

Independence and interdependence of sustainable spaces is the overarching theme for FARU journal Vol.9 (Issue 01). The theme reflects how the sustainable spaces in terms of both research and professional spaces can act independently and interdependently to achieve sustainability in the built environment. Having successfully published 3 journals under the space related themes of Re-evaluating space: across disciplines, Dimensions of space: multi-disciplinary approaches, and Beyond Sustainability: Reflection across spaces we are delighted to publish this Vol.9 (Issue 01) of FARU journal on the theme of 'Independence and interdependence of sustainable spaces'.

This volume consists of eight highly commended papers which were invited based on the papers presented and published in the proceedings of 'Faculty of Architecture Research Unit (FARU) 14th International Research Conference (2021)'. The selection of the papers focused on the reviewer recommendation, its academic standing, contribution to the field of study and presentation. Further, all the papers invited were improved to embrace the quality of the paper to cater FARU journal, underwent a double blinded peer review process, before getting accepted for the publication. All the research papers contribute to the fields from local context. We strongly believe that citing the work from FARU journal will help the research from local context to be recognised and outreach beyond the local boundaries.

The papers presented in this Volume demonstrates the overarching theme of sustainability by contributing from different perspectives such as design, cost, quality, safety, psychology, and user perceptions, all relating to the built environment context. The methodology used by the authors range from quantitative to qualitative analysis. The first two papers (papers 1-2) discuss the design features of buildings and their impacts on quality and well-being. Another paper (paper 3) talks about contribution of temporary assemblage towards sense of places. The safety and comfort in urban sustainability assessment tools was then presented (paper 4). The next paper explores the relationship between colour and psychology of disabled people in health care sector (paper 5). Cost sharing methodologies were then proposed for utility works in road projects (paper 6), followed by an analysis on skills gaps of plant and equipment operators in building construction (paper 7). Thermal performance and user perception of sustainable mud concrete as an alternative for flooring were analysed in the last paper (paper 8).

The first paper by Pathirage & Perera, explores the effect of daylight variation and contrast effect on human perception of spatial quality. The authors have used two case studies for the in-depth analysis of the spaces, where the digital images were first mapped to generate contrast diagrams which was then used as a tool to explore the relationship between daylight variability and human perception. Authors claim that it is not only the level of contrast but the way in which light interacts with the envelope of space, creating a varied experience for the users. The second paper by Casather & Coorey argue that the design of a workspace should contribute beyond the economic gain to improve the sense of wellbeing. Workspaces used by academics as knowledge workers were considered for this research and in-depth interviews, questionnaires, checklists, and observations formed the major data collection tools. The paper reveals certain design elements such as privacy, accessibility, workplace fitting workstyle, biophilic design, social gathering, etc. have a positive association with sense of wellbeing and coherence among academics. The third paper authored by Wijesekara & Munasinghe presents the contribution of temporary assemblage towards sense of place, which is a phenomenal still vaguely defined and appeared to be with the association of the inhabitants. The influence of the temporary structures for temporal benefits to play an important role is more apparent in sacred built environment. Hence the paper focused this study on a sacred place in Aluth-Nuwara. A qualitative study adopting Seamon's six-triad method formed the basis for the analysis. This study has demonstrated how the temporary structures made in a sacred place change the behaviours of the people in that place. The fourth paper by Kumaraguruparan et al. emphasises the significance of incorporating physical safety and comfort aspects within the urban sustainability assessment tools to effectively control street accidents of Colombo. The research was done based on bibliometric analysis of SCOPUS database using VOSviewer software to summarise the globally accepted definitions and keywords of sustainability and urban sustainability rating tools. The fifth paper by Hettiarachchi and Perera, intends to establish the relationship between interior colours in health care facilities in managing depression, anxiety, and stress levels of mobility impaired individuals. Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21S) was adopted to measure the self-reported emotional state of depression, anxiety, and stress levels of participants under each colour exposure. Additionally, questionnaire survey was used to figure out the data on preference, perceived comfort, and satisfaction with reference to the introduced colour conditions. The research concludes that green colour was found to be significantly supportive in inducing favourable impacts to manage depression, anxiety, and stress levels of patients over blue and yellow. The next papers authored by Mohamed Ismail et al. aims to develop methodologies for cost-sharing of utility works to mitigate impacts during the design and construction stages of utility relocation, betterment works, and provision of new utility infrastructure in roads projects. The authors conducted twelve in-depth interviews with senior advisors, project directors, general managers, senior project managers, legal experts, and team leaders representing roads, utilities, transportation, and light rail authorities to capture primary data to propose cost-sharing measures. Further recommendations were suggested to enhance collaboration between roads and utility related authorities. The seventh paper written by Waidyasekara et al., analyses the skills gaps of plant and equipment operators in building construction projects in the perspectives of construction professionals in Sri Lanka.

The authors have identified sixteen different skills for nine main occupational categories of P&E operators. A survey research strategy was adopted under a quantitative approach to ascertain the level of satisfaction and importance of each identified skill for each category of P&E operators in building construction projects in Sri Lanka according to the construction professionals. The authors revealed that mechanical skills and technical skills of plant and equipment operators gained comparatively higher level of satisfaction and importance in the industry. The final paper authored by Galabada et al. presents a comparative evaluation to investigate the thermal performance and user perception of newly invented soil-based flooring material with other common floorings in Sri Lanka. The authors constructed floor areas using ceramic tiles, cement rendering, and mud concrete for taking surface temperature for the analysis. The user perception was collected through questionnaire survey after allowing the respondents to visually observe and physically inspect on the constructed floors. The authors conclude that the soil flooring is one of the good innovations for the building construction industry, especially in countries with a tropical climate.

The above overview of the papers signals the multi-disciplinary nature of the journal manuscripts in this Volume. I wish to congratulate all authors who made valuable contributions to the knowledge domain on sustainability in the built environment. My sincere appreciation to all the reviewers, who have provided their utmost support to maintain the quality standards necessary for the manuscripts to be published in the journal. I would like to thank my colleagues in the FARU team who worked very hard for the professional undertaking of the tasks involved. I specially thank Dr. Sumanthri Samarawickrama, Editor-in-Chief of FARU Journal for offering me the opportunity to play a role as a guest editor for the Volume 9. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the Sri Lanka Journals Online for publishing the FARU journal in their database.

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FARU Journal, Vol. 09 (Issue 01)