

## Editorial

This is the Volume 17, Number 1 of 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 the disciplines of Architecture and Pedagogy in the English Literature classroom, Agriculture, Chemistry, Cultural Studies, ICT Education and Research Culture in universities.

The study entitled *Architecture for Engaged Pedagogy: How Classroom Design Affects the Teaching and Learning of English Literature* is a unique analysis which observes the link between classroom design and the teaching and learning of English Literature in the secondary school context. The author's own experience as a teacher of English and English Literature has assisted him to understand the correlation between the two aspects analysed in this paper. Moreover, author's familiarity with the observed participants and environments has facilitated the gaining of authentic data. Overall, the paper analyses a unique area of study and discusses an often-overlooked aspect of the Sri Lankan secondary school system. The paper draws on renowned theories by Freire and Miklitsch on pedagogy and classroom design, respectively. The study also draws on modern and effective classroom designs from around the world and applies elements from these studies to the observed environment. The paper emphasises on the awareness of the study's limitations, especially in terms of the effect it would have on the students' interest in Literature in the case of wide-spread use of space and dialogic learning by other subjects. The study also stems from a place of privilege: an environment which has access to space and resources. Therefore, resourcefulness plays a significant role in implementing learner-centric classroom designs recommended by the author. Nevertheless, the study substantially contributes to the national dialogue on pedagogic practices and school architecture in Sri Lanka.

Shade level is a predominant factor that greatly influences the growth, quality and yield of exotic vegetables that are grown in low

and mid country dry zone areas in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, a field trial was conducted to investigate the impact of shading on growth and yield of cabbage var. "Green Coronet" in the Ampara district of Sri Lanka. Levels of shades were defined in two treatments as open field condition (40% shade) and 70% shade levels. Growth Measurements were recorded at six and eight weeks after transplanting and Analysis of Variance was performed to determine the significant difference among treatments ( $p < 0.05$ ). Further, the head weight and yield were recorded at the harvesting stage and the results revealed that cabbage plants grown at 70% shade level showed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) better performance in the measured growth parameters especially after 50 days of transplanting (8WAP) and yield parameters, average head weight and final yield. The lowest performance was observed in plants grown at open field conditions with 40% shade level. The findings of the paper titled *Impact of Shading on Growth and Yield of Cabbage in the Low Country Dry Zone, Ampara, Sri Lanka* revealed that plants grown at 70% shade level would obtain high growth and yield with the modified temperature, relative humidity level and optimum light intensity in the protected environment. The findings will be beneficial for the farmers to grow cabbage in low country dry zone at commercial scale to obtain higher yields rather than cultivating in open field conditions.

The paper titled "*Like Mother, like Daughter?*" *Perspectives on Mother to Daughter Succession in Diasporic Culinary Fiction by Women* is based on the role migrant females have played in history as preservers of culture especially through the culinary domain. The focus of the paper is on fictional representations of migrant women, with the understanding that imaginative fiction mimics the material reality of its surroundings at the time of creation. Popular culinary fictions by migrant female writers typically highlight the notion of 'cooking mother from home' as a symbol for continuing traditions and for nostalgic reminiscences of nurturing. This study attempts to look beyond this familiar paradigm and to explore the significance of these mother figures in new and insightful ways which draw attention to their cooking as a powerful cultural motif as well as their ability to influence the way in which

their daughters navigate their diasporic existence. This work analyses mother-daughter bonds which are focused upon in the fictions of two writers, namely Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni and Amulya Malladi. How the “traits” of these fictional mothers are “carried forward” by their daughters is discussed, highlighting the way in which the mothers’ skills often undergo a process of transformation in their daughters’ hands, thus opening up a discussion on the notion of female being the cultural preserver in literary fiction.

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death around the world and the article titled *Mononuclear (Arene)Ruthenium Complexes as Anticancer Agents: A Review* undertakes a content analysis of the available cancer medicines in the world. The discovery of cisplatin which inhibits antitumoral properties marked the beginning of a new era of metal-based anticancer research. In the search of anticancer agents containing metals other than platinum, the most promising was found to be ruthenium. It was experimentally proven that ruthenium-based anticancer drugs showed high potential as cytotoxic and cytostatic drugs. Ruthenium is a desirable alternative to platinum as it mimics iron plays an active role in the physiological functions of the human body.

Remarkable features of ruthenium(II) centers are: (i) ruthenium and iron are biologically similar (ii) they are in the same group (iii) they have similar characteristics and many ruthenium complexes are not toxic and (iv) they are quite selective for cancer cells, which is due to the ability of ruthenium to imitate iron in binding with biomolecules.

The cytotoxicity of these (arene)ruthenium complexes were determined using various assays such as tube formation assay, adhesion assay, migration and invasion assay, wound healing assay, colony formation assay, RT-PCR, and western blotting.

Various (arene)ruthenium(II) complexes  $[(\eta^6\text{-arene})\text{Ru}(\text{L})(\text{X})(\text{Y})]$ ,  $[(\eta^6\text{-arene})\text{Ru}(\text{L}^{\wedge}\text{L})\text{X}]\text{Y}$  and  $[(\eta^6\text{-arene})\text{Ru}(\text{L}^{\wedge}\text{X})(\text{Y})]$  are known, where arene = cymene, benzene, toluene, hexamethylbenzene; L = amine,

phosphine;  $L^2L$  = diamine, diphosphine,  $(X^2Y)$  = oxalate,  $(L^2X)$  = acylacetate; and  $(X)$ ,  $(Y)$  = halides, triflate *etc.*

(Arene)ruthenium complexes are an emerging class of anticancer drugs, owing to their fewer side effects compared to platinum anticancer agents. The relationship between the structure and cytotoxicity of (arene)Ru(II) complexes of the types  $[(\text{arene})\text{Ru}(L)(X)(Y)]$ ,  $[(\text{arene})\text{Ru}(N^2N)X]Y$ ,  $[(\text{arene})\text{Ru}(N^2O)X]Y$ ,  $[(\text{arene})\text{Ru}(N^2S)X]Y$ , and  $[(\text{arene})\text{Ru}(O^2O)X]$  is elaborated in this review paper.

The paper titled *Flattening the Hate Speech Curve in Today's Digital Age: An Appraisal of Regulatory Frameworks in Nigeria* discusses hate speech as one of attendant ills associated with the pervasiveness of the digital (especially social) media, despite their great potentials. Lack of ethical concern, manipulation of contents, preference for speed over accuracy and sensationalism has led to the rise in the curve of hate speech on social media with resultant consequences of conflicts and violence among different groups in Nigeria. It conceptualises hate speech and identifies its characteristics to include intentionality, stigmatisation, manipulation of social characteristics, capability of denigrating targets and possibility of reprisal from victims, leading to violence. The paper identifies and analyses the regulatory frameworks to flatten hate speech curve in Nigeria such as the Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention, etc.) Act 2015; the Independent National Commission for the Prohibition of Hate Speeches Bill sponsored by Senator Muhammed Musa Sani in 2019, which is awaiting passage in the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; and the Reviewed (6<sup>th</sup> edition) National Broadcasting Code of 2020. The paper concludes that the rising hate speech curve needs to be checked in today's era of digital communication. However, the multiplicity of regulation and absence of a clear-cut constitutional provision for hate speech in Nigeria make regulation ineffective. It recommends a holistic legislation on hate speech derived from the constitution and citizens' reorientation towards ethical consciousness social responsibility as measures to flatten the curve of hate speech in Nigeria.

The research study on *Perceived Research Publication Pressure of Academics: An Exploratory Study at The Open University of Sri Lanka*, attempts to explore the research publication experience of academics of The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) using a survey research design. The sample comprises 41 academics of all levels and the objectives of this research were to identify the level of publication pressure experienced by those academics at OUSL and to find out the factors that influence their research performance. The revised Publication Pressure Questionnaire (PPQr) by Haven, Bouter, Smulders, and Tijdink (2019) has been used for data collection. In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data on academics' publication experience has been collected through an open-ended question. The findings showed that the academics in the sample experienced research publication pressure to a considerable extent. However, according to the researcher, findings can be generalized only after a confirmatory study. The researcher emphasizes the value of enhancing facilities for research and creating a research friendly culture in the university.

Globally, information and communication technology (ICT) is seen as an indispensable part of the contemporary world. In fact, culture and society must be adjusted to meet the challenges of the information age. ICT is a force that has changed many aspects of education system. It is on this premise that the present study titled *An Assessment of ICT Competence Among Academic Staff in Kwara State Colleges of Education, Nigeria: Implications for Management* examined the ICT competence among academic staff of colleges of education in Kwara State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted in the study. The population consists of all academic staff in government owned colleges of education in Kwara State. An instrument titled ICT Competence among Academic Staff of College of Education Questionnaire (ICASCOEDQ) was used to collect data from a sample size of 152 academic staff. The results revealed that academic staff are competent in word processing, Microsoft power point, e-payment and mobile phone browsing; electronic mail (e-mail) and social networking. Inadequate funding, internet connectivity/low internet bandwidth, inadequacy of ICT facilities


at workplace and low ICT literacy by staff are the biggest challenges to the ICT competence among academic staff. Better interactivity and connectivity, ability to type, process and store work for later use, facilities for easy information retrieval and timely and quicker information processing are some of the benefits gained by the effective usage of ICT by academic staff. It was recommended that the government and school management should encourage academic staff to participate in ICT training programs to improve their level of ICT competence, which would lead to high productivity.

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

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