

LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

September – December 2023

UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA



Top News

“Hidden Treasures”
Art Exhibition



India Corner Unveiled

India Corner Unveiled at University of Peradeniya Main Library

The University of Peradeniya has taken significant steps to strengthen cultural ties between India and Sri Lanka by launching an “India Corner” at the Main Library on 7th December 2023. The prime aim of this initiative is to facilitate the exchange of educational resources and promote cross-cultural values between the two nations.

The inauguration was led by H.E. Shri Gopal Baglay, the High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, alongside Prof. M. D. Lamawansa, Vice Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya.

India Corner features a diverse collection of books in English, Hindi, Tamil and Sanskrit, covering a wide range of subjects including Indian Philosophy, Art, Culture, History, Economics, Political Science and Mythology. Additionally, the space includes interactive exhibits showcasing Indian classical music, festivals, cuisine, and dance, providing a rich visual and auditory experience.

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The event was graced by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor W.M.T. Madhujith; Assistant High Commissioner, Dr. Athira S.; Second Secretary of AHCI Kandy, Mr. P. Somaraj; as well as faculty members and the library staff. The program was overseen by Librarian Mr. R. Maheswaran, coordinated by Deputy Librarian, Dr. C. N.K. Alahakoon, and compered by Assistant Librarian, Mrs. M. T. C. N. S. De Silva.

The India Corner aims to enhance understanding of Indian culture and support global educational exchanges within the university community.



Role Models in Sports: Mr. R. Maheswaran at the Under 14 Hockey Tournament



The under 14 All Island boys and girls hockey tournament was held on 19th December 2023 at the University of Peradeniya hockey grounds. R. Maheswaran Librarian, a former national level hockey player, coach and administrator participated as a guest of honor in this junior national hockey tournament.

International Conference at University of Kelaniya on 29th November 2023



International Conference on Library and Information Management (ICLIM), a biennial conference organized by the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka was held on 29th November 2023. Mr. R. Maheswaran participated as a panel head and moderator in this International LIS conference.

Academic Exchanges in Library Science: Mr. R. Maheswaran's Contributions at Barathidasan University



During his recent visit to India, Mr. R. Maheswaran paid a courtesy visit to the Library and Information Science Department of the Barathidasan University, Tamil Nadu, India on 21st November 2023. Mr. Maheswaran delivered a lecture to the undergraduate and post graduate students.

Dr.S. Srinivasaragavan Professor & Head of the Department of Library and Information Science felicitated him with a token of respect and appreciation.

Mr. R. Maheswaran's Participation in the SRM International Symposium

Mr. R. Maheswaran, Librarian, participated as a Resource person in an International Tamil Symposium, organized by SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Rampur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

This two day symposium on Computer Technology in Modern Tamil Research was held on 23rd & 24th November 2023.



Subject: Report on Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) – Library Activities

The IQAC – Library Committee held two important meetings on 23rd-October 2023 and 3rd November 2023. These sessions provided a platform for members to engage in various discussions, addressing critical matters related to the library's operations and strategic goals.

A major outcome from these meetings was the preparation of a comprehensive Performance Scorecard. This scorecard aims to enhance transparency and accountability in evaluating the library's annual progress. It has been completed and submitted to the CQA office for further review, marking a significant step in tracking and assessing library performance.

Additionally, the committee finalized a new policy regarding lost or damaged library materials. After thorough deliberations, a special subcommittee was formed to draft the policy. The finalized draft was presented, reviewed, and approved during the meetings. The committee is now planning to submit the revised policy to the next Senate Library Committee for final approval and implementation.



Awareness Program on Systematic Review for Evidence-Based Practice: Enhancing Learning and Student Success

The Main Library of University of Peradeniya organized a workshop titled “Systematic Review for Evidence-Based Practice: Enhancing Learning and Student Success” on 24th November 2023. The event was conducted in collaboration with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC - Library) and the Staff Training Division.

Ms. Sriyani Perera, a Consultant in library development and Visiting Senior Lecturer on Systematic Reviews for Evidence-Informed Policy-making at the Bandaranaike Academy for Leadership and Public Policy, served as the resource person. Her expertise in systematic review techniques provided valuable guidance on methods essential for evidence-based practice.

The workshop saw active participation from faculty members across various disciplines, including dental, medical, and arts faculties, as well as students, library academics, and staff. The session aimed to enhance learning and support student success by equipping attendees with crucial skills for conducting systematic reviews. The event successfully delivered insights into effective review methodologies, fostering informed decision-making in academic and professional settings.

Library Seminar Series No. 12

The Library, University of Peradeniya, hosted Library Seminar Series No. 12 on 1st December, 2023 at the Library Auditorium from 09:30 AM to 11:30 AM. The event featured two distinguished guest lectures. Professor S. Srinivasaragavan from Bharathidasan University delivered an engaging presentation on *Artificial Intelligence for Teaching, Learning, Research, and Information Management*. Following this, Professor R. Balasubramani, also from Bharathidasan University, offered valuable insights on *Research Indicators: Strategies for Selecting Journals and Plagiarism Detection Tools*. The seminar attracted enthusiastic participation from students, and faculty members of Arts Faculty, library academics, and staff. The session commenced with a warm welcome from Mr. R. Maheswaran, Librarian and was concluded with a thoughtful vote of thanks by Mr. S.A. Jeewan, the Coordinator of the Library Seminar Series. The event was a resounding success, sparking insightful discussions and providing valuable knowledge to all attendees.

“Hidden Treasures”

Art Exhibition

The Main Library, University of Peradeniya is pleased to announce the success of the 'Hidden Treasures' Art Exhibition, hosted from November 24th to December 3rd, 2023, in celebration of International Week. This event took place alongside a series of programmes organized by the International Relations Office (InRO) for International Week 2023.

The opening ceremony took place on 27th November, 2023, at 11:30 AM at the Art Gallery in the New Library Building. The exhibition was inaugurated by Her Excellency Ms. Bonnie Horbach, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Sri Lanka, and Her Excellency Dr. S. Athira, Assistant High Commissioner of India in Kandy, Sri Lanka. Dignitaries present included the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Librarian, Director of InRO, Deans of faculties, academics, students, non-academic staff, media, and the general public.

The exhibition was open to the public for five days, attracting school children, professional artists, scholars, and numerous visitors. Attendees had the opportunity to explore the paintings and visit the Professor Ediriweera Sarchchandra Museum, along with archival Palm leaf collections.

The programme was directed by Mr. R. Maheswaran, the Librarian at the University of Peradeniya, and supervised by Dr.(Ms.) C.N.K. Alahakoon, Deputy Librarian. Coordination was handled by Assistant Librarians S.A. Jeewan and Ms. Chamilka De Silva, along with a team of nine members. Additionally, all Main Library staff actively contributed to the success of this programme.

“Hidden Treasures”

Art Exhibition



“Hidden Treasures”

Art Exhibition



Connectivism in the Library Context: Embracing the Digital Age

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Science Library, University of Peradeniya

Introduction

In today's dynamic digital landscape, the role of libraries has transformed significantly to cater to the needs of their users. With the advancement of technology and the Internet libraries are no longer traditional repositories of physical material; libraries have converted into hubs of knowledge, connectivity and information access. Connectivism is a learning theory that perfectly aligns with this digital transformation. Libraries are embracing connectivism, recognizing the importance of networks and connections in the acquisition and dissemination of information (Transue, 2013). This article explores the concept of connectivism in the library context, highlighting how libraries can adapt to the digital age continuing to be relevant and valuable for their user community.

The Concept of Connectivism

Connectivism is an educational theory that emphasizes the significance of networks and connections in learning. In simple terms, learners grasp new knowledge through the connections they make. George Siemens introduced connectivism as a learning theory for the digital age, which is a successor to behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism (Siemens, 2004). Downes derived the concept of connectivism, employed in the application of biological brain models to machine learning neural networks, considering the neural network as an integral part of a larger system (Bell, 2011). The ideas of Downes and Siemens contributed to the development of the connectivism theory, which focuses on the utilization of networks to comprehend learning across various levels. The eight core principles of connectivism are as follows (Siemens, 2004):

- Learning and knowledge rests in diversity of opinions
- Learning is a process of connecting specialized nodes or information sources
- Learning may reside in non-human appliances
- Capacity to know more is more critical than what is currently known
- Nurturing and maintaining connections is needed to facilitate continual learning
- Ability to see connections between fields, ideas and concepts is a core skill
- Currency (accurate, up-to-date knowledge) is the intent of all connectivist learning activities
- Decision-making is itself a learning process. Choosing what to learn and the meaning of incoming information is seen through the lens of a shifting reality. While there is a right answer now, it may be wrong tomorrow due to alterations in the information climate affecting the decision



The principles of connectivism outlined above include vital concepts like critical thinking, credibility, relevance, validity, information seeking and access to information, which are all significant to the mission of libraries (Gurder, 2010).

Connectivism in Libraries

According to the theory of connectivism, learning is seen as process of establishing connections among nodes of information, resources and people. In the context of library, a wide range of diverse information is available and connections play a vital role in accessing as well as sharing knowledge. Also, a considerable part of library collections and services are made available via technology allowing users to engage with networked information as their primary source of knowledge (Guder, 2010). Traditionally, libraries were solely confined to physical walls, housing material. However, with the emergence of the digital age, libraries have expanded beyond physical boundaries, distributing knowledge across various platforms both online and offline. Thus, the connectivist approach is highly applicable and relevant for the Library context. Libraries are ideal and unique knowledge hubs that could exploit connectivism to enrich learning experiences for users. Connectivism offers a new perspective for librarians to approach learning theory, as it fosters a collaborative environment where library services and instruction take a more interactive role (Guder, 2010).

Libraries could reap many advantages through connectivism. It opens up more avenues for information access by using digital resources and networks. Online databases, e-books, digital collections etc. will provide rich and quality information to a wide user base. Users will be able to easily access these online resources remotely allowing them to learn anywhere, anytime at their convenience. Librarians can promote the use of multiple information sources by guiding users to search databases using subject headings and creating web pages and links that connect library resources to specific subjects. Also, the connectivism approach will encourage active participation of users as well as user collaborations. Discussion forums, virtual communities as well as social media platforms can be employed to allow users engage with others who share common interests. This will lead to the inculcation of a sense of belonging and collaborative learning. Online communities will open avenues for users to connect with scholars, experts and interested stakeholders from around the globe. Libraries can host webinars, virtual conferences and online forums, allowing users to engage in meaningful discussions and access specialized knowledge. These virtual spaces foster a global community of learners and would enrich the library experiences of users (Gurder, 2010). In addition lifelong learning is promoted through connectivism by focusing on skills and competencies in digital literacy, critical thinking and evaluation of information. This will help users to stay informed and adapt to new knowledge throughout their lives. According to Burclaff and Johnson (2016), librarians can utilize social media to effectively teach information literacy to users. This approach is supported by the strong theoretical foundation provided by the theory of connectivism.



Furthermore, connectivism recognizes that each individual has unique learning preferences and needs and libraries can embrace this aspect by seeking ways to provide personalized learning experiences (Drexler, 2010). Libraries can tailor resources and recommendations based on user's interest and learning goals via adaptive learning technologies. As a result, this personalized approach will enhance the learning experience and ensure that users obtain relevant content. In addition, study rooms, open floors, an increased number of computers and social environments within libraries are all designed to cater to the different learning preferences of users from diverse cultural backgrounds (Guder, 2010).

Challenges in Applying Connectivism in Libraries

While connectivism renders various benefits, libraries must also be prepared to address several challenges. One significant concern is the digital divide. That is, all users not having equal access to technology and Internet. Libraries must strive to bridge this gap by providing resources and training programs to ensure equitable access to information. Another challenge is the overwhelming amount of information available online, which can lead to information overload. Librarians play a key role in guiding users through this sea of information, teaching them how to evaluate information sources and use digital tools effectively. Libraries should take effective measures to address privacy issues. Further, libraries should continuously evolve and adapt in the light of emerging technological advancements.

Conclusion

Connectivism is an important concept which converts the role of the librarian from merely guardians of material to facilitators in the learning process. Librarians play a significant role in assisting users to find required information, while guiding them to improve their information literacy skills and critical thinking skills. Through applying concepts of connectivism librarians can empower users to be self-learners and feel more confident in the digital landscape. Yet, challenges such as unequal access to information, privacy issues and information overload should be resolved successfully. As libraries strive in the digital world, connectivism will be a compelling tool to form sound connections and enrich the overall library experience.

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LIBRARY ORIENTATION FOR NEW ENTRANTS- SCIENCE LIBRARY

Ms. S. Weerasinghe, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Science Library conducted a session on “Introduction to the Library” for the new entrants (21 batch) of the Faculty of Science on 7th November 2023, at 10.15am-12 noon. This lecture was held at the auditorium of the Department of Statistics and Computer Science, Faculty of Science and around 400 students attended the session.

Subsequently, guided library tours were organized for the new entrants on 28th November 2023 and 06th December 2023 at 1.30pm to familiarize them with the extensive resources and services offered by the Science Library.



E-Portfolio Workshop- Faculty of Science

Ms. S. Weerasinghe/Senior Assistant Librarian of the Science Library contributed as a member of the organizing committee of the e-Portfolio workshop conducted by the Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya on 11th - September 2023.

This workshop tailored to create awareness among the 3rd year students of the Faculty of Science about the emerging platform of e-portfolio. The workshop consisted of lectures as well as hands-on practical sessions.



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS

Ms. S. Weerasinghe/Senior Assistant Librarian of the Science Library served as a resource person in the Capacity Building Program for school teachers organized by the Staff Development Center of University of Peradeniya on 19th - September 2023. This workshop aimed to reshape the perspectives of teachers through exploring various facets of education, including what is taught, how it is facilitated, methods of assessment and the critical process of evaluation. Teachers from five schools in Kandy namely, Mahamaya College, Girls' High School, Kingwood College, Trinity College and Hillwood College attended this program.



Awareness Programme on Academic Staff Charter: Fostering Understanding and Engagement

On 4th December 2023, the Main Library of University of Peradeniya hosted an insightful Awareness Programme on the Academic Staff Charter. The event was led by Prof. Rasnayake Mudiyanse, Director of the Staff Development Center at the University of Peradeniya.

Prof. Mudiyanse provided valuable insights into the Academic Staff Charter, focusing on its significance and implications for academic staff. The program aimed to enhance awareness and understanding among library academic staff, highlighting the key aspects and benefits of the charter.

The session successfully fostered a deeper comprehension of the Academic Staff Charter, contributing to better engagement and alignment with its principles among the library's academic team.

Book Donation to the Medical Library On 2023.10.02

A generous collection of medical books has been donated to the Medical Library in memory of the late Dr. Praneeth Jayathilake. This valuable addition to our library will be a significant resource for the undergraduates of the Faculty of Medicine. Professor Vasanthi Pinto, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine attended the Donation program along with the family members of the late Dr. Praneeth Jayathilake.

Professor, Neelakanthi Ratnatunga, Professor Emeritus, University of Peradeniya coordinated this valuable contribution. Their contribution is greatly appreciated and will greatly benefit our students.



Certificate Course in Leading and Managing Universities

Mr. Sunil Premarathne, Senior Assistant Librarian/ Acquisitions Division, Main Library and Ms. Sureni Weerasinghe, Senior Assistant Librarian of the Science Library successfully completed the Certificate Course in Leading and Managing Universities 2023. This course was conducted from August to October 2023 at the Staff Development Center of University of Peradeniya. This was a comprehensive self-learning program that emphasized peer interactions, collaboration, simulated debates and discussions on relevant scenarios within the higher education system.



Research Publications

- **6th International Symposium of NILIS, University of Colombo on 15th November 2023**

- 01 Dr.C.N.K.Alahakoon, Deputy Librarian of University of Peradeniya presented paper on 'Higher diploma students' experience of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: survey study on SLLA students'
- 02 Dr.C.Gunasekare, Senior Assistant Librarian of University of Peradeniya presented paper on 'A decadal analysis of library and information science research trends in Sri Lanka (2013-2022)'
- 03 Mr.A.Dharmarathne, Senior Assistant Librarian of University of Peradeniya Presented paper on 'Computer literacy and Social Media awareness among the School Librarians in Kandy district, Sri Lanka'

- **5th International Conference on Library and Information Management (ICLIM - 2023) organized by the Dept.of Library & Information Science of University of Kelaniya on 29th November 2023.**

- 01 Mr.R.Maheshwaran, Librarian of University of Peradeniya and P.Hari Krishnan of Anna University, Coimbatore, India presented paper on 'Mapping the Literature on the Application of Image Processing in the Medical Field: A Scientometric Analysis'
- 02 Dr.(Ms.) C.N.K.Alahakoon, Deputy Librarian of University of Peradeniya presented paper on 'Preliminary analysis on Diploma Students' Satisfaction in Online Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: Sri Lanka Library Association'

- 03 Dr.(Ms.) C.Gunasekare, Senior Assistant Librarian of University of Peradeniya presented paper on 'Addressing Educational Disparities: Analysis of Library Resources and Services in Urban, Semi-Urban, and Rural Schools in the Kandy District'
- 04 Mr.A.Dharmarathne, Senior Assistant Librarian of University of Peradeniya Presented paper on 'Disaster Preparedness: the use of social media for academic information during the COVID-19 pandemic by new entrants of the Faculty of Dental Sciences at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka'
- 05 Mr.B.N.G.S.Premaratne, Senior Assistant Librarian and Mr.B.E.S.Bandara, Assistant Librarian of University of Peradeniya presented paper on 'Obstacles Encountered by Authors during the Publication Process of Books: An Investigative Study of University of Peradeniya Sri Lanka'
- 06 Ms.S.Weerasinghe, Senior Assistant Librarian and Ms.M.T.C.N.S de Silva, Assistant Librarian of the University of Peradeniya presented paper on 'The Impact of Organizational Culture on Employee Engagement: With Special Reference to Library System of State Universities in Sri Lanka'



- **1st Desk Research Conference (DRC) 2023, organized by the Library, University of Kelaniya on 06th December 2023.**

01 Dr.(Ms.) C.N.K.Alahakoon , Deputy Librarian of University of Peradeniya presented paper on –

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02 B.E.S. Bandara, Assistant Librarian and of University of Peradeniya and Dr. (Mrs.) B.M.M.C.B.Hindagolla presented paper on "Examining the Research Landscape and Identifying Gaps in Digital Reference Services in Sri Lankan Academic Libraries: Insights from Literature"



01 Dr. (Mrs.) B.M.M.C.B. Hindagolla has resigned from her position as Senior Assistant Librarian, effective 1st September, 2023.

02 Mr. K.S.B. Watareka, Library Assistant, retired from his position on 8th September, 2023.

03 Mr. A. Jesudasan, Library Attendant, retired from his position on 18th October, 2023.

04 Mrs. A.S. Ratnayake, Senior Staff Assistant, retired from her position on 24th November, 2023.

05 Mrs. S.B.R.M.K. Dissanayake, Library Attendant, was transferred from the University of Kelaniya to the University of Peradeniya on 15th December, 2023.

Awards

Mr. B.E.S. Bandara, Assistant Librarian at the University of Peradeniya, was honored as the Best Presenter at the 13th International Conference of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka (ICULA 2023). The conference, held on October 26, 2023, at the Maitland State Room, Mount Lavinia Hotel in Colombo, was themed "Transforming Academic Libraries for a Sustainable Future". Mr. Bandara's presentation, titled "Innovative Application for the Stock Verification Process of Library Materials: A Case of SEUSL," was widely recognized for its insightful contribution to the field.



An almsgiving in memory of the late **Mrs. Kanchana Dehigama**

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Almsgiving serves as a shield for humanity. It alleviates sorrow, acts as a stairway to heaven, and offers the gift of ultimate peace (Nibbana)

An almsgiving in memory of the late Mrs. Kanchana Dehigama was conducted by the library's academic staff on September 21, 2023, at the University temple. Mrs. Dehigama, who served as the Senior Assistant Librarian at the Allied Health Science Library, University of Peradeniya, dedicated 21 years to our library system before her passing on August 18, 2023. The ceremony was attended by her family, library staff and friends, who gathered to honor her memory and to wish her the supreme bliss of Nibbana.



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