

Editorial

This is the Volume 16, Number 2 of the OUSL Journal, the Journal of the Open University of Sri Lanka which is published biannually. The articles published in this Volume include research based on Law, Education, Health Sciences, and Folkloristics.

The paper titled *Information Printed on Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Labels: A Comparative Analysis of the Australian and Sri Lankan Legal Framework* is a unique study as it is a combined analysis of food with the disciplines of health and law. The authors explore and compare the law of sugar-related information of sugar-sweetened beverage labels in Sri Lanka and Australia from a global perspective. Authors broadly analysed the existing Sri Lankan labelling law framework on 'ingredient list', 'nutrition information panel', 'nutrient claims' and 'front of pack labelling'. They have cited legislative tools and scholars who have explored sugar information on food labels. The authors have successfully identified the areas to be updated in the Sri Lankan labelling law on sugar information to place them on par with international standards. At the same time, they have developed and suggested a legal framework to the Sri Lankan food label on sugar sweetened beverage information. By addressing the issues in the legal framework of labelling sugar sweetened beverages by amending the existing law of Food (Labelling and Advertising) Regulations of 2005, the authors are of the view that health of Sri Lankans consumers would be better protected.

Bilingual Education (BE) is a common educational approach used around the world. BE refers to classroom instruction offered in two languages and the use of those two languages as a medium of instruction for any part or all of the school curriculum. Bilingual

Education has been implemented in Sri Lanka since 2002. The paper titled *Challenges for Bilingual Education at the Junior Secondary Level of Education in Sri Lanka: Student and Teacher Perspectives* focuses on the problems and issues faced by the teachers and students in the bilingual classrooms. The study uses a qualitative case study design and an analytic framework informed by theoretical ideas of Cummins's (1981) Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) model and Krashen's (1984) Monitor Model to understand the students and teacher perspectives about bilingual teaching and learning at the junior secondary level classrooms. Six bilingual teachers and 30 students from Grades 6 and 8 of a selected school participated in the study. Focus Group Interviews (FGI) with the students and semi-structured interviews with the teachers were used to generate data. Findings of the study indicated that both teachers and students face many challenges and issues in teaching, learning and assessments in their classrooms mainly due to lack of adequate and appropriate physical and human resources and the lack of necessary support from school and other educational authorities. Teachers with limited experience and training in BE had to face many difficulties in teaching and assessment of students due to the lack of second language (L2) proficiency among their learners. Students, in turn, face challenges in learning and assessments due to the lack of basic skills in L2 and support from their teachers, peers and home environments as well as self-learning skills. Since BE is beneficial to both individual and society, it needs to be expanded and further developed to enhance equity, inclusivity, and quality of education and capacity for lifelong learning among learners. For successful implementation of BE, teachers and students should be adequately supported through a 'try level engagement' approach to education reforms.

The study titled *Criminological Organized Network Models of Human Smuggling: An Analysis with Special reference to the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants* examined the extent to which the salient features of the Criminological Organized Network Model (CON Model) have been translated into Article 2(a) of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized crime (UNCTOC) and Article 3(a) of the protocol against Smuggling of Migrants (HS Protocol). The study was based on three objectives, namely, identify the main characteristics of the CON Model, describe the features of the CON Model, and to compare the features of the CON Model and Article 2(a) of the UNCTOC and Article 3 (a) of the HS protocol in order to suggest amendments to existing legal provisions. Doctrinal research incorporating conceptual, descriptive, interpretative, analytical, and comparative methodology have been employed to achieve the objectives of the paper. The paper discusses and analyzes the objectives, nature, and tasks of organized crime groups relevant to the definition of an organized criminal group and human smuggling as per the UNCTOC and the HS Protocol and also, extracts the gaps in these definitions. The findings revealed that the UNCTOC does not adequately define the term 'transnational organized crime'; definition of the 'organized crime group' is narrow and fails to accommodate various types of the groups that engage in human smuggling and does not specify the period of existence of the organized criminal group. Further, the study reveals that Article 2(a) of the UNCTOC read with Article 37(4) of the UNCTOC and Article 3(a) of the human smuggling protocol provides no clear demarcation as to whether facilitating human smuggling without monetary benefit will fall under the overall ambit of human smuggling. Based on these findings the research study recommends that there is a dire need to revisit the legal

provisions of the UNCTOC and the human smuggling Protocol for refinement.

Healthcare provider responses and preparedness towards caring for females who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) in Sri Lanka come under focus in a cross-sectional study in hospital and community care settings in four provinces. Based on quantitative data gathered from 405 nurses, doctors, and midwives through a questionnaire, this study indicates the need for all healthcare providers to be trained and prepared to support females disclosing IPV regardless of whether they work in specialized IPV-care centres or routine settings in the country. The paper titled *Healthcare Provider Responses and Preparedness towards Caring for Females who have Experienced Intimate Partner Violence in Sri Lanka* provides important insights into healthcare provider preparedness and shows that most of them, both females and males, recognize and reject stereotypical ideas about IPV and can be part of an effective healthcare response to IPV in Sri Lanka with the necessary institutional supports, training, skills, and resources.

The paper titled *Air Mobility, Ten Heads and Universal Authority: Constructing Ravana in the Folk Imagination of Sabaragamuwa -- a Folkloric Study* attempts to re-read a collection of folktales from Sabaragamuwa which focuses on the anti-hero of Ramayanaya, King Ravana. Surrounded by thematic of aggression, betrayal, magic and asceticism Ravana is also a personality who has undergone a 'rebirth' owing to specific nationalistic discourses that were fermented in the post-civil-war Sri Lanka. This study undertakes a folkloric reading of the folktales from Sabaragamuwa for the modes of construction of the personality of Ravana and the insights such constructions might offer

into the material conditions of the story creators/tellers/listeners. This is a preliminary study that leads on to a larger study to understand the symbolic meaning of Ravana to the people of the modern nation state.

Career indecision that refers to the inability to resolve issues in a particular chosen profession (Feldman, 2003) is recognized as a noteworthy issue among many university graduates. With increased choice of courses at universities, and more opportunities and options to pursue tertiary education, in addition to expanding work opportunities globally, the career decision-making process has become more complex, and as such, more challenging for students. Making an appropriate career decision is a very important and it has been quite a pressing issue especially for young students. This phenomenon has been explored by many researchers throughout several decades mainly to identify key factors contributing to career indecision among various individuals. Most of the previous studies on career indecision were aimed at exploring significant factors influencing on career indecision among college students and were of a western orientation. However, none of them focused on university students in a Sri Lankan context. Further, it is challenging to generalize the findings of these studies that were based on students in developed economies, to the Sri Lankan context owing to the differences in the cultural settings, demographics, economic aspects, and disparities in financial situations of the developed and developing contexts. The paper titled *Can Gender and Location Create Career Indecision among the Undergraduates of Management Studies in State Universities of Sri Lanka?* explored whether there is any significant differences in career indecision among the Management undergraduates of state universities in Sri Lanka, when it comes to

the segregation of the target population based on the gender as well as the geographical location of the state universities. As per the key findings of the study, it was revealed that career indecisiveness was higher among males and the difference in career indecision between male and female management undergraduate was significant. Moreover, this study found that there are no significant differences in career indecision between students studying in peripheral or urban universities. These findings would be beneficial to undergraduates, policy makers and government institutions as well as for the society at large, when it comes to devising human resource development programs, related policies etc. As this study found empirical support for significant differences in career indecision between male and female management undergraduates, the authorities who design career counselling interventions need to pay attention to this. As male undergraduates experience relatively high degree of career indecisiveness, separate strategies are required to address the differences.

The online learning platform has had an influence in various ways, particularly in the sector of higher education, especially in light of the present Covid-19 pandemic. To keep academic courses continuing, the bulk of educational institutions have resorted to online learning platforms. However, the interpretation of university student demographics is yet to be evaluated in the Sri Lankan context. To address this issue a study was conducted titled *Online Learning during the COVID-19 Outbreak: Undergraduates' Perspective – A Case of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka* to look at the perspectives of agricultural students on online learning during the pandemic. Undergraduates from the University of Ruhuna's Faculty of Agriculture were chosen as the study's respondents. The


researchers performed an online survey of 334 students to learn about their preferences for various elements of online courses, their perspectives on online learning, and the benefits and drawbacks of online learning for students. The majority of students were pleased with their online learning experience, want to recommend it to the others and wants it to be a part of the academic curriculum in the future. For online learning, the laptop was the device of choice for the vast majority of students. The majority of students desired to plan their online classes so that they could finish the semester and preferred having classes on weekdays between 8 and 10 a.m., for aduration of 1.5 hours per class. During the pandemic, however, majority of students experienced a lack of connectivity/network troubles as their primary difficulty. Hence these elements should be considered while creating an online course in order to improve the teaching-learning process. Understanding the preparedness and perspective of students for online learning is one of the objectives of this research study.

We welcome your suggestions for further improvement of this Journal. We are looking forward to publishing your current research findings in our next issue.

Professor Shyama R. Weerakoon

Editor in Chief/OUSL Journal

Email: ouslj@ou.ac.lk

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0975-2738>

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