

## Certification

This is to certify that Dr. Raguram Sivasubramaniam, senior lecturer of Media Studies at University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, was invited to attend the first meeting of Asia-Pacific Academic Alliance for Communication and Journalism Associations on October 25 at Tsinghua University. The title of his report at this meeting is "The Trends of Media and Communication Research among University Undergraduates in Sri Lanka."

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## **THE TRENDS OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AMONG UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES IN SRI LANKA**

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The research culture among the undergraduates in Sri Lankan universities particularly in the field of media and communication research has been nourished and vastly concentrated by the academic communities since it's become compulsory for the students as a dissertation project to partially fulfill the requirement for the completion of undergraduate degree programmes. Even though the research activity initiated as a part of the study, the stimulation and interest have been identified among the undergraduates to continue the analytical phenomenon in higher studies.

This study is carried out in five selected universities which are situated in different parts of the country with the different ethnic composition: University of Jaffna from Northern Province, Trincomalee Campus of the Eastern University, University of Kelaniya, Sri Jayawardanapura University and Sri Palee Campus of University of Colombo from Western Province. The dissertations submitted by the final year undergraduates for the last three years from 2015 to 2017 are taken into consideration for the analysis.

The study concludes that the research topics of undergraduates vastly move towards the recipient analysis from the content investigation in media and communication in recent days and much of the researches are mounted on find the impacts of electronic and new media compare to the less attention paid on print. While have look on methodologies of the dissertations, it's noted that the larger number of undergraduates are chooses focus group discussions and sense making interviews with qualitative approach than traditional way of data collection such as questionnaires which mostly attended the quantitative research.



Further, the study has found that the researches on unspoken issues according to the so-called cultural context in mainstream media such as finding the representation of homosexuality, promotion of domestic violence, reporting child abuses and ban and censorship are showcase as the new trends in research arena. Addition to this, the analysis revealed that the majority of the studies are geographically limited to the provinces, districts and sometimes the divisions where the undergraduates are residing or have the opportunities for their comfortable mobilization and the time frame also largely limited for few months. This paves the way to lack of competencies in researchers to generalize their findings at national level and bring them for the wider discussions in conferences and symposiums. The another barrier identified in take the outcomes of the undergraduates' research attempts for extensive discussions that the dissertations done by the students in their mother tongue Sinhala or Tamil which also the medium of teaching – learning throughout their study programme in universities except one and only university from the Eastern Province which follows English as it's medium of instruction.

**Keywords: Undergraduates, Research Culture, Content Analysis, Recipient Investigation**

# THE TRENDS OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AMONG UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES IN SRI LANKA

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## Introduction

- The research culture among the undergraduates in Sri Lankan universities particularly in the field of media and communication research has been nourished and vastly concentrated by the academic communities since it's become compulsory for the students as a dissertation project to partially fulfill the requirement for the completion of undergraduate degree programmes.

- Even though the research activity initiated as a part of the study, the stimulation and interest have been identified among the undergraduates to continue the analytical phenomenon in higher studies.

## Sample Design

This study is carried out in five selected universities which are situated in different parts of the country with the different ethnic composition:

- University of Jaffna from Northern Province,
- Trincomalee Campus of the Eastern University,
- University of Kelaniya,
- Sri Jayawardanapura University and
- Sri Palee Campus of University of Colombo from Western Province.

## Sample Design

- The dissertations submitted by the final year undergraduates for the last three years from 2015 to 2017 are taken into consideration for the analysis.

## Data Analysis

### University of Jaffna

UoJ is situated in Northern part of Sri Lanka and survived through the hardships of war nearly for three decades.

- **Relevant to impacts of war and conflicts**

‘Internet usage among the Teenagers - A Research on welfare camps of displaced people in Jaffna’

‘Reconciliation in post war Sinhala films’

‘The News presentation of Sri Lankan dailies in the last days of war: A Comparative analysis’

‘The cartoons on Southern Politics in National Tamil dailies’

‘Conflict sensitive reporting in Jaffna Newspapers : A content analysis’

‘An analysis on development news reporting in the newspapers of Jaffna region’

- **Huge impact of media influences from Southern India**

‘Media Ethics in South Indian Tamil films’

‘A study on south Indian tamil Television mega serials’

‘Role of feminism changing trends in South Indian tamil cinema’

‘Ethnics, Religious and Political Conflicts in Manarathnam’s National award Winning Tamil Movies’

‘The impact of music reality shows of Tamilnadu channels among Eezham Tamils: A recipient analysis’

‘The portrayal of transwoman in south Indian films’



- **Post war Trends**

‘Trend and impacts of Citizen Journalism in Social Media Networks’

‘Professional challenges of the working Journalists in Northern Province’

‘Searching Jobs for Media Studies undergraduates of University of Jaffna: opportunities and challenges’

**Trincomalee Campus – Eastern University**

- **Analysis on electronic visual media**

‘Depiction of violence in Director Hari’s Movies’

‘News framing in Local Television Channels’

‘Agenda setting of political program : Special reference Bambara Walalla and Mahan and Nikini Wessa’

‘Behavior of Television news in reporting child abuse incidents : Special reference to Seya’s murder case’

‘Portrayal of rural social issues in Somarathna Disanayaka’s movies’

‘Audience Perception of Banned Movies in Sri Lanka’

‘Representation of Homosexuality in Sri Lankan films’

‘The impact of soap operas on changing the life style of teenage girls in Sri Lanka, special reference to “Me Adarayai” “swapna”, “Jhoda Akbar” broadcasted by sirasa TV and Hiru TV’



- **New media as a new window for the research**

‘Facebook users and their engagement in pro social activities in real life’

‘Facebook for educational purposes : A study on university students’

- **New areas in communication research**

‘The Availability of Information for Adventure Tourism in Sri Lanka,  
Special reference : Hiking Activities’

‘An investigation of intercultural communication among university students, special reference Trincomalee campus’

**Sri Jayawardenapura University, Colombo**

- **Focus on cultural impacts by media**

‘Sinhala Newspapers/popular culture/content analysis’

‘Newspaper language/diglossia’

‘Dubbed Korean tele dramas/women behavior’

‘New cultural trends by television effect on Sinhala and Muslim culture’

‘Contemporary television ads/consumer behavior’

- **Other than main stream media**

‘bus television sets/southern highway buses’

‘staff motivation/communication methods’

‘communication strategies/health clinics /maternity health’

‘SMS news alerts/professionals as audience’

### **University of Kelaniya**

- **Keeping attention on Traditional media**

‘Ganadevi’ Worship and Communicative Meanings’

‘Sinhala vedaKaviya’ and Communicative Meanings’

‘Communicative Meanings of Traditional Udarata Marriage Rituals in Sri Lanka’

‘Sri Lankan Funeral Rituals and Communicative Meanings’

‘Communicative Meanings Revealed through Christian Traditional Rites’

‘Communicative Meanings Revealed through Buddhist Art’

‘Communicative Meanings of Naaga Concept’

‘Tattoo Art and Communicative Meanings’

- **Focus on political communication and propaganda**

‘Television Political Interviews and building political counterparts’

‘Intended Objectives of Governmentalization of Lake House’

‘Students’ Conflict in the University of Jaffna and New Behavior of Media’

‘Sri Lankan Newspaper Reporting and Journalists Subjected to Violence’

‘Presidential Elections in Sri Lanka and Newspaper Media Behavior’

‘General Election 2015 and Usage of Facebook’

‘Modern Sinhala Poem and Political Communication’

‘Contribution of New Media to Build Peace and Co- existence’

## **Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo**

- **Impacts of mass media**

‘Mass consciousness on sports /role of mass media/television’

‘Media effects/personality/ child on probation’

‘A study about the role of Mass Media; in mediating post-conflict dialogue in the Transitional Justice Process’

‘Television/crime reporting/audience effect’

‘Mass consciousness/contemporary media/Radio’

‘A study on the impact of Advertisements for consuming and selecting carbonated sugary drinks by adolescents in the Western Province, Sri Lanka’

## Findings

- The research topics of undergraduates vastly move towards the recipient analysis from the content investigation in media and communication in recent days.
- Much of the researches are mounted on find the impacts of electronic and new media compare to the less attention paid on print.

## Findings..

- While have look on methodologies of the dissertations, it's noted that the larger number of undergraduates are chooses focus group discussions and sense making interviews with qualitative approach than traditional way of data collection such as questionnaires which mostly attended the quantitative research.

## Findings..

- The study has found that the researches on unspoken issues according to the so-called cultural context in mainstream media such as finding the representation of homosexuality, promotion of domestic violence, reporting child abuses and ban and censorship are showcase as the new trends in research arena.

## Findings..

- The analysis revealed that the majority of the studies are geographically limited to the provinces, districts and sometimes the divisions where the undergraduates are residing or have the opportunities for their comfortable mobilization and,
- The time frame also largely limited for few months.

## Findings..

- This lackness paves the way to less competencies in researchers to generalize their findings at national level and bring them for the wider discussions in conferences and symposiums.

## Findings..

- The another barrier identified in take the outcomes of the undergraduates' research attempts for extensive discussions that the dissertations done by the students in their mother tongue Sinhala or Tamil which also the medium of teaching – learning throughout their study programme in universities except one and only university from the Eastern Province which follows English as it's medium of instruction.

