

The Report on the International Conference in Education 2025

The Second International Research Conference in Education 2025 (IRCE 2025) was successfully held on the 14th and 15th of June 2025 at the Kailasapathy Auditorium and the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Jaffna. This Conference was jointly organized by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Department of Education, Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna. The conference was conducted under the theme ***“Unveiling Innovative Practices for Sustainable Education – Challenges and Opportunities.”*** The event brought together a wide array of stakeholders including academics, researchers, educators, policymakers, and students from both national and international settings, all of whom engaged in critical discourse on current educational challenges and innovative practices aimed at sustainability.



The primary objectives of the conference were to provide a platform for scholars to present original research in education, facilitate the exchange of innovative ideas and practices across diverse educational contexts, foster interdisciplinary dialogue on sustainable and inclusive education, and encourage both national and international collaborations in educational research and development. These objectives were effectively met through a series of carefully curated sessions and interactions.



The conference commenced with an inaugural ceremony attended by several distinguished guests, including Prof.S.Satkunarajah,Vice Chancellor of the University of Jaffna, Snr.Prof.T.Velnampy, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Prof.S.Raguram, Dean of the Faculty of Arts as the chairs of the conference ,Dr.Nithilavarnan, Head of the Department of Education,as the Co-Chair, the Provincial Director of Education, and the Secretary of the Ministry of Education – Northern Province. Over 600 participants attended the opening plenary session. Following the inaugural ceremony, two keynote addresses were delivered. Prof. Selva Selvanathan, Professor of Econometrics and Director of the Policy Analysis Program at Griffith University, Australia, presented on “Interdisciplinary Degree Programs and Universities’ Contribution to the Re-development of North and East.” The second keynote was delivered by Dr. L.M. Kapila Bandara, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Colombo, on the topic “Education for Navigating Uncertainties Towards a Sustainable Future.”



162 papers were presented in parallel Sessions. The Research papers were reviewed by a panel of reviewers comprising professors and senior lecturers from national universities and the University of Jaffna. Selected abstracts were published in the official proceedings. Presentations were organized into eight thematic panels, including two virtual sessions to accommodate international participants.



The second day of the conference featured two thematic sessions aligned with the central theme. The first session, titled “***Sustainable School Education,***” was moderated by Prof. S. Raguram and included panelists such as Prof. F.M. Nawastheen, Faculty of Education,Open University of Sri Lanka, who spoke on “Needs of building teacher competence in digital tools to support Curriculum Reform and Implementation”; Dr. S. Athirathan, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, University of Colombo, who discussed on “Educational Technology for Rural Schools”; and Mr. K. Keetheeswaran, Senior Lecturer, Department of Special needs

Education, Faculty of Education, Open University of Sri Lanka, who presented on “Policy Frameworks for Inclusive Education in Sri Lanka.



The second thematic session of the conference was moderated by Senior Professor T. Velnamby and centered on the theme “***Contemporary Issues in Higher Education.***” The session brought together an esteemed panel of academics from various Sri Lankan universities, each presenting critical perspectives on the challenges and transformations occurring within the higher education landscape in Sri Lanka.



Professor Sivamohan Sumathy from the University of Peradeniya opened the session with a presentation titled “*Polity and Educational Policy: From Citizenry to Commodity.*” Following this, Professor Shamala Kumar, also from the University of Peradeniya, delivered a presentation on “*Innovating at the Periphery: Implications of Using Self-Financing Activities to Fund Universities Based Outside Colombo.*” Dr. Kaushalya Perera from the University of Colombo addressed the theme of academic productivity and sustainability in her presentation titled “*Running Slower: Calling for a Slow and Sustainable Research in Sri Lankan Universities.*” Dr. Ramya Kumar from the University of Jaffna presented on “*Dismantling Hierarchies to Foster Critical Inquiry and Engagement in Universities.*” The final presentation was delivered by Dr. Aruni Samarakoon from the University of Ruhuna, titled “*Revisiting Sri Lanka’s Free Education Policy at the Height of Neoliberalism: Crisis or Path to Becoming.*” Following the individual presentations, the session featured a dynamic Q&A segment, where audience members engaged the panelists with insightful questions and reflections. The session concluded with a comprehensive summary and concluding remarks delivered by the moderator, Senior Professor T. Velnamby, who synthesized the key arguments and emphasized the importance of sustained dialogue on these pressing issues within Sri Lanka’s higher education system.



The validity and importance of the conference proceedings were affirmed by validation addresses delivered by Prof. N. Balasundarampillai and Prof. N. Shanmugalingam, both former Vice Chancellors of the University of Jaffna. The conference also included a formal recognition segment where Senior Prof. T. Velnamby, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, presented certificates to paper presenters and mementoes to invited guests and dignitaries.



The outcomes of IRCE 2025 were both impactful and far-reaching. The event strengthened academic networks across national and international institutions, encouraged participants to adopt innovative teaching and research practices, and promoted the publication and dissemination of high-quality educational research. It also laid the groundwork for future international collaborations and student exchange initiatives, while significantly contributing to ongoing discourse on sustainable educational practices in the post-pandemic era.



In conclusion, the Second International Research Conference in Education 2025 achieved its intended goals and made a meaningful contribution to the field of educational research and

practice. The high quality of presentations, active participation of scholars, and collaborative atmosphere of the sessions underscored the value of such academic gatherings. The Faculty of Graduate Studies extends its sincere gratitude to all organizers, participants, speakers, and volunteers for their contributions to the success of this significant academic event.

Dr.V.Vijayabaskar

Convener

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