



Years of Journalism &  
Media Education in South Asia  
1920 - 2020

International Web-Convention

# Hundred Years of **MEDIA EDUCATION**

**Decoding the South Asian Mystique**

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December 19 and 20, 2020

# **ABSTRACT**

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International Web-Convention


# Hundred Years of **MEDIA EDUCATION**

## **Decoding the South Asian Mystique**

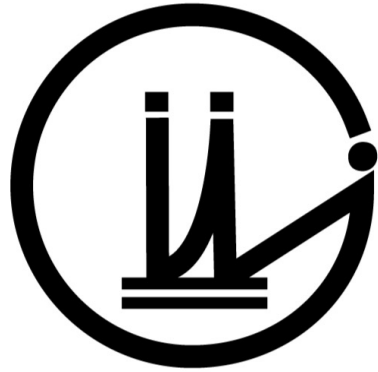
December 19 and 20, 2020

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# ABSTRACT



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# Preface

The centenary of media education in South Asia is not only an occasion to celebrate but also to fine tune the pursuit of academic excellence. The international web convention, One Hundred Years of Media Education: Decoding the South Asian Mystique, provides a platform to introspect and identify the previous pitfalls as well as signposts for future path of enviable progress. Media education facilitates a dynamic flow of high standards, both ethical and professional. Its relentless chase of quality internalities and externalities generate positive vibes of aesthetic pantheon. Media education has reached a high level acceptability by media houses which was unthinkable one hundred years ago. While the mushrooming of media education outlets is indicative of popularity, it also emphasizes the need for total quality control because numbers do not reflect quality.

The international web convention is basically an effort of three institutions. However, we are overwhelmed by the support extended by several universities and institutions forming a stable coalition for the purpose. Besides, the response to different technical and plenary sessions is heart-warming. The number abstracts received for review is indicative of the interest the convention has generated. The abstracts have been reviewed and suggestions have been communicated to the respective authors. The arduous work that has gone into this painstaking exercise for the success of the august event is to be appreciated tremendously. On behalf of the organizing committee, it is my duty to convey our gratitude to the teams headed by Dr. Jatin Srivastava and Dr. Ankuran Dutta. I congratulate everyone involved in this daunting task. And once again a big 'Thank You' to all of them.

**K. V. Nagaraj**  
Chair, Organising Committee

# ASSOCIATION COLLABORATION

Celebrating  
**100**  
Years of Journalism &  
Media Education in South Asia  
1920 - 2020



Global Risk Journalism Hub  
Melbourne



South Asian Communication Association  
(SACA), USA



Public Relations Council of India  
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**INDO-BANGLA**  
MEDIA EDUCATORS NETWORK

Indo- Bangla Media Educators Network,  
Dhaka



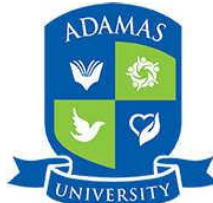


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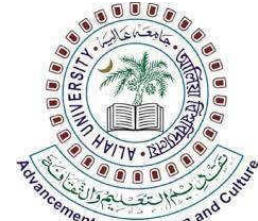
# ACADEMIC COLLABORATION



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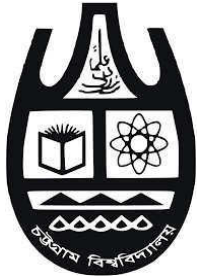
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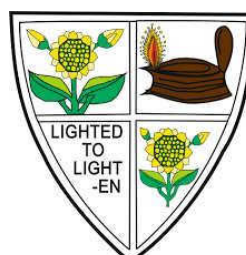
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Mumbai



Visva Bharati, Centre for Journalism and  
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Sri Lanka Development Journalist Forum



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Media Asia  
AMIC/ Taylor and Francis ISSN: 0129-6612



Journal of Content Community and Communication ISSN-2456-9011  
(SCOPUS indexed), Gwalior, India



South Asian Journal of Communication Studies  
ISSN- 9 771234 567898, Colombo, Sri Lanka



Communication Today (Media Quarterly)  
ISSN- 0975-217X Jaipur, India



## **Ensuring quality in South Asian media education**



**Sivatharsiny Paramsothy, Muniappan Dhulabarani,  
Sivasubramaniam Raguram**

sthula28@gmail.com

Sr Lecturer/ Lecturer

University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

## Opportunities and Challenges of the Media Education Students at the Universities of Sri Lanka in Professional Internship Trainings

Media education at the university level has completed more than 50 years of its introduction in Sri Lanka. At present, the systematic courses related to media and communication studies at under graduation, post-graduation and research programmes level have been conducted at eight National Universities all over the island. Apart from the Universities, the state media organizations such as Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, State Television: Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation are also conducting short term courses and on the job training to enhance and update the knowledge and skills of their employees. In addition to this, the institutes that belong to the associations of privately owned professional media outlets such as Sri Lanka Press Institute also involve in conducting diploma and certificate courses for different fields of media education regularly and whenever necessary. It could be observed that the courses impart theoretical, practical and professional training they need. However, the students, the academics, and the industry people feel that the space for internship practice is not sufficient to meet the professionalism. In this context, this research focuses on finding whether the tasks on internship training assigned to the students of Universities meet the requirements of the objectives of the courses and the professional standards expected to enter into the world of work. The research investigates the process of the selection of media organizations for the internship, the tasks assigned during the period of training, the viability of the application of courses learned, the opportunities to enhance the capacity building of the students, the challenges and barriers faced by the internees, the observations, and the recommendations put forwarded by the industries, academics, and students as major stakeholders. This research has chosen the Trincomalee Campus of the Eastern University of Sri Lanka from the Eastern Province, the University of Kelaniya from the South, and the University of Jaffna from the North where the media, communication, and mass communication undergraduate courses available, as the research area.



Further, the inquiry on the contribution of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, State Television: Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation, Country's first television channel: Independent Television Network, Privately owned Maharajah Television / Broadcasting Channels and International Broadcasting Corporation – Tamil as the placement institutes of the internship was also included. The data obtained through the interviews and focus group discussions among the academics and the students of the three selected Universities and the scrutiny on the evaluation made by the institutions that provide professional training. The analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively. The research found that the students preferred electronic media to print media for the internship, they developed the practical skills notably during the internship with the light of the theoretical foundation gathered from the Universities, and the course units: reporting techniques and skills, editing concepts and processes, production technologies, film studies, audio-visual editing, photojournalism, media management, and laws and ethics relevant to media functions were much help to create conducive environment to work with professionals. Further, the research identified the major opportunities through the internship to the students as the internship helps the student to adapt themselves to the new environment, placement to get familiar with a professionals, adaptation in a multicultural sphere, acquisition of new language/s, different openings in the professional world, and potential to work independently and empower them to start a media on their own with confidence, and the limited duration, non-payment of stipends, unfair treatment of the permanent employees, less space to acquire training in desired fields, lack of opportunity to learn the in-depth knowledge, the training that provides only the knowledge of the assigned section of and thus fails to help the students get the necessary know-how of the other areas of the field were identified as major challenges. The researcher obtained the following as recommendations; increasing the period of internship, teaching subjects related to languages, conducting more sessions of sharing experiences of professionals, providing more practical according to the curriculum, and the universities taking the responsibility of paying stipend during the period of training and providing more training on media which the students are interested in at pre-internship period.

**Opportunities and Challenges of the  
Media Education Students at the Universities of Sri Lanka  
in Professional Internship Trainings**

*Muniappan Dhulabarani<sup>1</sup>, Sivatharsiny Paramsothy<sup>2</sup>, Sivasubramaniam Raguram<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Lecturer, Department of Media Studies, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup>Demonstrator, Department of Media Studies, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

<sup>3</sup>Senior Lecturer, Department of Media Studies, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

sthula28@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, [sivatharsiny02@gmail.com](mailto:sivatharsiny02@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, ragunadu2003@yahoo.com<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract**

Media education at the university level has completed more than 50 years of its introduction in Sri Lanka. At present, the systematic courses related to media and communication studies at under graduation, post-graduation and research programmes level have been conducted at eight National Universities all over the island. Apart from the Universities, the state media organizations such as Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, State Television: Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation are also conducting short term courses and on the job training to enhance and update the knowledge and skills of their employees. In addition to this, the institutes that belong to the associations of privately owned professional media outlets such as Sri Lanka Press Institute also involve in conducting diploma and certificate courses for different fields of media education regularly and whenever necessary. It could be observed that the courses impart theoretical, practical and professional training they need. However, the students, the academics, and the industry people feel that the space for internship practice is not sufficient to meet the professionalism.

In this context, this research focuses on finding whether the tasks on internship training assigned to the students of Universities meet the requirements of the objectives of the courses and the professional standards expected to enter into the world of work.

The research investigates the process of the selection of media organizations for the internship, the tasks assigned during the period of training, the viability of the application of courses learned, the opportunities to enhance the capacity building of the students, the challenges and barriers faced by the internees, the observations, and the recommendations put forwarded by the industries, academics, and students as major stakeholders.

This research has chosen the Trincomalee Campus of the Eastern University of Sri Lanka from the Eastern Province, the University of Kelaniya from the South, and the University of Jaffna from the North where the media, communication, and mass communication undergraduate courses available, as the research area. Further, the inquiry on the contribution of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, State Television: Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation, Country's first television channel: Independent Television Network, Privately owned Maharajah Television / Broadcasting Channels and International Broadcasting Corporation – Tamil as the placement institutes of the internship was also included.

The data obtained through the interviews and focus group discussions among the academics and the students of the three selected Universities and the scrutiny on the evaluation made by the institutions that provide professional training. The analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively.

The research found that the students preferred electronic media to print media for the internship, they developed the practical skills notably during the internship with the light of the theoretical foundation gathered from the Universities, and the course units: reporting techniques and skills, editing concepts and processes, production technologies, film studies,

audio-visual editing, photojournalism, media management, and laws and ethics relevant to media functions were much help to create conducive environment to work with professionals. Further, the research identified the major opportunities through the internship to the students as the internship helps the student to adapt themselves to the new environment, placement to get familiar with a professionals, adaptation in a multicultural sphere, acquisition of new language/s, different openings in the professional world, and potential to work independently and empower them to start a media on their own with confidence, and the limited duration, non-payment of stipends, unfair treatment of the permanent employees, less space to acquire training in desired fields, lack of opportunity to learn the in-depth knowledge, the training that provides only the knowledge of the assigned section of and thus fails to help the students get the necessary know-how of the other areas of the field were identified as major challenges.

The researcher obtained the following as recommendations; increasing the period of internship, teaching subjects related to languages, conducting more sessions of sharing experiences of professionals, providing more practicals according to the curriculum, and the universities taking the responsibility of paying stipend during the period of training and providing more training on media which the students are interested in at pre-internship period.

**Key Words: Media Education, Internship, Media Outlets**

## **1. Introduction**

The developments in communication technology, the progress made in mass media and the nature of its influence on society have been the important factors that have led to the development and the in-depth study of the subject of Communication Studies as an independent academic discipline.



More than fifty years have passed since the introduction of media education at the university level in Sri Lanka. Now, eight universities in Sri Lanka conduct courses related to communication and media.

The subject of Communication was first introduced to Sri Lanka under the initiation of the Junior Campus at Dehiwela. During 1968 - 1969 a course was introduced under the title 'Journalism'. From the year 1971, when universities introduced vocational study programmes, they renamed 'media studies' as 'communication studies'. Accordingly in 1973, in the University of Kelaniya, a new Department known as the 'Department of Mass Communication Studies' was established.

During this period, the committee appointed by the University Grant Commission consisting of Professor Wimal Dissanayake, Professor Sunanda Mahendra, Professor M. B. Ariyapala, Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra, Dr. Edwin Ariyadasa and Mr. D. C. Ranathunga, took leadership.

In the year 1972, the University of Sri Jayewardenepura started a diploma course in Journalism. At the University of Jaffna from the Northern Province, Professors K. Kailasapathy and K. Sivathamby introduced journalism through the Department of Tamil.

The National Institute of Education for the first time introduced the subject of 'Communication and Media Studies' to Grade 10 in 2006, to Grade 11 in 2007 as a supplementary subject and 'Communication and Media Studies' was introduced to the Advanced Level in the Arts Stream in 2008.

Apart from the universities, Newspapers and State-owned Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation in Sri Lanka and State Television: Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation also conducted relevant study programmes for their journalists and other technical crews. In addition to this, the institutes that belong to the associations of privately owned professional media outlets such as Sri Lanka Press Institute also involve in conducting diploma and certificate courses for different fields of media education regularly and whenever necessary.

Now, the University of Kelaniya, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Palee Campus of the Colombo University, Rajarata University, Open University of Sri Lanka, Trincomalee

Campus of the Eastern University, and the University of Jaffna conduct courses related to media and communication.

This course pervades in many approved universities, developed and they offer diploma, higher diploma, general degree, special degree and post-graduate and masters and research programmes.

## **2. Research Problem**

It could be observed that the students who follow media studies at the Sri Lankan Universities provide internship programmes along with classroom activities. Nevertheless, it was observed that the opinion that the space for the internship provided parallel to the academic activities is not enough prevails among the students of communication and media studies and the professionals.

In this context, this research focuses on finding whether the tasks on internship training assigned to the students of universities meet the requirements of the objectives of the courses and the professional standards expected to enter into the world of work.

## **3. Research Questions**

The researchers posed the following research questions.

- Do the students who follow media studies at the Sri Lankan Universities have opportunities to obtain career-related internships at the media institution?
- What type of media institutions are much prioritized by the students who follow media studies at the Sri Lankan Universities?
- How the space is available for internships at these selected institutions?
- How useful are the units taught at the universities to the internships?

On par with the above, the research investigates the process of the selection of media organizations for the internship, the tasks assigned during the period of training, the viability of the application of courses learned, the opportunities to enhance the capacity building of the students, the challenges and barriers faced by the internees, the observations, and the

recommendations put forwarded by the industries, academics, and students as major stakeholders.

#### **4. Purpose and Objectives of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate how the space is available at the media institutions for the internship programmes of the students who follow media studies at the Sri Lankan Universities.

The space for the internships is determined according to the tasks assigned to internees during the period of internship, application of the units taught in the courses of communication and media studies at the Universities, challenges the students face during the internship, the opportunities the students get through the internship, recommendations given by undergraduates and lecturers of the media studies programmes.

#### **5. Hypotheses of the Research**

The hypotheses of the study are as follows: The space for internships available at media institutions is inadequate. The duration of the internship is also found to be insufficient. Further, the students opting the print media for internship for career development is also found to be less.

#### **6. Sample Design and Collection of Data**

This research has chosen the Trincomalee Campus of the Eastern University of Sri Lanka from the Eastern Province, the University of Kelaniya from the South, and the University of Jaffna from the North where the media, communication, and mass communication undergraduate courses available, as the research area. Further, the inquiry on the contribution of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, State Television: Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation, Country's first television channel: Independent Television Network, Privately owned Maharajah Television / Broadcasting Channels and International Broadcasting Corporation – Tamil as the placement institutes of the internship was also included.

The data obtained through the interviews and focus group discussions among the academics and the students of the three selected Universities and the scrutiny on the evaluation made by the institutions that provide professional training.

## **7. Data Analysis**

The analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively.

### **7.1 The quantitative analysis of the Internship Evaluation Reports regarding the internees conducted by the media institutions**

According to the above, the Internship Evaluation Reports of Internees of the University of Jaffna from the year 2016 to 2018 were evaluated.

#### **Appraisal Qualities Guideline:**

1. Outstanding – Exceptional Performance
2. Excellent – Notable achievements beyond normal expectations
3. Good – Balanced and consistent performance
4. Competent – Requires some development to fulfill all expectations
5. Below average – Requires significant development to improve performance
6. Incompetent – Incapable of performing at the required level
7. Unacceptable - Fails to meet minimum standard



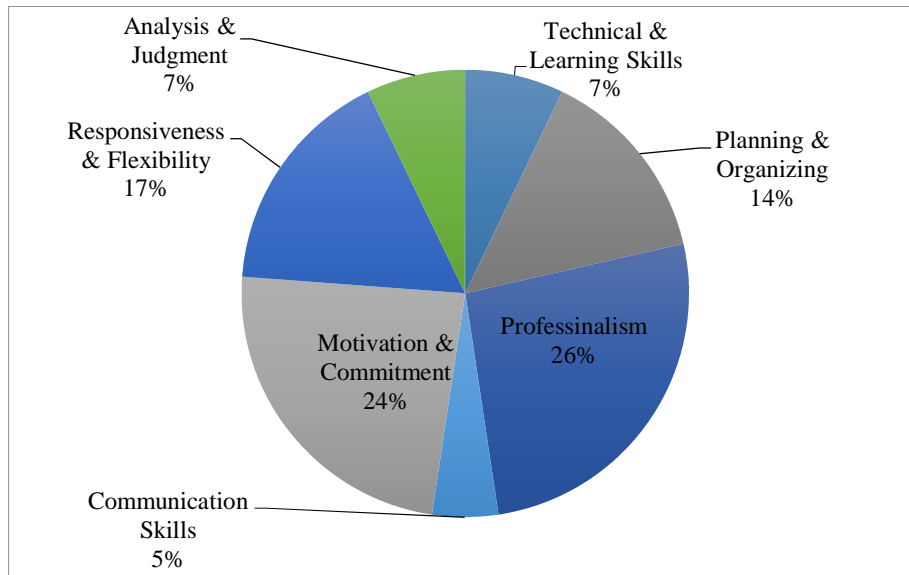


Diagram: The Indexes from the Internship Evaluation Reports - Internees of University of Jaffna

Based on the evaluation made by the media outlets who provided the internship, the internees learned the skills of professionalism at a large level and the motivation and commitment, responsiveness and flexibility and planning and organizing are the other priorities.

The evaluation further shows that the learning of analysis and judgment, technical skills and communication skills are at a lower level during the internship period.

## **7.2 The qualitative analysis of the Internship – Interviews and Focus Group Discussions**

### **7.2.1 The priority of the students and what they learned during the internship at the media institutions**

The students expressed that the internships helped them acquire the process of production of a variety of contents in print media and programmes of television channels. The institutions assigned them the roles of producers, technicians and the activities of the studio in producing programmes and many related aspects of the channels and they got the first-hand experience of applying the theories learned in the classroom. Internships enhanced student's learning and understanding of issues relevant to the specialized area.

Internships provide interns with hands-on practical experience and exposure. They assisted the intern to bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practical reality in handling software to edit and polish programmes; made them more than what they learned at the university.

During the internship, media institutions exposed the way of gathering news (Videos, Foreign News, Sports News), Copy Writing, Video and Audio Editing, List of Item and Running Order, Headline and Headline Dubbing, Bars, Card and Text (Beds) Moreover.

### **7.2.2 Tasks assigned to the internees during internships at the media institutions**

Students informed that during their stay in the programme division, they trained them to present live and recorded programmes (Pre-Production, Production and Post-Production), News scriptwriting, Video and Audio editing and Dubbing. They assigned the tasks of a producer and presenter.

They were allowed to take part in the content production of YouTube channels belongs to the media outlets and to take their refined products to the public by way of promoting the production.

### **7.2.3 Application of the courses taught in the studies**

Students stated that the practical taught at the universities were very helpful during the internship for the universities made them use their lessons learned to produce videos on all genres of media, like news, advertisements, documentaries, short films and feature films.

Since the practical classes on print, electronic and new media were conducted at the initial years of the degree programme they could use the acquired knowledge to learn better at the media institutions within the allocated duration without much difficulty.

The units, Reporting Techniques and Skills, Editing Concepts and Processes, Introduction to Production Technologies (TV, Radio production), Film Studies (Video Editing) and Photo Journalism, Media Democracy, Law & Ethics Concept and Advertising were very helpful.

#### **7.2.4 Opportunities the students get by the internship**

Students get employment in the institutions where they complete their complete internship. The lecturers responded that those who had graduated from the universities were employed in the media organizations.

#### **7.2.5 Challenges those students face during the internship**

The students and lecturers mentioned, the time allocated was short to adapt themselves with the staff and the environment of the institution and the lack of mentoring division for the interns, the unwillingness of some personnel to impart necessary skills and knowledge, confinement to the study area that prevent to study the institution fully as challenges.

Most of them pointed out that lack of stipends, language fluency, and compartmentalized internship as major impediments.

#### **7.2.6 Recommendation made at the end of the internship**

The following are made as recommendations by the students and lecturers to enhance the efficiency of the internship training.

- Increase the duration of the internship
- Give immediate hand on training after completion of each unit of the syllabus
- Conduct sharing sessions by the veterans in the field media.

### **8. Results of the Research**

The following are identified as the opportunities to the students regard to the internship in Sri Lankan Universities' context.

- The students prefer electronic media, specially television, to the press media.
- The students learned to handle technical applications and updated their exposure on using software professionally, which are not much available in study centers.
- They learned to apply the courses studied at the universities appropriately.

- The courses learned relevant to Reporting Techniques and Skills, Newspaper Editing, Production Technologies, Film Studies, Audio - Visual Editing, Photo Journalism, Media Laws and Ethics, Media Management and Advertising were very helpful to them to grasp the opportunities.
- Internships provide hands-on practical experience and exposure and bridge the gap between the academic learning process and the practicality.
- Internships boost the motivational levels of the students and help to improve the marketability of graduates.
- Internships enhanced learning and understanding the issues relevant to a particular area of study.
- The internees gain soft skills and interpersonal skills in the real work environment.
- The students earn adaptability to work in critical and different situations.
- The internship empowered them to initiate the efforts to move towards owning a media platform.
- The opportunities are available for employment in the institutions where the students complete their internship.

The following are identified as the challenges to the students regard to the internship in the Sri Lankan Universities' context.

- Insufficient infrastructure in universities to acquire practical components.
- The time allocated for the internships is short to adapt themselves to the staff and the environment of the institution.
- The lack of mentoring for the internees in media outlets.
- The unwillingness of permanent employees to impart the necessary skills and knowledge.
- Confinement to the study area prevents to study of the institution fully.
- Lack of or no stipends.
- Lack of language fluency to adapt to a new environment.
- Compartmentalized internship.

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