

## Editorial

This is the Volume 17, Number 2 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 Chemistry, Education, Plant Pathology, Nursing, English Language Teaching, and Teaching Literature.

Rhenium(I) tricarbonyl complexes containing pyridine and phosphine-based ligands have shown a wide variety of applications in supramolecular chemistry, catalysis, and in biology as fluorescence imaging agents.  $[\text{ReX}(\text{CO})_3]$  ( $\text{X} = \text{Cl}, \text{Br}$ ) has been used to polymerize 4-vinyl-1-cyclohexene diepoxide photochemically and thermally without cocatalysts. Rhenium(I) carbonyl complexes of the type *fac*- $[\text{ReX}(\text{N}^{\wedge}\text{N})(\text{CO})_3]$  can be tuned by using different types of ligands and also by varying the R group. The rhenium(I) complex *fac*- $[\text{ReCl}(2,2'\text{-bipyridine})(\text{CO})_3]$  selectively catalyses deoxygenation of nitrous oxide ( $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ ) to nitrogen in organic media in the presence of water. *fac*-Re(I) tricarbonyl bis-imine complexes  $[\text{Re}(\text{bisimine})\text{L}(\text{CO})_3]^+$  have the ability to retain their fluorescence in biological systems, thus making them promising cell imaging agents. The objective of the study on *Synthesis of tricarbonyl Re(I) Complexes of N and P Donor Ligands* is to explore the chemistry of bulky bipyridine ligands such as 5,8-diphenyl-6,7-di(3-thienyl)-1,12-diaza-triphenylene **L<sup>1</sup>**, 6,7-di(4-*tert*-butylphenyl)-5,8-diphenyl-1,12-diazatriphenylene **L<sup>2</sup>**, 3,4,5,6-tetraphenyl-2,2'-bipyridine **L<sup>3</sup>**, half-cyclised N-heterosuperbenzene **L<sup>4</sup>**, 4-bromophenyl terpyridine **L<sup>5</sup>**, 4-phenyl-3,6-di(2-pyridyl)pyridazine **L<sup>6</sup>** and P,N donor ligands *Z*-3-diphenylphosphino-(1*R*)-(+)-camphor dimethylhydrazone **L<sup>7</sup>** and diphosphine *Z,Z*- $\text{PPh}_2\text{CH}_2\text{C}(\text{Bu}^t)=\text{N}-\text{N}=\text{C}(\text{Bu}^t)\text{CH}_2\text{PPh}_2$  **L<sup>8</sup>** with rhenium(I) centers. During this study, synthetic routes to hexa-substituted benzene derivatives **L<sup>1</sup>** and **L<sup>2</sup>**, *facial* tricarbonyl rhenium(I) complexes *fac*- $[\text{ReCl}(\text{CO})_3(\text{N}^{\wedge}\text{N})]$  (where  $\text{N}^{\wedge}\text{N} = \text{L}^1 - \text{L}^6$ ), *fac*- $[\text{ReCl}(\text{CO})_3(\text{L}^7\text{-P,N})]$ , *fac*- $[\text{Re}(\text{CO})_3(\text{L}^8\text{-P,N,P})]\text{Cl}$  and *fac*- $[\text{Re}(\text{CO})_3(\text{L}^8\text{-P,N,P})]\text{PF}_6$  were discussed.



This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International License (CC-BY-SA). This license permits use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium; provided it is licensed under the same terms and the original work is properly cited.

Students' welfare services and educational stability in tertiary institutions are of serious global concern. The academic calendars of the institutions are designed to go smoothly without any interruption. The study on *Students' Welfare Services and Educational Stability in Public Universities in the Oyo State, Nigeria* identified the welfare services that are in existence in tertiary institutions in the Oyo State; examined the level of student's satisfaction with the available welfare services as well as the relationship between welfare services and students' educational stability in public universities in the Oyo State. A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population for the study comprised of all the final year undergraduates from the two public universities in the Oyo State. A questionnaire titled, *Students' Welfare Services and Educational Stability Questionnaire (SWSESQ)*, was used to gather information for the study. Data collected were analysed, using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Research questions raised were answered using frequency counts, percentages, and mean, while Pearson product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypothesis formulated at a 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that there was a moderate level of welfare services and there was no significant relationship between the students' welfare services and educational stability in the public universities in the Oyo State. The study concluded that students' welfare cannot determine educational stability in public universities in the Oyo State.

A higher student dropout rate is a serious issue in any educational institution because it reflects the lower performance and less effectiveness of the educational programme. Further, it reflects certain administrative issues and certain issues relevant to the academic programmes which need corrective measures. Hence, any educational institute should analyse the student dropout rate of the institutes and programmes and should apply strategic management principles to make corrective actions. The study titled, *Evaluation of Student Dropout Rate in Alternative Higher Education Sector of Sri Lanka: A Case Study*, is mainly focused on the student dropout rate of the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced

Technological Education (SLIATE) which is a leading government-funded alternative higher educational institute in Sri Lanka. The average dropout rate of the SLIATE was analysed using five years' data for the whole institute, for the individual programmes, and for individual regional centres governed under the SLIATE. Findings revealed that Civil and Electrical Engineering programmes have the lowest (< 27%) student dropout rate and the Quantity Surveying programme showed the second lowest (29%) student dropout rate. Agriculture, Food Technology, Business Administration, Business Finance, Mechanical Engineering, English and Accountancy programmes showed a <50% dropout rate. The average student dropout rate of SLIATE was 48%. Out of the 19 centres, the Colombo centre showed the lowest student dropout rate (35%) whereas Tangalle and Batticaloa centres showed the highest student dropout rate (65%). Further studies are required to identify the reasons for such dropouts to develop strategies to minimize them.

Postharvest diseases account for the loss of a large percentage of fresh produce in Sri Lanka. *Colletotrichum* sp. is one pathogen that attacks several fruit and vegetable commodities in the country. Banana anthracnose caused by *Colletotrichum musae* is one such commodity attacked by *Colletotrichum* sp. The standard practice for controlling this disease is by using synthetic fungicides, which are a hazard to the consumer as well as the environment. Use of essential oils is now becoming a viable and safe alternative. However, due to its volatile nature, the antifungal effect of essential oils can be easily lost. Introducing the essential oils in a bio-safe coating material can overcome this issue. In the study *Control of Anthracnose in Banana Cultivar Kolikuttu (Musa sp.) with Essential Oils and Bio-safe Fruit Coatings*, the popular local banana cultivar *Kolikuttu* was used. The leaf, matrices of *Aloe vera*, was coating material into which essential oil was introduced. Of the tested essential oils, basil oil at 1000  $\mu\text{LL}^{-1}$  was effective with 2% or 4% *Aloe vera* coating in significantly reducing postharvest anthracnose with no negative effects on quality parameters. Results indicated that basil oil when incorporated into *Aloe Vera*

act as a suitable bio-safe fruit coating against anthracnose in banana.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is considered a public health problem affecting one third of females globally. They suffer short- and long-term health consequences of IPV that affect the health of their families and thereby the society at large. Nurses as frontline healthcare providers have a responsibility to address the problems affecting females who visit hospitals for treatment. Many previous researches have reported deficiencies of knowledge, attitudes and practices of nurses when caring for such females. The study on *Nurses' Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Associated Factors in Caring for Females subjected to Intimate Partner Violence in the Western Province of Sri Lanka*, assessed these concerns in a sample of nurses from the Western Province and found that a majority of them had favourable attitudes towards the care for IPV-affected females while there were deficiencies in their overall knowledge related to this practice. The study recommends the inclusion of IPV-related content in nursing curricula and the authorities to take action to conduct educational programs to enhance knowledge and practices of nurses on this important area of public health.

Conducting teaching-learning activities using the Zoom technology has become essential in the present Sri Lankan context due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study on *Student Perceptions on the Use of Zoom Technology for French Language Teaching: with Special Reference to Students in a French Language Institute* examines Sri Lankan students' perceptions on the use of Zoom technology for French language learning by using Sri Lankan female students from the pre-intermediate level classes at the French Language Institute of Alliance Française de Kotte. The findings indicated that the majority of the students considered the use of Zoom in French language teaching as effective and efficient in terms of time and the current pandemic situation and they agreed that learning the French language via Zoom can help them in practicing language skills and acquiring new vocabularies. However, lack of collaboration, loss of identity, difficulty in meeting the expectations of the students, distance and technical issues are considered to be

the major challenges in using Zoom technology for French language teaching. The results implied the necessity to conduct blended classes rather than using only online technologies such as video conferencing applications. The study carried out is significant in developing strategies to teach French language effectively and further research can be conducted on other video conferencing applications to find out ways to manage the challenges that students face.

Multiple interpretive possibilities make teaching literature a challenging task, particularly in an ODL context, where teacher's absence could be a common occurrence. Perhaps, the pandemic era zoom-learning might have caused enormous issues for teachers of literature who would count on the physical presence of students to grapple with dissemination concerns caused by the textual complexities of their subject matter. This study titled, *How to Read "Silence" in a Literary Text without a Teacher: ODL Learners' Perceptions of Studying Literary Texts through the Online Mode*, investigated second-year undergraduates' perceptions on learning T.S. Eliot's epic poem *The Waste Land* -- a notably difficult text for learners -- via both online and in-person Day Schools. Using a qualitative research design and in-depth semi-structured interviews the study found that the students viewed the online component of the course as useful but supplementary in its function. The online learning could replace the teacher in a physical classroom and the students preferred the physical presence of a teacher when attempting to read, understand and interpret the literary text.

In the discipline of teaching, the provision of feedback is an important aspect. It provides students with reinforcement and shows how they should correct their mistakes. There are different accepted ways of providing feedback to learners' written work, i.e., peer feedback, teacher feedback, oral feedback, written feedback and video feedback. However, such practices are mostly Eurocentric and there is a lack of similar research in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, there are no studies conducted on the provision of video feedback in Sri Lanka. The study on *Effect of Video Feedback*


*on Adult ESL Learners' Paragraph Writing Skills* uses an experimental design and studies whether the provision of video feedback for ESL learners' paragraph writing is effective than the provision of written feedback. The target population used for this study comprised of ESL undergraduates. The main aim of this study is to locate whether there is a noticeable difference in video feedback when compared to other modes of feedback. The secondary purpose of the study is to contribute to the gap of knowledge on the provision of feedback for written work in Sri Lanka.

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](mailto:ouslj@ou.ac.lk)

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