^2 value is .338; this implies other factors; social and economic, should be considered. The Central Expressway has been a sizable social and economic investment for Sri Lanka. It is hoped that this study may add to creating an enabling climate for the mitigation of both social and environmental impacts and be a narrative for projects of similar nature yet to come, particularly about the impact management and environment impact assessments.

Keywords: *Environmental Impact, Expressway*

Factors Affecting Attitudes on the Green Purchase Intention of Eco-friendly Products in University Students

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Abstract

As much destruction has been caused to the world through pollution and human behavior, the need to shift to using eco-friendly products has risen. 'The use of eco-friendly products' has not been a very familiar concept in the local community and has begun to emerge in the past few years. The study focused on a quantitative approach with the sample ($n = 380$) collected from students of the four main state universities within the Western Province to understand a Sri Lankan perspective of green purchase intention and the factors that affect the attitudes of such consumers. Thus, with this intention, a survey strategy was designed using stratified sampling, and a self-administered questionnaire was used as the research instrument in data collection. In light of analyzing the data using statistical techniques, factor analysis was applied as the analysis tool to identify latent factors of the variables. The findings of the study focused on describing the sample profile and further identifying any statistical differences of demographic and socio-economic variables related to purchasing intention. The findings resulted in depicting the general profile of the sample and the effect of green purchase intention through variables such as level of family income and current living location. On a statistical base, it was revealed that the factors 'environmental concern' and 'product perception' affect the purchase intention. Conclusively, the study reported that the perception of consumers plays an important impact in the green purchase intention of young consumers and thus should be given sufficient thought when dealing with eco-friendly products. Further, it was distinguished that the use of eco-labels on green products and a price range suitable to young consumers will improve the purchase intention, thereby creating an improvement for the betterment of the environment.

Keywords: *Green Purchase, Eco-friendly*

Session 3 B

Law, ICT, GIS and Sustainability

Constitutional Recognition of Implementing International Treaties in Domestic Contexts: A Comparative Study with Special reference to Sri Lanka

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Abstract

International treaties have a profound impact and influence on the domestic legal system in the contemporary world. However, the status of international treaty law within the domestic legal system is hardly defined in many jurisdictions including that of Sri Lanka. International law does not provide a mechanism on how a country should implement its international treaty obligations at the domestic sphere, and the theories of monism and dualism too have failed to capture the realities of state practices regarding recognition and implementation of international treaties at the domestic contexts. The absence of a proper mechanism for the recognition and implementation of international law in a domestic context, being one of the problems in the process of incorporating international law in a sovereign State, this study argues that a constitutional provision would resolve the issue of recognition and implementation of international treaty law in a domestic context. Using a qualitative methodology followed with a comparative analysis of the constitutional provisions of India, United Kingdom, United States and South Africa, this paper submits a proposal for a suitable constitutional provision for the recognition and implementation of international treaty law in Sri Lanka. The findings have revealed that a constitutional provision would advance the separation of powers and the rule of law and well define the roles of the three branches of the government in absorbing international treaty law to the domestic sphere. Such a provision will help to make the incorporated international law principles certain and achievable in the domestic context, which would result in upholding the rights and duties of individuals in par with the international obligations of a country.

Keywords: *International Treaties, International Law, Constitution*

Human Intervention Affecting the Degradation of Floral Diversity of Freshwater Swamp Forests in Sri Lanka: Preliminary Study of *Walawuwaththe Wathurana* Freshwater Swamp Forest

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Abstract

The tropical freshwater swamp forests are globally important ecosystems. They provide environmentally valuable services such as regulation of flood, maintenance of water quality, and offer suitable habitat for the conservation of flora and fauna ecosystems. Though they are hosts to important biodiversity, their contributions to ecosystems are poorly understood and are badly affected by some human interventions. This study aimed to examine the human interventions in the degradation of floral diversity of Walauwewatta Wathurana Environmental Protection Area situated in Kalutara district. The area is considered to be the only freshwater swamp forest with unique features in Sri Lanka. It consists of rich floral diversity compared with other swamp forests in the country. Primary data were collected through the quadrant method, questionnaire survey, field observations, and semi-structured interviews with the people. Data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Fifty-six floral species were identified from the core area of the forest. Among them, 43 percent species are identified endemic, and twenty floral species were identified from the periphery area. About 35 percent of floral species are endemic to Sri Lanka. Over 80 percent of the people studied are directly or indirectly involved with primary occupancy that is linked with the swamp forest production. Also, about 78 percent of the villagers are using timber and non-timber products drawn from the forest area. Illegal timber felling is a major threat that causes the loss of richest floral diversity and endemic species. Human encroachment, Illegal fishing, agricultural pollution, and sand mining activities have influenced the degradation of the floral diversity of the swamp ecosystem. Rubber, bamboo, cane, and rattan industry have gained negative consequences for this forest. A participatory conservation mechanism and practices should be implemented with the help of the community living in the buffer zone.

Keywords: *Freshwater, Floral Diversity*

Modelling of Crop Yield with Climate Changes: Optimization Using Machine Learning: A Survey

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Abstract

Deep learning is used as a modern technological approach to extract useful information and previously unknown patterns from huge data for the last few decades. Being successful in various domains, it has recently entered the domain of agriculture. Recently, crop production has been immensely affected by the climatic changes in the respective areas. Hence, the traditional farmers are now facing problems due to a continuous fall in crop yield. If farmers can get the prediction on the yield of the crop that they are planting beforehand, they would manage accordingly to get a better yield based on the climate. The main objective of this literature survey is to review the best deep learning algorithms used to create models using real-time weather data and past production data. In this paper, a Systematic Literature Review was performed with 10 most recent research efforts that employ deep learning techniques, applied to model crop production with climatic changes. We examined the specific models and frameworks implemented, different sources of data, pre-processing techniques used, and the overall performance achieved at each approach. According to the study, it was found that there exist various successful and popular architectures, which researchers may use to start building their models instead of starting from scratch, including AlexNet, CaffeNet, VGG, GoogleNet, and Inception-ResNet. According to our analysis, the most used features are temperature, rainfall, and soil type, and Artificial Neural Networks were used mostly in these models. It was also found that Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) is the most widely used deep learning algorithm. According to the analysis, deep learning provides high accuracy, outperforming existing commonly used image processing techniques. The overall benefits of deep learning are encouraging further use towards smarter, more sustainable farming and more secure food production.

Keywords: *Crop Yield, Climate Changes*

Use of Geographic Information System (GIS) as a Public Library Management Tool in Identification of Potential Users: A Case Study in Uva province, Sri Lanka using Location-allocation Model

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Abstract

Due to its versatility nature, Geographic Information System (GIS) provides a vast platform for the managers in decision making in almost all of the disciplines. Locations of Public libraries and the associated communities can be mapped to identify relevant topological characteristics. This study was based on the public libraries in Uva province considering the socio-economic status of the province. Spatial Analysis was based on location-allocation model of network analyst extension GIS toolbox. According to the results spatial distribution of public libraries of the province has a fair even distribution and average number of Grama Niladari divisions with potential users per public library is six within the prescribed distance. In other words, number of Grama Niladari divisions per public library from which most of the users can be drawn are service areas.

Keywords: *Geographic Information System, Public libraries*

Challenges and Panacea in Online Learning amidst COVID-19 Pandemic: Empirical study of Higher Education Sector in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to assess the challenges and panacea in Online Learning amidst in COVID-19 Pandemic, in the higher education sector in Sri Lanka. It has been observed by the most of higher education institutes in Sri Lanka, that the learners' engagement has not been satisfactory in the online platforms. However, irrespective of the above fact many measures have been taken by authority to develop and expand online learning amidst in COVID-19 Pandemic all around the world. Quantitative research approach based on cross-sectional research design was used in the study. Data was collected via electronic survey using a questionnaire and it consisted of multiple choice, likert scale, and open-ended questions. It was distributed via Google form among the private and public sector university undergraduates and postgraduates in Sri Lanka, who are engaged in learning activities in the higher education sector in Sri Lanka. 429 respondents had contributed to the study. Data gathered on demographics, socio and economic background in Sri Lanka, ability to access technological resources, study habits and purpose of using online platforms, etc. Descriptive statistics were calculated and trends were analysed accordingly. Analysis revealed that many of respondents had used smart phone to get online services. The second main tool is computer. More than 50% respondent had used Windows operating system and 48% used Android phones for access. Zoom meeting is the most popular video conferencing tool. The second and third popular tools are WhatsApp and Microsoft team. Dialog Axiata PLC is the most popular service provider, the second preferred choice went to Mobitle and third place has taken by Sri Lanka Telecom. Challenges were mainly come from incapability of technological adaptation and many had environment challenges as domestic places were not supported for frequent online learning. This lead to poor communication between educators and learners and engagement was negatively affected. Development of IT infrastructure and affordable package systems at concessional rates were suggested by many participants. Further, inclusion of interactive qualities of online learning tools and delivery patterns of lecturers were suggested to change in order to enhance engagement in online learning.

Keywords: *Online Learning, Learners' Engagement, COVID-19 Pandemic, Sri Lanka*

Simulator Based Visuospatial Training for Maritime Cadets at CINEC

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Abstract

Human Resource Development of Cadets who have no sea experience within the Maritime domain commences at CINEC Campus with maritime courses of 9-13 months. Hitherto the only source of visuospatial training gained through a simulator module where theoretical aspects of maritime training are correlated with practical aspects of seamanship was not included as a component within phase I of the Officer Cadet Training Programme. Recently CINEC introduced a simulator module as a component of the Officer Cadet Training Programme for its Navigation and Engineering Cadets. On an empirical level, to identify whether a significant difference existed between the means of the pre vs. posttests, graphical comparisons were made to visually indicate the distribution of the two groups. The findings recorded an enhancement of self-declared skill levels in the areas under investigation at the post test level. Satisfactory levels of the simulator-based training recorded by the Cadets had a high percentage mean allocation of 65 for 'Excellent'. Based on these findings this study emphasizes the importance of visuospatial training gained through the simulator for maritime Cadets. Additionally, this study's findings contribute to the research corpus of Human Resource Development in the maritime domain.

Keywords: *Cadets, Visuospatial Training*

A study on the application of digital technology for Film Restoration

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Abstract

The present study aims at identifying and examining the factors related to film restoration with no harm or minimal impact on the original work of its aesthetic values. A film is an audio-visual heritage that is also recognized as an artifact that should be preserved for the future generations and references. It not only provides an empirical database to the linear evolution of specific culture, society and industry, it enhances and advances the technologies utilized by the genre of artists to evolve a specific industry that is identical to its time, space and the norms and practices as well. The material that makes up the particular cinematic creation, the celluloid film, is damaged and deteriorated inherently. Restoration of film is a process that not only involves repairing and reconstruction a damaged film, but also a careful process of restoring its authentic elements and values as well. The traditional way of restoring a film is simply to originate a duplicate of the original piece in terms of extending the life span of the original work. However, the question raised at this point is whether the matter of restoration is a matter of life span of the film. The modern technology and tech devices have provided us with several opportunities to restore the film with its original values and elements without making no harm to the original authentic quality of the so called piece of art work. Thus, the present study focuses on the application and equipment provided by the digital technology for the film restoration by using selected software i.e. DIAMANT, Phoenix, and Blackmagic Design DaVinci Revival Pro. The study was carried out by using a literature survey in selected archives and museums to identify the Sri Lankan films and film history, and the field survey and case studies with the application of particular software to review and watch audiovisual media. The literature survey was further carried out to examine the international standards and methods on film restoration and the projects that have already been conducted successfully in the global industry. The selected films and the restoration software provided the necessary data that can assess the ability of reconstruction of audio-visual quality through the digital restoration process. The study revealed that this kind of software can provide/perform high quality restoration formula, eliminating even the initial shortcomings of the film, and provides a number of applications for recreating the emotional atmosphere of the cinematic creation. However the new challenges have been created with new technology that are not visible in traditional restoration technology.

Keywords: *Audiovisual Media, Celluloid Film, Film Preservation, Film Restoration, Restoration Software*

Do We Live Upside Down? Decolonising Geography through World Maps

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Abstract

The most common world map used today is the Mercator Cylindrical Projection despite being contested for its inaccurate depictions of the sizes of the continents and their positioning. This leads us to question the objective reality that cartography purports to convey. The term 'geography' is birthed from the roots *geo* and *grapheia*, meaning 'to write the earth'; maps then are these documents on which the Earth is inscribed. A map, just like any other text, seems to be a narrative with an immense storytelling power. The objective of the study was to discuss how the world map is yet another Eurocentric imperial construct that needs decolonising, and that it is not merely a representation of objective physical reality. This paper takes into account a variety of world maps from numerous Spatio-temporal contexts in world history and analyses the diverse foci that each of these maps places emphasis on. Readings into critical cartography shed light on counter mapping initiatives, one of which is the 'south-up' oriented map challenging the very orientation of our world as we know it. An analysis of said map orientation shows how the accepted world map format reflects a particular western outlook falsely presented as a universal way of 'knowing' the world. It comprises a visual hierarchy that instils attitudes of superiority and inferiority among imperial states and former colonies thus demonstrating Enlightenment ideals that perpetuate racism and classism. The paper takes a decolonising approach to studying world maps and concludes that a world map is rarely an objective and natural portrayal of physical space but a political, social, and cultural construct that serves purposes beyond depicting an essentialist geographical reality.

Keywords: *Critical Cartography, Decolonising, Imperialism, Racism, World Map*

Session 3 C

Sociology and Psychology

Importance of Traditional Communication in Rural Development

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Abstract

Communication is a great way to communicate with the development process. In a rural area, it is important to combine traditional communication with the development process. Traditional communication born in traditional society and it created with indigenous knowledge. Traditional communication methods the mediums through which the cultural traits passed from generation to generation. Keeping in view their intimacy, as they are very close to the heart of the people, the traditional communication is available to all and enjoyed by people's different age groups generally at very low cost. So, this study is about the importance of traditional communication in rural development. Therefore, the main objective was how could use traditional communication in Rural Development. The quantitative research methodology was used for the scientific method in this research. Questionnaires and interviews were used to obtain primary data collections. Data has been analysed by SPSS software package. According to statistical sampling, 88% of the rural villagers confirmed that they are in favour of traditional communication. And they believe the content of traditional communication more familiar, clear and trustful than modern communication methods. In conclusion, traditional communication could play a vital role in enhancing community participation in rural development. As a suggestion, practicing traditional communication methods to advertising development concepts with the interference of government is necessary.

Keywords: *Traditional Communication, Indigenous Knowledge, Rural Development*

Importance of Counseling for Mental Disorders in Elderly Hood

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Abstract

Disorders badly affect Person's healthy lifestyle. There are two types of disorders which can be categorized as physical and mental disorders. Mental disorders arise due to various factors and one of such factors is growing old. The main objective of this study is to identify the importance of counselling interventions for elderly hood mental disorders. Four Elder homes functioned by State and Non – State Organizations. The methodology was random sampling under Stratified Sampling. Accordingly, 40 elders were chosen between 60-75 age groups from 02 elders' homes as 20 elders from each home. Primary and Secondary Sources are used in data collection of this research. In elderly hood mental disorders are way too high comparing with physical diseases. During the study, it revealed that there are more tendencies in arising non – communicable diseases in the elderly hood. Disorders like Dementia and Depression in the elderly hood is comparatively high. Depression causes the detachment elderly from their family members. Elders who are suffering from Dementia dislike in attending their daily chores and spending more time unhappily. This study reveals that due to mental disorders there is a tendency to drug addiction and committing suicide among elders. 78% of elders who suffer from mental disorders are not prepared to admit their illness and it leads to many social issues. Moreover, not admitting mental disorders refrain them from getting medical treatments. During the research many reasons causing mental disorders could be identified, such as difficulties in attending the day to day tasks, not getting responsibilities, losing the respect and status in the family, retirement from a job, lose income, breaking Social relationships. Moreover, this study reveals that programs to control, minimize and to prevent mental diseases are limited. 32%, elders with mental diseases are less aware of counselling programs and after they were educated regarding the counselling programs many elders with mental diseases understood the importance of counselling programs and they appreciate the same.

Keywords: *Counseling, Mental Disorders, Elderly Hood*

The Role of Risk Perception and Socio-Demographic Characteristics in Determining COVID-19 Related Stress among University Undergraduates in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic situation has brought about major changes in the lives of the world populace, mostly of a negative effect on their mental health. Adaptation to such drastic changes is challenging and stressful. The objective of this study was to determine the relationship between risk perception, demographic features, and COVID-19 related stress to identify stressors experienced by undergraduates and to possibly devise successful psychological interventions to ensure undergraduates' wellbeing. The responses provided by 371 consenting undergraduates of the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, to an online survey were utilized for this research. The survey required participants to complete two scales assessing COVID-19 related risk perception and COVID -19 stress in addition to providing their demographic information; their residential province and socio-economic status; measured by their monthly family income. A positive correlation was detected between risk perception and COVID-19 related stress with $r(369) = .431, p = .000$. A majority of 48.8% of the participants experienced moderate levels of stress, while 7% and 44.2% experienced high and low levels of stress, respectively. The highest level of stress was reported in the xenophobia subscale, which indicates that the study sample experiences stress related to being exposed to people from other countries due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Demographic data-based analysis indicated a significant relationship between the socio-economic status and COVID-19 related stress indicating lower income levels associated with higher stress levels. However, the residential province and COVID-19 related stress did not show any significant relationship.

Keywords: *Risk Perception, COVID-19*

Social Impacts of Covid-19 Lockdown Period in Kirkoswald Grama Niladari Division

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Abstract

Sri Lanka has been able to control the 'first wave' of the pandemic successfully. Yet, it disrupted the social-economic activities in the country. The Upcountry community faced a severe socio-economic impact due to the pandemic of COVID-19. This paper investigates the social impact during the lockdown period in the Upcountry community through a Sociological perspective in Kirkoswald Grama Niladari (GN) Division. The main objective of the study is to understand the various impacts of social structure in the Kirkoswald Grama Niladhari Division. The data collection method of this study consisted of semi-structured interviews, field observations, and secondary data. The interview and field observation were conducted by purposive sampling among a hundred households in the research area. According to the findings, people disconnected their social inter-relationship as they were afraid of COVID-19. Love and care of personal relationships have improved a lot, although people spent most of the time with mental stress because they couldn't meet each other. Family relationships and understanding improved within many families, but on the other hand, it got worse in some families. Unlike always, there were social contradictions in this period. Social class and caste problems increased during this period. Poor people's livelihoods were not affected too much due to the COVID-19. During this period, people created new backgrounds for their livelihood. Men became risk-takers, and this period explained the importance of patriarchy. Contrary to the external view of the people, there are many social impacts among the Upcountry communities during the period of COVID-19. This study further suggests that the government and other social organizations should come forward to help people who suffer from stress and anxiety. Additionally, the Grama Niladhari has to maintain appropriate information about the villagers during the disaster period to avoid potential social conflicts.

Keywords: *Social Impact, COVID -19*

Social Distancing as a Precondition of Self-realization: *Beer without Alcohol*

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Abstract

This paper culminates the lockdown effects portrayed in the film *Beer without Alcohol* by Asoka Handagama. Further, it elaborates that this short film's cinematic lockdown effect articulates some key human issues such as the ambiguity of romance, inauthenticity of ordinary human communication, the complexity of daily existence, and the subsequent roadmap to self-realization. The film's underlying theme is based on a paradoxical interplay between social distancing and unexpected proximity during the lockdown in determining the individualistic realization that occurs within a complex cobweb of social interrelationships. This paper's conceptual framework derives from the combination of different zoom frames through which holistic communication takes place in a match with the above cobweb. Further, the same zoom frames in this pioneering lockdown movie ever made in the world collectively articulate that the so-called modern romances lack a fundamental essence of love. The above essence-less-ness can be defined as suggestive of the underlying thematic signifier, *Beer without Alcohol*, substance without essence. While arguing that social distancing may impact devastatingly on the human psyche, this paper views that a fundamental absence can also help to flourish deep human understanding. The above absence is demarcated by a severe lack of authentic communication that symptomatically runs through every relationship of this movie. On the one hand, the protagonist, as a migrant, does not know how to solve a deeper existential issue in his family without the help of a mediator who lives in Sri Lanka. On the other, the mediator also finally falls prey to her own fantasy and symbolically collapses towards the end of the movie. It concludes that the middle-class zooming generation of suburban origin finds no escape from falling into modern essence-less-ness.

Keywords: *Social Distancing, Beer without Alcohol*

A Study of the Impact of Rajagiriya Flyover on Neighboring Communities

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Abstract

Industrial development and expansion of businesses to the districts might have caused such traffic congestion along with the enhancement of affordability for using private vehicles. Therefore, traffic congestion has increased due to the lack of proper and efficient traffic management systems. At present, the Rajagiriya junction is experiencing traffic congestion during the daytime. The main objective of this study was to identify the impact of the Rajagiriya flyover on neighboring communities. Hence to achieve the target, 50 commuters, 25 traders both permanent and mobile surrounding the flyover and 25 Householders were selected through the purposive sampling method. Focus-group discussion and questionnaire surveying (2019.05.18-2019.12.18 – used weekends) techniques were used to collect primary data from Surrounding the Rajagiriya junction, while other secondary data sources such as traffic data & Land use data. Descriptive Statistics including percentage and mean score measures to analyze the data and used Inferential Statistic Methods such as Paired Two Sample for Means to identify the peak time. The study identified that there was heavy congestion along the Sri Jayawardenapura Mawatha in the morning peak time was 07:30h – 09:00h and 16:30h - 19:45h was in the evening. The majority of the sample was daily routers. Half of the sample of the fixed merchant had mentioned that the construction of flyover as an existing issue. Also, all fixed merchants did business in the pre-construction period of flyover and after too. Finally, the researcher found that the number of vehicles is higher than earlier after the construction. For that reason, traffic congestion had also increased. Out of this alternative, Flyover suggested for the current traffic flow at this intersection and during the construction of flyover maximize traffic delay by the road safety Audit and using the rapid construction method for the construction of the flyover at intersection. Moreover, this study demonstrated that the construction of flyover project is a failure due to insufficient feasibility study.

Keywords: *Commuters, Flyover, Peak Time, Roundabout, Traffic Congestion*

Session 3 D

Health and Well-being

An Investigation of Distal Factors on Fertility Behaviour of Reproductive Aged Women in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Human fertility affects population dynamics. Fertility may be defined as the actual reproductive performance of a woman. Fertility is a significant public health concern because it affects economic productivity and population growth, which may also pressure the existing social facilities. The required fertility level of a woman is considered as Age Specific Fertility Rate of her age. The main goal of this study is to identify the demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural factors that affect the fertility of reproductive aged women in Sri Lanka. The data utilized in this study were extracted from Sri Lanka Demographic and Health Survey 2016 (SLDHS) conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka. The sample consisted of 14,307 ever-married women within reproductive ages ranging from 15 to 49 years. Chi square tests and Binary logistic regression methods were used in the analysis. The Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test was used to assess the fit of the fitted binary logistic regression model. The analysis revealed that all the considered variables, namely, woman's residential district, ethnicity, wealth index, woman's education level, woman's occupation, partner's education level, and partner's working status, were found to have a significant effect on odds of having at least the required fertility level for her age at 5% level of significance. The odds of having at least the required fertility level for the age of a woman belonging to the lowest wealth index was 48.1% more than that of a woman belonging to the highest wealth index. Furthermore, the odds of a woman having achieved at least the required fertility for her age who is employed in a professional job is 38.9% less than that of an unemployed woman. The results revealed by this study will be beneficial for relevant authorities when conducting awareness programs on fertility forever married women in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Fertility, Reproductive Performance*

Anthropometric Factors Associated with Diabetes among Children in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Diabetes is a group of illnesses characterized by high blood glucose levels that result from defects in the body's ability to produce and/or use insulin. Glucose comes from the foods we eat, and insulin is a hormone that helps the glucose to get into cells to give them energy. Diabetes can have a significant impact on the quality of life and can reduce life expectancy. The occurrence of diabetes shows substantial inconsistencies across the different stages of life. Children can also develop diabetes for various reasons, and the number of children getting diagnosed with diabetes is going up within each passing year. BMI, WC, BPL, and birth weight of a person are considered as major anthropometric factors. Therefore, the research problem was, what are the anthropometric factors affecting diabetes among children. The main objective of this study was to identify the relationship between BMI, WC, BPL values, and birth weight with diabetes. This survey was based on primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from a cross-sectional survey conducted through a structured questionnaire, and interviews from children (below 19) and their parents attending the diabetic clinic in the hospitals in the Gampaha district, and 80 participants were randomly selected for the study. Descriptive statistics, chi-square test, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were used to analyze data using SPSS and Excel according to the objectives. There was a positive moderate relationship between children's BMI value with their father's BMI value ($r=0.574$) and their mother's BMI value ($r=0.679$). To assess the relationship between diabetes with a birth weight and blood pressure level of children, chi-square tests were used. There was a statistically significant relationship between diabetes with birth weight of children ($\chi^2 (1, N=80) = 6.698, p=0.010$) and diabetes prevalence with the children's blood pressure level ($\chi^2 (2, N=80) = 57.274, p=0.000$). It can be concluded that when parent's BMI value increases it causes to improve children's BMI value. With the rise of the obese and overweight children type 2 diabetes is also on the rise. Therefore, BMI value, WC value, birth weight, and blood pressure level were identified as well-known anthropometric factors that influence on diabetes among children.

Keywords: *Anthropometric Factors, Diabetes*

Economic Burden of Diabetes Mellitus in Sri Lanka: A Gendered Analysis

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Abstract

The economic burdens of diabetes mellitus at the household level in Sri Lanka are estimated in this study. In addition, risk factors and prevention strategies of diabetes are identified, highlighting the gender-wise patterns. The objective of this study is to evaluate, for policy purposes, using a gendered analysis, the economic burden, risk factors and prevention strategies of diabetes. For this study, 100 patients with type II diabetes were selected using purposive sampling to capture the different dimensions of interest and were interviewed using a structured questionnaire. The economic cost of diabetes at the household level is estimated using the cost of illness method. The standard and independent samples t-tests were used. The Factorial ANOVA test was conducted for comparison of cost means across the grouped variables. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS 21.0. The direct mean cost of diabetes care of type II adult diabetes patients was Rs. 3171.00 per month, including the cost of drugs, tests, out-in patient cost, special diet, and travelling cost. The mean indirect cost was Rs.2945.00, and a large part of the indirect cost was in the form of lost earnings of the patient and family. These costs represent 21% of the incomes of the families of the patients. A male diabetes patient results in a significantly higher cost than a female. This study found that the ill-health conditions of females at lower ages may be the reason for imbalances in their families and a threat to performing the duties of their triple role. The government and other responsible institutions should provide the necessary and appropriate medical and socio-economic support to safeguard poor and elderly people. The health burden on families could be reduced by providing drugs and other care equipment at a low cost and increasing the availability of resources devoted to health in public hospitals. The diabetes educational programs should target self-management education incorporating problem-solving and coping skills and knowledge to reduce the burden of disease, giving priority to female diabetes patients.

Keywords: *Economic Burden, Diabetes*

Mental Well-being of the Aging Population in Elders' Homes: Special Reference to *Kesbewa* AGA Division

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Abstract

Mental wellbeing, which plays a significant role in maintaining overall health, is related to the ability to identify a person's potential, to recognize problems, and deal with day-to-day life's problems. An aging population, which results from a rapid demographic transition, is a key global demographic challenge that will continue as an issue during the twenty-first century. A lower level of mental wellbeing of elderly people is one of the main issues in Sri Lanka. The objective of this study is to give recommendations to increase the level of mental wellbeing by understanding the level of mental wellbeing of elderly people in the elders' homes. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire from a sample of 74 elders from two elders' homes in Kesbewa AGA division. This AGA division was selected for this sample survey using a cluster sampling technique. Frequency analysis and Factor score method were used for data analysis purposes. The main finding of the study is that the level of mental wellbeing of the majority of elders in the elders' homes is at a lower category at 62%. 24% of them fall into the moderate category, while the other 14% fall into high levels of mental wellbeing. "Feeling optimistic about the future" and also "feeling cheerful" are the most impacted indicators of the mental wellbeing of the elders.

Keywords: *Well-being, Aging Population*

Exploring Ageing as a Social Issue: A Case Study of Elderly Women in Cleaning Services of University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Ageing is not simply a biological phenomenon; it is associated with social policy mechanisms including economic development. Sri Lanka has rapidly become a nation of population aging. A significant increase in the ageing population is observed in the Sri Lankan context when compared to other South Asian countries. In this sense, this Sociological study has explored the socio-economic challenges faced by elderly women who are employed in cleaning services. This study was carried out in the context of Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. For the sample of the study, 18 elderly women who worked as cleaning staff were used intentionally. In-depth interviews were used as a main data collection tool and all the outcomes were analysed through thematic and narrative analytical methods. The results reveal, with the changes in the family structure where more and more families have become nuclear from the traditional extended families, the added responsibility cast upon these elderly women have made them to work as cleaning staff. Due to economic competition, children are busy working and children's income levels are inadequate for family maintenance and adult welfare. It has caused these women to work well after their retirement age. Therefore, they find their own employment to meet their daily social and health needs and they resort to cleaning jobs. Within the university context, adults engaged in these cleaning services are more likely to have a lower social acceptance and they are positioned simply as cleaners, or "trash takers". They can also be identified as a marginal group in the university environment where they hardly get any companionship from any other. The decision-making authority over these elderly persons lies with the purview officer and they have their own sub culture with their words and gestures that they use. They share a collective lifestyle in the work environment. In that sense, adults who work in this cleaning service can be defined as an economically exhausted, relatively poverty-stricken labour unit.

Keywords: *Elderly Women, Cleaning Service*

Lived Experiences of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Patients in National Infectious Diseases Hospital (NIDH).

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Abstract

HIV, (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), targets on CD4 cells of the immune system, which help the body to respond to infections and weakens the immune system. HIV affects negatively on human life in physical, psychological and social aspects. The aim of this study was to explore the lived experiences of HIV patients who had been diagnosed by a positive retro viral study in NIDH. This is a qualitative phenomenological study. Twelve participants from both genders between 30-50 years were selected on purposive sampling. In-depth interviews were conducted using a theme guide. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee of Colombo South Teaching Hospital. A thematic analysis was carried out and phenomenon of living with HIV is a multifaceted experience, therefore three main themes were developed as, physical disabilities and discomforts, difficulty coping with HIV and stigma and discrimination towards HIV. Themes were based on three main types of experiences, physical, psychological and social experiences due to the illness. Physical experiences like fever, loss of appetite, vomiting, skin rashes, and weakness, loss of weight and pigmentations were expressed by the participants. As psychological experiences fear, fear related dying, uncertainty, loneliness, losses and suicidal ideas had been revealed. Isolation from the family and friends, losing of jobs and relationships breakdown were identified as the commonly expressed social experiences. Further research will require to eliminate HIV related stigma from the society. It is also recommended to explore how HIV patients receive support and how that support affects to improve the quality of their lives.

ii

Keywords: *Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Patients' Experiences*

Health and Well-being of Sri Lankan Population during COVID-19 Outbreak

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has made a challenge on the health and economic stability of the people worldwide. According to the epidemiological transition theory, non-communicable diseases have become the main factor that could affect the health and well-being of the population. After experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic, it is realized that pandemics can also be a crucial factor that would be an impact on peoples' health and well-being. The pandemic effects on the health and well-being of the Sri Lankan population were due to the disruptions occurred during the period. The main objective of the study was to examine how the COVID-19 outbreak impact on health and well-being of the Sri Lankan population. Data was gathered through an online Google questionnaire from 340 respondents selected purposively. The data reveals that the mean age of the respondents is 32.29 years, and the sample consists 43.8% males and 56.2% of females. Most of the respondents are Sinhalese and 47.6% are married. Remarkably 88.2% are employed while 56.8% represent the urban sector. Among the sample, 19.7% are having non-communicable diseases such as gastritis (32.9%), cholesterol (21.9%) and diabetics (19.2%), while 22% of them had difficulties in getting their medical checkups and medicines. Especially 38.2% of the sample are unable to have their physical exercises during the COVID-19 period. More than 80% of the respondents were obeying health guidelines. As a new practice of well-being, 43.8% has moved to traditional food practices and 39.7% has started indigenous medicines to improve their immunization. Nearly 60% of respondents have engaged in gardening and planting to maintaining their physical and mental well-being. Since there would be a possibility of having more pandemics in the future, it is important to aware the people on how to sustain their health and well-being in a positive manner in order to face such a risky environment.

Keywords: *COVID-19, Epidemiological Transition, Health and well-being, Pandemic*

Analysis on Future Training Needs in Health Sector of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

With the rapidly changing technology in the medical sector, training becomes crucial for the health staff to maintain the quality of health services. Sri Lanka holds a unique position in South Asia as one of the developing countries that provide universal health. The government spending welfare budget by sacrificing the development budget of the country for the health sector. For that reason, it needs to proper utilization of the human resource of the health sector. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to identify what are the future training needs of health sector employees in Sri Lanka. This study collected information from healthcare professionals in National Hospitals in Sri Lanka, through a questionnaire with open-ended questions. It was distributed among 500 health care professionals and consequently received 100 responses. Data analysis conducted using the word cloud tool. The study has identified the 12 future training needs in terms of highest, moderate and least priority. Such as highest priority for clinical and surgical, technical actions and new equipment's, computer and new technology literacy, analyzing and interpretation of patients' data, managerial and administrative skills, stress management and mental illness. Moderate priority for ISO and quality assurance, English language, teamwork. Least priority for awareness on new diseases and effective communication, evaluation for researches. It can be concluded that when organizations in the health care sector plan and designed training programs, all 12 training needs shall be considered. The findings of this study have implications for policymakers and administrators to consider how medical practitioners' feelings about training facilities and enhance training programs for future training needs. Keywords: Health Sector, Training Needs

Keywords: *Health Sector, Training*

Session 3 E

Health and Well-being

Nursing Students' Stress and Coping Strategies during Clinical Training in College of Nursing Anuradhapura

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Abstract

Students are subjected to different kinds of stressors, such as the pressure of academics with an obligation to succeed and difficulty in integrating with the system. Nursing students suffer from high levels of stress related to academic assignments in addition to their clinical skills training. As a psychosocial phenomenon, stress affects students' academic achievement and wellbeing. Coping mechanisms help students to deal with the challenges arising from stress. The primary aim of this study was to assess the prevalence of stress and coping strategies in the clinical training environment among nursing students in the college of nursing Anuradhapura. A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out to determine the type of stress and coping strategies among nursing students in a clinical setting. The level of stress was evaluated through the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the type of coping strategies were assessed by the use of Coping Behaviors Inventory (CBI). Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics and SPSS statistical package (version 20) was used for this purpose. 97.5% of response rate was reported and the majority of the respondents belonged to age group 23-24 (n= 159, 59.3%). The mean age was 23.69 (SD 1.44). Majority of nursing students were female (n= 243, 90.7%), Sinhalese (n= 264, 98.1%) and Buddhist (n= 260, 96.7%). The perceived stress level was 76.98 (SD 12.54) and the Students perceived a moderate level of stress (M= 2.65, SD =0.432), most commonly attributed to assignments and workload (M=2.99, SD=0.645). Gender, academic year, current clinical placement and distance of residence to the training school are statistically significant with copying behavior of 'avoidance'. The most frequently used coping mechanism was staying optimistic. The study further found that gender and academic year were good predictors of the use of avoidance as a coping behavior. Students experience a moderate level of stress in clinical training which illustrates the need for stress management programs and the provision of suitable support. Findings have the potential for planning to improve the quality of nursing education in the nursing college.

Key Words: *Nursing Students, Stress, Coping Strategies, Clinical Training*

Sector Differentials of Health and Wellbeing among Gay Men in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The Health and wellbeing of gay communities and other sexual minorities have become a public health topic of great interest to researchers and policymakers in health and demography. Sri Lanka, as a South Asian country, identifying gay communities is a challenging phenomenon, and it is concealed under the cultural practices and government laws. As found in the literature, the rural environment poses more challenges and issues to gay communities than gay communities in urban. Most gay people refused medical assistance, were terminated from work and education and were harassed physically and mentally due to their sexual orientation. The main objective of this paper is to investigate urban and rural differences in health and wellbeing among gay men in Sri Lanka. This study is based on primary data collected through a google questionnaire from 136 gay men selected by a snowball sample method that represents an equal number of urban and rural respondents. The mean age of urban respondents is 29.25, and rural respondents are 26.26 years. Among the urban gays, 27.9% had sexually transmitted diseases within their lifetime, and it represents 35.3% among rural gays. Especially 45.6% of rural gays have faced sexual harassment within their lifetime, while it was reported as 36.8% from their urban peers. Among the rural gays, 11.8% had a long-term disability within their lifetime, and it was reported as 13.2% from urban gays. At the same time, 7.4% of rural gays have been started to stop smoking, while it was reported as 19.1% from urban gays. Remarkably 81% of urban gays are having a protection method when having sex, while rural gays representing it as 76.5%. Comparatively, 55.9% of rural and 51.5% of urban gay have a diet plan to keep their bodies healthy. Therefore, it can be concluded that there are differences that can be seen among health and wellbeing among rural and urban gays. Organizing health and wellbeing awareness programs in both sectors can be suggested to enhance the gay community's health and wellbeing in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Wellbeing, Gay Men*

The Distribution of Externally Observable Congenital Anomalies in Relation to Fetal Sex and the Period of Gestation of Stillborn Babies in Hospitals in Kandy District, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Stillbirths is one major health issue globally, and in the Sri Lankan context, even though pregnant women are more compliant to antenatal care than early. A number of studies conducted in many countries depicted that one reason for stillbirths is congenital anomalies of the fetus, most of which are preventable. This study aimed to explore the distribution of externally identifiable congenital anomalies according to their sex and the period of gestation and to estimate the risk of stillbirth with or without congenital anomalies to be born preterm (<37 weeks) or term (≥37 weeks). Stillborn babies born at or after 22 weeks of gestation from April 2017 to May 2018 from government hospitals of Kandy District were examined for externally observable structural congenital anomalies and fetal sex at birth. The gestational age of each fetus was confirmed by ultrasound scanning. Identified anomalies were classified according to the International Classification of Disease and Related Health Problems 10th Revision (ICD 10) for congenital malformations, deformations, and chromosomal abnormalities. The calculated sample size was 246. From a total of 246 stillbirths, due to difficulty in identification of body structures, because of extreme prematurity and extreme maceration, 05 fetuses were excluded. Of the 241 stillborn babies, 36 (14.9%) had congenital anomalies. Majority of them were females (n=23, 9.5%). The mean period of gestation at the time of stillbirth occurred was 31 weeks (SD=5.3). A greater proportion of stillbirths (n=30, 12.5%) with observable congenital anomalies happened before 37 weeks gestation. Those preterm stillbirths comprised of 11 (4.5%) stillbirths that happened before 28 weeks of gestation while 9 (3.7%) and 10 (4.1%) occurred during 28 to <32 and 32 to <37 gestational weeks respectively. Further, 95% confidence interval (0.261-1.170) of risk estimate revealed that there is no statistically significant association between fetal sex and having congenital anomalies. The risk to be preterm stillbirth for the fetuses with visible structural congenital anomalies was 2.447 times (OR = 2.447) greater than the stillbirths which did not have obvious structural congenital anomalies. These results explicate that female fetuses were at high risk to acquire congenital anomalies than male fetuses. Moreover, presence of congenital anomalies causes preterm stillbirths.

Keywords: *Stillborn Babies, Congenital Anomalies*

Knowledge Related to Delay in Seeking Medical Advice among Sri Lankan Adults with Chickenpox

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Abstract

Chickenpox (Varicella) is a highly contagious disease caused by the varicella zoster virus. Many people practice traditional caring methods for Chickenpox and focus on taking medical advice after a few days of getting the infection. Delay in the initiation of treatment for Chickenpox is known to delay the healing process and increase the hospitalization days. Therefore, we decided to determine the knowledge in patients who delayed seeking medical advice for Chickenpox. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at the Isolation unit of the National Institute of Infectious Disease (NIID), Angoda. Two hundred and fifty patients were recruited into the study. Interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect data, and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Most of the participants were male (n= 152, 60.8%), Sinhalese (n=236, 94.4%) and Buddhists (n=229, 91.6%). A majority (90%, n=225) have not taken any medical advice prior to hospital admission for Chickenpox. Most of them (n=242, 96.8%) knew Chickenpox is an infectious disease and its signs and symptoms. However, they had a poor knowledge on disease transmission (79.2%, n=198) and blistering location (61.6%, n=152). The participants who were educated beyond the Ordinary Level (O/L) showed a good knowledge (n=78, 59.1%) while 55.9% (n=66) of participants who have educated up to O/L and less showed a poor knowledge. The study findings demonstrated that most (n=183, 73%) of the participants had an adequate knowledge on Chickenpox and its signs and symptoms. However, 27% (n=67) showed an inadequate knowledge regarding the transmission of the disease and early seeking medical advice. Further, the participants who are more educated had a good knowledge than to less educated participants. Therefore, an awareness programme towards the importance of early seeking medication for Chickenpox and knowledge regarding its transmission is highly recommended to improve their knowledge.

Keywords: *Chickenpox, Infectious Disease*

The Impact of Work-Family Conflict on Problematic Alcohol Use among Private Sector Employees in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Alcohol use among employees is a significant social policy implication as it can harmfully impact on the health of employees and their job performance. Socio-economic factors mainly influence on alcohol use and related problems. Numerous reasons may affect the amount and the frequency of alcohol use, as such friends, living environment, genetic propensity, stress, job types, gender, religion, culture race and ethnicity. However, work-family conflict may play a significant causal role in psychological and physical well-being through their life array and unhealthy coping strategies such as alcohol use. Excessive levels of work-family conflict is correlated with problem drinking. Employees' problem drinking may affect in different ways, such as reducing positive work outcome, high healthcare costs, security issues in the workplace, absenteeism, and workforce turnover. The objective of this research was to assess the impact of work-family conflict on problematic alcohol use among private-sector employees in Sri Lanka. It was hypothesised that work-family conflict has a positive significant impact on problem drinking. This study was based on an internet-based sample survey conducted with 400 private-sector employees, aged between 24 to 60 males in the western province in Sri Lanka. Five major companies, comprising over 1000 employees were selected initially and after that, they were sent the Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFCS) to assess the Work-Family Conflict (WFC) and Daily Drinking Questionnaire (DDQ) to assess the alcohol use among employees. Findings indicate that stressful life events such as work-family conflict influence employees to practise unhealthy coping strategies such as alcohol use. Though certain work-family conflict effected on alcohol use only for short period, most of the time work-family conflict had a significant positive effect on alcohol use among employees. These findings help to comprehend the association between work-family conflict and alcohol consumption among private-sector employees in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Work-Family Conflict, Alcohol Use, Private Sector Employees, Sri Lanka*