



Population Association of Sri Lanka

PASL NEWSLETTER

2020 - 2021 No.1

President's Message

It is an honour to serve as the President of the PASL for the year 2020-2021 and my pleasure to write this message for Issue No 1 of the 2020-2021 PASL Newsletter. I and the members of the 23rd Council are committed to raise the profile of the Association while promoting research and disseminating knowledge in demography and population studies. The 23rd Council commenced its tenure on the 23rd of February 2020 with the aim of strengthening the work conducted by the 22nd Council, and promoting more innovative activities to benefit the membership as well as the community connected through their interest in Demography.

The unexpected COVID-19 pandemic had its impact on the PASL activities and we were compelled to change some of our plans and decide on alternatives. One response was the launching of the online forum for professional networking on the World Population Day 2020. The first activity under this is a series of sessions on organizations and institutes which collect demographic data and the different types of data they collect.

The call for papers for the Sri Lanka Journal of Population Studies (SLJPS) Vol. 21 (2) was circulated and we are expecting positive responses in the form of quality scientific studies

I congratulate the Editor of the Newsletter for publishing this Newsletter and thank her for the dedication and hard work. The PASL will continue its journey and the support of the membership will facilitate our endeavors.

Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda
President

23rd Council - Population Association of Sri Lanka (PASL) 2020-2021

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Inauguration Ceremony



Twenty Second Annual Scientific Sessions of the PASL



Editor
Irangi Samarakoon

Inauguration Ceremony of the Twenty Second Annual Scientific Sessions of the PASL

The Inaugural Ceremony of the Annual Scientific Sessions and launching of the Sri Lanka Journal of Population Studies (SLJPS) Volume 21 Number 1, together with the AGM of the Association was held on 23rd February 2020, at the M. B. Ariyapala Auditorium, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. The event was graced by the Chief Guest, Senior Professor Chandrika N Wijeyaratne – Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo, Guest of Honour, Ms. Madusha Dissanayake - Assistant Representative, UNFPA, Sri Lanka, Keynote Speaker - Dr. Nalika Gunawardena, National Professional Officer (Noncommunicable Diseases and Health Systems), World Health Organization Country Office - Sri Lanka, Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda, President/PASL and Dr. M W S J Kumari, Secretary/PASL.

The Presidential address was also delivered by Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda at the Inauguration under the topic *Gender and Ageing: Empowering the 'Reproductive Role'*. The speech focused on elderly women and policies and programmes that should be put in place in order to resolve many of the issues prevailing among elderly women so as to truly achieve the promise of Sustainable Development Goal's - "Leaving no one behind".

Twenty Second Annual Scientific Sessions of the PASL

Twenty Second Annual Scientific Sessions consisted of two sessions and eight presentations on the following titles.

1. Ageing, Blue Collar Works and Reflections among Older Adults in an Urban Slum: A Qualitative Study - H L S De Zoysa
2. Challenges encountered by Employees with Visual Impairment & Blindness in the Sri Lankan Workplace: An Exploratory Study - V R Dunuwila and T Suraweera
3. Returnee Migrants and Economic Reintegration: A Case of Fisheries Community in Puttalam District - Dilki Ishara and Roshini Jayaweera
4. Evaluating the Traditional Practitioners Knowledge and Practices related to Snake-bite First aid and Treatment - W M S S K Kulatunga, H M R D Herath & H A S Ariyawansa
5. Differences in the level of income and expenditure among chronically-ill people in Sri Lanka: Evidence from household survey data - R A D M Ranawaka, M N R Perera, S P Joachim & V K Mallikarachchi
6. Socio-economic and Demographic characteristics of Household members on different types of Chronic Illnesses in Sri Lanka: Evidence from Household Survey data - R A D M Ranawaka, M N R Perera, S P Joachim & V K Mallikarachchi
7. Social demographic factors and drug use patterns of Female Heroin Users in Sri Lanka - B Senanayake & A T Darshana
8. Customer Perception on Restaurants Hiring Deaf Employees: Comparative Study of Two Pizza Hut Restaurants in Sri Lanka - V E M G Senaviratne, T Suraweera, W A A Charuka, N W Samarakkody & K A M S Wijayanayaka

The two sessions were chaired by:

Dr. Swarna Ukwatta
Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda

Keynote Address – Inaugural Ceremony of the 22nd Scientific Sessions

Dr. Nalika Gunawardena

National Professional Officer (Noncommunicable Diseases and Health Systems)
World Health Organization Country Office - Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has a high burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). More than 80% of all deaths are due to NCDs. Cardiovascular disease (CVDs) is the leading cause of mortality accounting for 34% of all deaths, followed by cancers (14%), diabetes (9%) and chronic respiratory diseases (8%).

Risk of dying prematurely between ages 30 and 70 years from any of the four major chronic NCDs was estimated to be 17% in 2018. Risk behaviours for NCDs, namely physical inactivity, smoking, unhealthy diet and consumption of alcohol are also high in the country. NCD preventive activities in Sri Lanka are guided by the National Multisectoral Action Plan for Prevention and Control of NCDs 2016-2020 and implementation of cost-effective, affordable and evidence based technical packages to address risk factors of NCDs forms the basis of the plan.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". Goal 3 is to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages and includes a target to reduce premature (30 and 70 years) deaths from NCDs by one third, by 2030. To support the countries to achieve this target, World Health Organization (WHO) has proposed a menu of 16 policy options and cost-effective interventions which are termed as "best buys". An analysis by WHO on status of implementing showed that globally, implementing best buys are suboptimal. In Sri Lanka of the 16 'Best Buy' interventions, five have been fully implemented and six have been partially implemented while five have not been implemented with a trend indicating non-achievement of the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 2030. WHO convened an Independent High-Level Commission on NCDs to advocate all countries to take renewal efforts through enhanced political leadership and responsibility to implement a specific set of priorities at scale by reorienting health systems to include NCDs in their policies and plans and by engaging with all stakeholders. Adequate financing and strengthening accountability to their citizens for action on NCDs are other recommended measures.

Certificates of Membership

Certificates of Membership were awarded to the new members who obtained Life Membership of the Population Association of Sri Lanka during the tenure of the 22nd Council. The Life Membership of the PASL currently stands at 308. Certificates for the new members were awarded at the Inaugural Ceremony of the 22nd Scientific Sessions by the President of the PASL.





Sri Lanka Journal of Population Studies - Volume 21 Number 1

Sri Lanka Journal of Population Studies (SLJPS) –Volume 21 Number 1 was launched on 23rd February 2020. The SLJPS is a scientific refereed journal, published by the Population Association of Sri Lanka. It seeks to promote and disseminate knowledge on Demography and Population Studies in a multi-disciplinary perspective with major reference to Sri Lanka. Volume 21 Number 1 consisted of five articles and one book review, and carried an array of interrelated themes covering fertility, mortality and migration, the core areas of Demography, and population ageing, internal and international migration, demographic transition and urbanization.

Volume 21 Number 1 carries papers titled “The Socio-Demographic Context of Abuse of Elderly People: A Case Study Based on Elderly Care Settings in Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte Divisional Secretariat Area of Colombo District, Sri Lanka”, “Spatial Orientation and Efficiency of Migration in Sri Lanka”, “Human Trafficking and the Family: Examples from Sri Lanka on Socio-Economic Issues Experienced by Families of the Trafficked due to Trafficking”, “Perspective on Health of Resettled People in Urban Settlements”, “Identifying the Determinant of Consumer’s Purchase Tendency towards Herbal Cosmetics: A Research Based on Minuwangoda Divisional Secretariat” and a book review on the publication “The Demographic Transition in Sri Lanka: A Socio-Economic Analysis”.



An online Forum for Professional Networking

The 23rd Council of the PASL launched a new initiative – “*Online forum for professional networking*” on 11th July 2020, the World Population Day. The objectives of the new initiative were to find a fast, healthy and a safe method to develop closer contact among the membership in a context where it has expanded and is dispersed across Sri Lanka and around the world, and to disseminate knowledge regarding demography and population studies and promote awareness on population and development issues. First of the series of the initiative was on organizations and institutes that collect different types of population related data that are useful for demographic research and policy planning. So far three videos have been released and available at the PASL Website and the Facebook Page.

Population Data Sources - Emeritus Professor K A P Siddhisena, Department of Demography, University of Colombo
Department of Census & Statistics - Dr. I R Bandara, Former Director General, Department of Census and Statistics
Medical Statistics Unit, Ministry of Health - Ms. M M Darshanie, Senior Statistician, Medical Statistics Unit - Ministry of Health



An online Forum for Professional Networking - Session I

Speaker: Emeritus Professor K A P Siddhisena
Introduced by Dr. Kumudika Boyagoda

The topic of the inaugural session of the series was “Population Data Sources”, which was delivered by Emeritus Prof. K A P Siddhisena, Department of Demography, University of Colombo. In this session, Prof. Siddhisena discusses about the main population data sources in Sri Lanka, and the organizations that produce these data, namely the Department of Census and Statistics - Censuses and Surveys; Registrar General’s Department – Vital Statistics and other government institutes. Further, explaining each source of data, he speaks about the history of the national censuses commencing from 1871, importance and the characteristics of the censuses and the different types of data that have been collected such as size, distribution and composition of population (age, sex, place of residence, ethnicity, religion etc.).

He then explains about the importance of vital statistics, which are called as continuous data collection system, that are collected by the Registrar General’s Department. In the latter part of the video, Prof. Siddhisena discusses about the main national surveys carried out in Sri Lanka -Labour Force Survey, Demographic Health Survey, Household Income and Expenditure Survey and Child Activity Survey et. conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics and data collected by government institutions such as the Department of Immigration and Emigration – international migration, Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment – labour migration, Urban Development Authority – urban characteristics and infrastructure, Ministry of Planning – regional resource profiles, Ministry of Education – statistics on school going population, enrolments, dropouts and physical and human resources. The session concludes by drawing the viewers’ attention to the importance of identifying the main relevant authority/body when collecting the required population data to conduct successful demographic research.



An online Forum for Professional Networking - Session II

Speaker: Dr. I R Bandara

Introduced by Dr. M W S J Kumari

The second session of the “Online forum for professional networking” was an overview of the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) and its activities which was conducted by Dr. I R Bandara, former Director General, Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka. She commenced her presentation with a brief introduction to the department, including its history and the vision and mission of providing timely statistical data using new technology for the country’s development.

The session further explained the divisions in the department which are termed according to the data they work with – Population Census and Demography Division, Agriculture and Environment Division etc. Dr. Bandara discussed about the support services provided by the department including the library facilities and the dissemination unit. Furthermore, she explained about the censuses conducted in Sri Lanka and some of the key national surveys which are conducted by the department – Demographic and Health Surveys, Household Income and Expenditure Surveys, Labour Force Surveys, Time Use Survey etc. Dr. Bandara concluded her presentation with an important discussion on the ways that DCS information can be used by researchers.



An online Forum for Professional Networking - Session III

Speaker: Ms. M M Darshanie

Introduced by Dr. Ruwan Jayathilake

The third session of the “An Online forum for professional networking” was conducted by Ms. M M Darshanie, Senior Statistician, Medical Statistics Unit - Ministry of Health, on the topic of the Medical Statistic Unit of the Ministry of Health and its data. She commenced her session explaining the functionality of the Medical Statistics Unit (MSU) which is to collect the health information and compile health indicators.

Some functions of the MSU were explained as updating health institution list, data collection, analysis, publication of the Annual Health Bulletin, conducting training programmes and issuing health data. Next, Ms. Darshanie explained about the different data items on which that data is collected and how different indicators are calculated. The data items that are collected by the Maternity Form are still births, live births, maternal deaths and infant deaths. Maternal Mortality Ratio, Still Birth Rate and Low Birth Weight Rate are some of the indicators that calculate from the above data. From the Indoor Morbidity and Mortality Statistics Bed Occupancy Rate, Bed Turn Over Rate and Average Duration of Stay are calculated. Out-Patient Department (OPD) Return, Clinic Return, Beds by Ward Return, Staff Return, Specialist Return and Dental Return are the other data collection forms. She also explained on the different types of data published in the Annual Health Bulletin which has commenced its publication in the year 1980. The session was concluded with the explanation on the future developments which includes the expansion of data collection to private hospitals and Indigenous Medicine sector.



In memoriam of Dr. Kusuma Masinghe

It is with great sadness that we inform the demise of Dr. Kusuma Masinghe, member of the Founding Council of the Population Association of Sri Lanka (PASL), and a past Editor of the Sri Lanka Journal of Population Studies. Dr. Masinghe completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Ceylon and Doctoral Studies at the Adelaide University, Australia. She was a Visiting Lecturer at the Department of Demography, University of Colombo. Her valuable service to the PASL will always be remembered with gratitude. The Council of 23rd PASL pay respect to the late member of the PASL.

How to join PASL

The Population Association of Sri Lanka consists of four categories of membership.

Persons who have studied Demography/ Population Studies/ Allied fields for a Special / General/ Postgraduate Degree shall be eligible for Ordinary Membership.

Persons eligible for Ordinary Membership shall be eligible for Life Membership by payment of a sum of Rs. 1500/=.

Persons who have made distinguished contributions to Demography and Population Activities in Sri Lanka shall be nominated as Honorary Life Members by the Council

Persons and Institutions who are actively involved in the field of Demography and Population but who do not come under 4.1.1 may apply for Associate Membership.

Contact Details for Application

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