

Editorial

In keeping with the aims of the University of Colombo Review, this second and final issue for 2023 carries articles from seven disciplines: Ayurveda, biomedicine, education, disability studies, translation studies, and physics. In an era of hyper-specialization even within an academic discipline, one may question the value of publishing scholarship from such a diverse range of disciplines on a common platform. Moreover, this year the UCR has engaged in an open call for submissions and not remained within a specific theme in its issues. What is the value for the author, reader and the University in engaging in this scholarly endeavour?

We think there are at least three justifications. First, the UCR's core concern is the advancement of interdisciplinary scholarly inquiry. The publication of scholarly work from different disciplines in a common academic platform is one means of furthering that project. Interdisciplinarity can be encouraged in at least two ways: publication of different disciplinary interpretations of a common theme and the publication of different disciplinary interventions on a common platform. Second, and relatedly, the publication of such work on a common platform has a unique effect of confrontation. Readers of different disciplines are confronted with work by scholars of different disciplines when they engage with UCR. The UCR therefore offers a common platform which reminds its audience of the academic universe which is diverse and encourages us to cultivate a sense of curiosity about other approaches. We hope it will nurture a sense of healthy awareness of the strengths and limitations of our own disciplines and that it will spark ideas for inter- or cross-disciplinary research. Third, and this is mostly a point related to academic publication, working with authors from different disciplines has challenged the UCR team to meaningfully work out what it means to support interdisciplinarity in academic publication. We think that this experience will help us to be more effective in contributing to the interdisciplinary conversations in academia.

In this issue, H.S.Kumarasinghe and T.L.Gunathilaka present a research review of 'G-protein coupled receptors in adipose tissues and regulatory roles in the pathophysiology of human diseases.' From the other side of the room, so to speak, F.R. Fyzer's and W.A.S.S. Weerakoon's article on Ayurveda and Sri Lankan Indigenous Medicine (Deshiya Chikitsa) explores the attitudes of working adults towards traditional medical practices as well as their use and understanding of such

use. R.M.P. Rathnayaka and C. Wannigama write about formative assessments given in science classrooms, and students' perceptions of these. A useful study of teenagers with visual disabilities is presented by J.M.I.H. Jayasekera and C.L. Weeraratne, who discuss the knowledge, attitudes and challenges faced by this community regarding fitness and exercise. L.A.D. Weerasinghe analyses an Independence Day speech by the former President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, focusing on the narrative strategies taken to a positive image of post-war Sri Lanka. Finally, M.A.S.M. Madduma Arachchi's article is related to the X-Press Pearl incident, assessing the viability of using Synthetic Aperture Radar imagery to detect oil spills.

This issue's Symposium Section is an interview with Jayadeva Uyangoda, Emeritus Professor in Political Science at the University of Colombo on the publication of an edited academic volume in the Sri Lankan context. This interview captures the experiences of one of leading scholars in South Asia on the art of academic publication. It discusses the difficult aim of publishing locally and the challenges as well. We are confident that this interview will be a useful guide to any scholar who is interested in learning about and improving their efforts in publishing edited volumes in the local context.

For the UCR editorial board and team, 2023 has been an year of reflexivity and preparation for what we anticipate to be the next stage of the journal's development. We are pleased to have expanded our team, to include a production editor and more copy editors. We are also in the process of transitioning to working on an online platform and database, Sri Lanka Journals Online (SLJO). To be in step with present-day practices of publication, with this issue we offer first view or an advanced online view of articles on the UCR website. The publication of articles as 'first view' until it is assigned an issue is a best practice that we have adopted in order to provide the earliest opportunity for authors and readers to engage with articles published by UCR.

We look forward to 2024 with a sense of excitement and hope while holding in tension the deep challenges to academic work thrown up by the developments around us, whether in Sri Lanka, in the region or globally. We are mindful of the excellent prospects for further strengthening the UCR and are committed to realising them as far as possible.

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