Formation of Catholic Youth in Sri Lanka for Social Justice: Liberation Theology as a Resource

Deepa Fernando M.Phil

Holy Family Congregation, Sri Lanka

DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100600199

Received: 24 May 2026; Accepted: 30 May 2026; Published: 20 June 2026

ABSTRACT

The arrival of colonial powers and Christian missionaries in Sri Lanka had a profound impact on the pluralist social fabric of the island nation. Missionary education became intertwined with colonial missiology, producing an English-speaking Christian elite class designed to serve the colonial administration. Catholic youth emerged as an exclusive community, economically and politically privileged and largely indifferent to the injustices experienced by Sinhala Buddhist and Tamil Hindu youth. Three major youth uprisings, two Sinhala insurrections (1971; 1989) and a Tamil youth armed struggle arose in response to entrenched socio-economic and political discrimination. The official Roman Catholic Church in Sri Lanka, aligned with the state, failed in its prophetic mission to stand with marginalized youth, instead reinforcing Sinhala Buddhist hegemony and deepening divisions between Sinhala and Tamil Catholics.

This qualitative, phenomenological study investigates how Liberation Theology can serve as a resource to educate Catholic youth in the ways of social justice. Employing semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis with ten participants, the study generated three thematic findings: (a) the impact of Vatican II teachings and Liberation Theology on social justice activism; (b) the impact of the Catholic school system on social justice education; and (c) the impact of the Roman Catholic Church on Catholic youth formation. Findings reveal that while progressive priests and lay movements inspired by Liberation Theology made significant contributions to social justice awareness among rural communities, the official Church actively discouraged these movements to preserve the status quo. The Catholic school system, governed by a national curriculum devoid of social justice content and marked by oppressive pedagogy, fails to sensitize youth to structural inequalities. The study concludes that Liberation Theology particularly Asian Liberation Theology as articulated by Aloysius Pieris and Raimond Panikkar, together with Paulo Freire's pedagogy of liberation constitutes a rich resource for transforming Catholic youth formation toward social justice in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Liberation Theology, Catholic Youth, Sri Lanka, Social Justice Education, Aloysius Pieris, Paulo Freire, Post-Vatican II, Missionary Education, Colonialism

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

Sri Lanka is home to 4.64 million young people between the ages of 15 and 29, constituting approximately 28 percent of the total population (Damayanthi et al., 2013). Within this demographically significant group, Catholic youth occupy a complex and historically layered position. Their formation has been predominantly shaped by the Sri Lankan Church-led education system operating both formally and non-formally within a parish ethos grounded in a conformist theology that does not critically interrogate the socio-economic inequalities and forms of discrimination pervading Sri Lankan society.

The roots of this situation lie in the colonial period. Sri Lanka was successively colonized by the Portuguese (1505–1656), the Dutch (1656–1796), and the British (1796–1948), each of whom transformed the island's

educational landscape in the service of colonial and imperial interests. Missionary education displaced a holistic, temple-centered indigenous system, replacing it with English-medium schooling designed to produce an auxiliary class for colonial administration (Corea, 1969; Prasangani, 2014). The legacy of this process is a Catholic community whose educational identity was forged in privilege and separation from the broader population.

The Church-led education system has historically privileged urban Sinhala and Tamil Catholic youth educated in private Catholic schools, insulating them from the broader youth population experiencing persistent marginalization in education, employment, and social mobility. This educational privilege produced a mentality of acceptance toward the established social and political order. Rural Sinhala and Tamil Catholic youth, by contrast, have remained systematically neglected, lacking equal opportunities for advancement.

As a reaction to these injustices, Sri Lanka witnessed two Sinhala youth insurrections in 1971 and 1989 led by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), as well as a Tamil youth struggle that escalated into a devastating civil war lasting from 1983 to 2009. All three movements were violently suppressed by the state. The official Roman Catholic Church's response to these uprisings was characterized by a logic of self-preservation and alignment with the state rather than prophetic solidarity with marginalized youth.

This study argues that Liberation Theology and in particular its Asian articulations by Aloysius Pieris and Raimond Panikkar, together with Paulo Freire's pedagogy of liberation offers a coherent and contextually appropriate resource for addressing this failure. By critically examining the historical, ecclesial, and pedagogical conditions that have produced the current situation, the study contributes to a growing body of scholarship on contextual theology and social justice education in postcolonial Asian contexts (Phan, 2000; Tan, 2017).

Research Problem and Questions

Catholic youth in Sri Lanka lack formal education in social justice, rendering them indifferent to the manifold injustices surrounding them. This study, therefore, aimed to investigate how Catholic youth can be empowered through a Liberation Theology approach toward the ways of social justice. The central research question guiding this inquiry was:

How does Liberation Theology become a resource in forming Catholic youth in Sri Lanka in the ways of social justice?

Three sub-questions were developed to address this overarching inquiry:

1. What historical relations exist between the Catholic Church and the Catholic education system in Sri Lanka that have made Catholic youth an exclusive community within a pluralist background?

2. How does Liberation Theology become a resource in relation to social justice, and in what ways does the Christian context integrate social justice education?

3. In what ways do the Catholic Church and her education system relate faith and education with social justice in the formation of Catholic youth?

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design employing a phenomenological methodology was adopted for this study, given that phenomenological methods are particularly suited to understanding how participants make meaning of lived experiences (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews conducted via WhatsApp and Zoom, questionnaires distributed via email, and analysis of secondary sources comprising scholarly writings and institutional documents. Ten participants were recruited with verbal consent: two university Catholic students, two secondary school Catholic students, two Catholic school teachers, one Catholic school administrator, one Catholic social activist, and two Catholic priests. All participants are referred to by their role throughout this paper in order to preserve anonymity while retaining the interpretive

significance of each perspective. Thematic analysis, following the framework of Braun and Clarke (2006), generated three central themes from the data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review maps the theoretical and contextual frameworks informing the study. It examines, first, the colonial educational history that produced the conditions this study addresses; second, the origins and theological foundations of Liberation Theology; third, the specific contributions of Asian Liberation Theology; fourth, the scriptural resources within Catholic Social Teaching; and fifth, Paulo Freire's pedagogy of liberation as a transformative educational framework.

Colonial Education and the Making of an Exclusive Catholic Community

The colonial transformation of Sri Lankan education is extensively documented. Prior to Portuguese arrival, an indigenous education system centered on Buddhist temple schools Pirivenas offered a broad curriculum encompassing languages, philosophy, science, mathematics, and the arts (Corea, 1969; Golding, 2018). Colonial intervention systematically dismantled this system. The Portuguese Jesuits introduced Western missiology; the Dutch imposed a Calvinist curriculum; and the British replaced temple-centered schooling with English-medium instruction designed to produce an administrative auxiliary class (Prasangani, 2014). As Marumo (2018, p. 3) argues, the missionary project ensured that indigenous people were indoctrinated and treated as non-equals in the eyes of God.

The concentration of English-medium education in missionary schools institutionalized a decisive social stratification. By 1885, all state English schools had been transferred to Christian missions, granting them a monopoly over English education (Corea, 1969). While 94 per cent of Christian children could be accommodated in Christian schools, only 24 per cent of Buddhist children had access to comparable institutions (Corea, 1969, p. 157). A parallel vernacular system, designed for the 'poor and humble sections of the community,' offered only minimal literacy for manual labor (Warnasuriya, 1969, as cited in Wettewa, 2016, p. 67). This two-tiered legacy produced what Freire (2005) terms a 'colonized mentality' — an internalized acceptance of inequality that continues to shape Catholic educational culture in Sri Lanka today.

The post-independence transfer of power to a westernized, English-educated elite deepened these frustrations. The JVP insurrection of 1971, led predominantly by poor rural Sinhala Buddhist youth 89 per cent under 30 and 86 per cent educated in rural secondary schools (Venugopal, 2010) was a direct reaction to unemployment, poverty, caste oppression, and political marginalization. The Tamil youth struggle, arising from systematic ethnic discrimination culminating in the Sinhala Only Act (1956) and the university Standardization policy, grew into a thirty-year civil war (Balamayuran, 2018). The Roman Catholic Church's response to both crises was characterized by alignment with the state rather than prophetic solidarity: the hierarchy remained silent in the face of Tamil suffering, bishops endorsed military action, and Tamil priests advocating for their communities were accused of LTTE sympathies (Johnson, 2012; Lena, 2018). By colluding with successive governments and congratulating Catholic schools for not educating young people toward social consciousness (Pieris, 1998/1999), the Church displaced its scriptural responsibility to stand with the poor and the oppressed.

Liberation Theology: Origins and Theological Foundations

Liberation Theology, as articulated by the Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutierrez (1968/1997), fundamentally reconceives theological reflection as an act that arises from prior commitment to the struggle for human dignity. In Gutierrez's formulation, theology is the understanding of the commitment, and the commitment is action (cited in Hennelly, 1997, p. 63). This represents a decisive shift from a theology preoccupied with a transcendent God located outside the world, toward a theology of immanent divine presence within the struggles of the poor and the oppressed.

The Exodus narrative provides a foundational paradigm for Liberation Theology: the liberation of Hebrew people from bondage is read as a type and template for the liberation of oppressed peoples in every age (Kirk-

Duggan, 2012). Statistics, economics, sociology, and political theory are among the analytical tools employed by Liberation Theology to diagnose the structural sin of injustice (Gordon, 1996). Liberation Theology has spread across continents, generating distinct forms Black Theology, Feminist Theology, Dalit Theology, Minjung Theology, and Asian Liberation Theology — each addressing specific matrices of oppression (Phan, 2000).

The Asian context characterized by extremes **Asian Liberation Theology: Panikkar and Pieris** of socio-economic poverty and extraordinary religious diversity demands a distinctive theological method. Raimond Panikkar's contribution lies in his concept of intra-religious dialogue: an inner conversation arising within a person toward other religions, built on empathy, communication, and mutual understanding (Aguilar, 2018). Panikkar's framework offers Catholic youth in multi-religious Sri Lanka a pathway toward humanizing social life through inter-religious encounter.

Aloysius Pieris, S.J. the first Christian to earn a doctorate in Buddhist philosophy from a Sri Lankan university ground his Liberation Theology in Asia's two defining realities: massive poverty and diverse religiosity (Kang, 2012, p. 132). For Pieris, any authentic Asian Liberation Theology must engage inseparably with both. His concept of 'liberation-theo-praxis' integrates the social demand for justice for the poor with the spiritual resources of Asian religious traditions, particularly Buddhism. Pieris argues for radical renewal of the Sri Lankan Church in the reforming and dialogical spirit of Vatican II, and for the conscientization of youth as a precondition for genuine ecclesial transformation (Pieris, 1998/1999). His diagnosis of the Sri Lankan Church's failure a lack of proper tools for social analysis and an absence of religio-social analysis from seminary formation (Kang, 2012, p. 134) strikes at the root of the problem this study addresses.

Catholic Social Teaching and Scripture

The Catholic tradition contains substantial scriptural and doctrinal resources for social justice education that remain largely untapped in the Sri Lankan context. Luke's Gospel places the poor at the center of Jesus's mission: the Magnificat proclaims a cosmic reversal in which the powerful are dethroned and the lowly exalted (Luke 1:46–55); the Beatitudes offer blessing to the poor and a stark warning to the rich (Luke 6:20, 24). Tissa Balasuriya's Mary and Human Liberation (1990/2014) argues that the institutional Church has reduced Mary from a disturber of the comfortable to the comforter of the disturbed, suppressing her subversive prophetic power a power urgently needed for the social formation of Catholic youth.

Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of Liberation

Paulo Freire's (1970/2005) pedagogy of the oppressed offers a transformative educational philosophy directly applicable to the formation of Catholic youth for social justice. Freire's concept of conscientization the development of critical consciousness to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and act against oppressive realities challenges the 'banking' model of education in which students are passive recipients of deposited information. In its place, Freire envisions a dialogical teacher-student partnership in which knowledge is co-constructed, oppressive systems are named, and students become active agents of transformation.

Freire's concept of conversion from oppressed to new man (1970/2005, p. 75) finds deep resonance with the Pauline theology of new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17–18). For Catholic youth in Sri Lanka, Freirean pedagogy suggests a two-fold process: first, challenging their inherited worldview and the myths sustaining the status quo; second, developing the critical consciousness necessary to become co-creators of a more just society. Freire's vision of the classroom as democratic communities where students and teachers together develop relational power, experience their subjectivity, and learn to love one another toward the completeness of all (Thomas, 2020, p. 80) provides a compelling framework for transforming Catholic school pedagogy.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Theme 1: Social Justice Activism — The Impact of Vatican II and Liberation Theology

The Asian Theological Conference of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT),

held in Sri Lanka in 1979, articulated an Asian identity in Liberation Theology that integrated non-Christian religions into a biblically grounded prophetic vision (Pieris, 1998/1999). This ecclesiological renewal inspired a generation of progressive Sri Lankan theologians Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, Fr. Paul Caspersz SJ, Fr. Aloysius Pieris, and Bishop Leo Nanayakkara to establish centers of social justice work on the periphery of the institutional Church: The Centre for Society and Religion (1971), *Satyodaya* (1972), and *Tulana* (1974) (Pieris, 1998/1999, p. 270).

Fr. Michael Rodrigo's *Suba Seth Gedara* in Buttala a center for Buddhist-Christian dialogue and conscientization among rural farmers exemplified Liberation Theology in practice, affirming that Christianity living for Buddhism at the village level constituted the authentic inter-religious dimension of Asian Liberation Theology in Sri Lanka (Gunawardena, 2017). These post-Vatican II movements demonstrated that when the Church commits to solidarity with the poor, profound social transformation becomes possible. However, the official Roman Catholic Church consistently discouraged these initiatives, viewing them with suspicion as potential leftist infiltration (Pieris, 1998/1999). A social activist confirmed: 'The Church is reluctant to speak the true word of God. Today many priests encourage youth for rituals, and for healing sessions, but not for social engagement.'

Current movements such as *Kithusara* (founded 1989) which stands for Tamils and Muslims affected by war, engages in inter-religious collaboration, and uses workshops, seminars, and digital media to raise awareness on Liberation Theology and social justice among youth demonstrate that the seeds planted by the post-Vatican II movement continue to bear fruit outside official ecclesial structures. The University Catholic Students' Movement (UCSM, 2021) similarly aims to educate university youth in Vatican II teachings and Liberation Theology, with one university student noting that the majority of Sinhala university youth 'don't have a historical understanding of the Tamil youth struggle, and they support the popular state ideology for a unitary state.'

These findings resonate directly with Gutierrez's foundational claim that theology must arise from prior commitment to the struggle for human dignity (1968/1997). The post-Vatican II figures and movements documented here Balasuriya, Caspersz, Pieris, Rodrigo exemplify what Gutierrez describes as 'theology as the understanding of the commitment.' Critically, their marginalization by the official Church illustrates Pieris's (1998/1999) diagnosis of an institution that lacks the tools for social analysis and treats prophetic action as a political threat rather than a theological imperative. The survival of movements like Kithusara and the UCSM outside formal ecclesial structures suggests that Liberation Theology's transformative potential persists but requires institutional support and legitimacy to achieve systemic change.

Theme 2: Social Justice Education — The Impact of the Catholic School System

Findings consistently revealed that none of the participants had received any formal social justice education during their schooling. The national curriculum provided by the National Institute of Education does not include Social Justice Education as a subject, and all Catholic schools follow this same curriculum, as confirmed by both secondary school students and teachers interviewed. The classroom pedagogy prevalent in Catholic schools is oriented entirely toward examination performance, leaving no time or space for dialogue on social matters. Religion instruction, where it exists, is limited to rituals and doctrinal knowledge, with little opportunity for students to interrogate Jesus's liberational teachings in relation to contemporary social realities.

Catholic school 'discipline' valued by the wider society as a mark of quality was revealed by participants to function as a mechanism of submission and silence rather than genuine formation. One university student noted that 'the concept of discipline in Catholic schools refers to strict controlled behaviours that make a student silent and submissive,' producing dualistic characters: well-mannered before authority, disruptive in personal life. Some teachers were reported to use violent physical methods of discipline and to create discriminatory atmospheres within classrooms, practices antithetical to the Freirean vision of the classroom as a space of dialogical partnership and mutual humanization.

In contrast, a school administrator provided a compelling example of extracurricular social justice formation: a group of middle school students, after being exposed to discussions on social justice and human rights,

undertook a two-day visit to a war-affected rural village, engaged with villagers facing water scarcity, and lobbied school leaders, religious leaders, and government officials for remedial action. This process exemplifies Brady's (2010) practical strategies of fostering compassionate concern, building community support, and developing advocacy skills. The administrator articulated the essence of social justice education as 'taking the risk of allowing students to arrive at destinations that you may not always be able to control directly, but which may in the end provide rich, authentic opportunities to explore social justice.'

Taken together, these findings confirm Freire's (1970/2005) critique of the 'banking' model of education with striking precision. The Catholic school system's exclusive focus on examination performance, its culture of silent submission, and its religion curriculum reduced to ritual and doctrine all constitute what Freire identifies as the deposition of information into passive receptacles rather than the cultivation of critical subjects. The extracurricular initiative described by the school administrator, by contrast, embodies the dialogical pedagogy Freire advocates students are confronted with real social contradictions, engage with affected communities, and take action. That this occurred outside the formal curriculum rather than within it underscores the depth of the institutional problem. As Pieris (1998/1999) observes, the Church actively congratulates its schools for not producing socially conscious youth; Freire would identify this as the educational arm of a system designed to reproduce, not challenge, structural inequality.

Theme 3: Catholic Youth Formation — The Impact of the Roman Catholic Church

Both priests interviewed revealed a Church-based youth formation paradigm oriented toward over-spiritualization and moral discipline, framing youth primarily as problematic subjects susceptible to consumerist and individualist temptations. One priest characterized youth as 'very lethargic for spiritual exercises' and 'very stubborn,' concluding: 'I can't understand today's youth. How can they be taught about social justice, and their social responsibility?' This framing positions the Church as fundamentally reactive and unable to engage youth as dynamic agents of history.

A university student directly challenged this ecclesial stance, arguing that 'the Church needs to consider the realities surrounding youth, instead of over-spiritualizing them,' and that 'the person of Jesus engaged with prostitutes, sinners, tax collectors, and anyone who has been labelled as bad. The Church doesn't allow space for us to dialogue on these matters.' A social activist raised the Church's investment in private international schools and universities facilitated by its alignment with state power as symptomatic of a perpetuation of colonial missiology: 'The Roman Catholic Church spends huge amounts of money to build private schools and universities. Why can't the Church improve the schools in the rural sector, to uplift the education of the poor Catholic youth?'

The case of a Catholic youth who publicly demanded justice for victims of the 2019 Easter Sunday attacks and was left isolated by the Church before state machinery illustrated, in the school administrator's analysis, the Church's consistent betrayal of its own youth in favor of protecting its relationship with state power. This pattern of double standards a 'holistic Catholicism' proclaimed but not practiced represents, in the terms of this study, a fundamental displacement of the Church's prophetic mission.

These findings illuminate a profound ecclesiological contradiction. The Church's framing of youth as spiritually passive and morally suspect as expressed by both priests stands in direct tension with the Freirean and Liberation Theology vision of young people as dynamic agents of history and co-creators of a more just world. Pieris's concept of liberation-theo-praxis demands that the Church engage inseparably with both poverty and religiosity; yet the evidence here suggests an institution that has retreated into spiritualized interiority precisely to avoid the socio-political demands of the former. Similarly, Panikkar's model of intra-religious dialogue as a pathway to humanizing social life (Aguilar, 2018) finds no echo in a formation paradigm oriented toward submission and conformity. The voices of the university student and the social activist, who articulate with theological clarity what the Church should be doing, represent not an external critique but a prophetic witness from within precisely the kind of conscientized youth voice that a Liberation Theology approach to formation is designed to cultivate.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate how Liberation Theology can serve as a resource in forming Catholic youth in Sri Lanka toward the ways of social justice. The evidence gathered across three thematic areas converges on a single, sobering finding: the structural conditions for such formation a prophetic Church, a socially conscious school system, a dialogical pedagogy is currently absent at the institutional level, but the theological and pedagogical resources needed to create them are richly available and already alive in the work of individuals and movements at the margins of the official Church.

The three themes are not independent findings but interconnected dimensions of a single problem. The banking pedagogy observed in Catholic schools (Theme 2) is not accidental; it is the educational expression of an institutional Church that has consistently prioritized self-preservation over prophetic solidarity (Theme 3), a pattern rooted in the colonial legacy of a Church formed in privilege and alignment with state power (Theme 1). Equally, the post-Vatican II movements of Theme 1, the extracurricular initiative of Theme 2, and the conscientized voices of youth in Theme 3 are not isolated exceptions but convergent signs that Liberation Theology's transformative vision as articulated by Gutierrez, Pieris, Panikkar, and Freire has genuine purchase in the Sri Lankan context when given institutional space to breathe.

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. With ten participants, the findings cannot claim statistical representativeness; they offer, rather, a phenomenologically rich account of lived experience that illuminates patterns and points toward directions for further inquiry. The study was also conducted remotely via digital platforms, which, while enabling access during a period of restricted movement, may have limited the depth of relational trust that in-person fieldwork can foster. Future research would benefit from expanded participant pools, longitudinal engagement, and comparative analysis with Catholic youth formation in other postcolonial Asian contexts.

Four directions for institutional action and further research emerge from the findings. First, post-Vatican II teachings and Liberation Theology particularly the Asian theologies of Pieris and Panikkar should be integrated into Catholic school curricula as a named and examined body of knowledge, not merely an occasional extracurricular theme. Second, Vatican II teachings and Liberation Theology should be incorporated into Church ministry and formation programs for priests and lay leaders, addressing the absence of religio-social analysis in seminary formation identified by Pieris (1998/1999). Third, advocacy for the inclusion of Social Justice Education in the national curriculum of the National Institute of Education would extend the reach of this formation beyond the Catholic school system to the broader youth population. Fourth, future research should investigate how a contextual Liberation Theology can be developed to engage youth from Sinhala Buddhist, Tamil Hindu, and Muslim backgrounds within Sri Lanka's irreducibly pluralist society a task for which Panikkar's model of intra-religious dialogue offers a particularly promising starting point.

The prophetic vision of Christ unconditional love enacted in radical solidarity with the poor remains both the measure and the mandate for a renewed Catholic youth formation in Sri Lanka. The question this study leaves with the Church, its schools, and its formation programs is not whether the resources for this renewal exist. They do. The question is whether the institution is willing to deploy them.

REFERENCES

1. Aguilar, M. I. (2018). Intra-religious dialogue and silence in the life of Raimon Panikkar. Dilatato Corde, VIII(2).
2. Balamayuran, M. (2018). Tamil youth radicalization after the armed conflict in Sri Lanka. In Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Trends in youth radicalization in South Asia (pp. 65–87).
3. Balasuriya, T. (1990/2014). Mary and human liberation. Centre for Society and Religion.
4. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77–101.
5. Brady, J. A. (2010). A burning desire for social justice. In M. Son (Ed.), Teaching social justice in Christian higher education (pp. 57–74). Wipf and Stock.
6. Corea, J. (1969). One hundred years of education in Ceylon. Modern Asian Studies, 3(2), 151–175.

7. Damayanthi, N. M. K., Samarasinhe, G. G. de L., Bandara, W. M. A. C. S., Hitihamu, H. M. S. J. M., & Perera, S. (2013). Youth in development: Sri Lanka (Research Report No. 161). Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute.
8. Freire, P. (1970/2005). Pedagogy of the oppressed. Continuum.
9. Golding, D. (2018). The colonial and neoliberal roots of the public-private education debate in Sri Lanka. Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, 16(1), 145–174.
10. Gordon, J. (1996). Liberation theology as critical theory: The notion of the 'privileged perspective.' Philosophy Social Criticism, 22(5), 85–102.
11. Gunawardena, N. (2017). Journey for justice: The life and work of Rev. Fr. Michael Rodrigo, OMI. Wipf and Stock.
12. Gutierrez, G. (1968/1997). Towards a liberation theology. In A. Hennelly (Ed.), Liberation theology: A documentary history (pp. 62–76). Orbis Books.
13. Hughes, D. (2017). Violence of youth and the youthfulness of violence. In T. Skelton, C. Harker, & K. Hörschelmann (Eds.), Conflict, violence and peace (pp. 1–17). Springer.
14. Johnson, D. (2012). Sri Lanka — a divided Church in a divided polity: The brokerage of a struggling institution. Contemporary South Asia, 20(1), 77–90.
15. Kang, I. (2012). Buddhist-Christian dialogue and action in the Theravada countries of modern Asia [Doctoral dissertation, Heythrop College, University of London].
16. Kirk-Duggan, C. A. (2012). How liberating is the Exodus and for whom? In A. Brenner & G. A. Yee (Eds.), Exodus and Deuteronomy: Texts@Contexts (pp. 3–28). Fortress.
17. Lena, M. (2018). Transforming the deep-rooted conflicts between diaspora Sinhalese and Tamil Roman Catholics in Toronto [Doctoral dissertation, Saint Paul University, Canada].
18. Marumo, P. O. (2018). The state of the Church in a postcolonial era from Newbigin's perspective. Verbum et Ecclesia, 39(1), 1–10.
19. Panikkar, R. (2014). Mysticism and spirituality: Opera omnia (Vol. 1). Orbis Books.
20. Phan, P. C. (2000). Method in liberation theologies. Theological Studies, 61(1), 40–63.
21. Pieris, A. (1988). An Asian liberation theology. Orbis Books.
22. Pieris, A. (1998/1999). The Catholic Church in Sri Lanka during the first fifty years of the country's independence (1948–1998). In A. Pieris (Ed.), Dialogue (Vols. 25–26, pp. 248–294).
23. Prasangani, K. S. N. (2014). Overview of changes in the Sri Lankan English education system. An International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 1(2), 193–202.
24. Strauss, A. M., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (3rd ed.). Sage.
25. Son, M. (Ed.). (2012). Teaching social justice in Christian higher education. Wipf and Stock.
26. Tan, J. Y. (2017). Ecumenical and inter-religious contributions to Asian liberation theologies. The Ecumenical Review, 69(4), 474–490.
27. Thomas, O. M. (2020). Toward a pedagogy of critical liberative theological consciousness: Cultivating students as agents of social change [Doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina, Greensboro].
28. Todd, N. R. (2010). Religious participation and social justice: Individual and congregational effects [Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign].
29. Venugopal, R. (2010). Sectarian socialism: The politics of Sri Lanka's Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). Modern Asian Studies, 44(3), 567–602.
30. Wettewa, V. (2016). Postcolonial emotionalism in shaping education: An analysis of international school choice in Sri Lanka. The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives, 15(1), 66–83.