

## **Editor's Message**

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is the only way forward for extending education to disadvantaged and underprivileged communities in both developed and developing countries. It is considered as a means to break the iron triangle; the quality, access and cost (Daniel, 2004) by the provision of quality education to anyone, at any time and low cost. Some countries have moved to fifth generation of ODL with the introduction of new advanced technologies though many countries are still in the third or fourth generations and they have their own problems for which they may have to find solutions through existing methodologies. As such, research has a very significant role to play in exploring the potential of Open and Distance Learning to respond to the diverse needs of the knowledge-based society.

Two articles of this journal are related to the field of Open and Distance Learning and the rest of the articles deal with the research in the subject specific areas. At the OUSL, research in subject specific area such as Science and Engineering Technology are equally important for producing up-to-date and high quality instructional material to gain widespread acceptance among students and employers alike. Therefore, in this volume, some important findings related to research in subject specific areas are also disseminated as they also shed light into the development of programmes offered through the Open and Distance mode.

The first research paper in this collection is written by G.D. Lekamge at the Faculty of Education. It focuses on some new innovative procedures introduced by the Faculty for quality improvement of the PGDE Programme and their effectiveness in achieving the expected outcomes in line with the development of professional skills of teachers. The second article, written by G.I.C. Gunawardena and G.D. Lekamge is based on a document review on the transformation of Open and Distance Learning and the possible adaptations to suit special contexts.

The next four articles are related to four different subject areas namely Physics, Chemistry, Agriculture and Botany. The article written by C.N. Nupearachchi, K.M. Prematilaka, A.N.B. Attanayake and G.W.A.R. Fernando focuses on a study conducted in Matale District. As the paper reports, the study revealed that electrical conductivity of groundwater in the region was uniform and had no significant salinity-based impact on the resistivity variations. In the next article, S.D. Perera, R. Quesada and S. M. Draper have explained a research study conducted on the preparation of a novel ligand system based on fluoranthene which can act as a bidentate ligand through both N-donors and an anionic terdentate NNC-ligand. C. S De Silva and T. Mikunthan concluded in their article that the single well pumping test in a large diameter well could be used successfully to estimate the aquifer parameters as it has close agreement with the results of the radial flow numerical model. In line with the next article

L.P Wijesinghe and T.K.Weerasinghe suggest that Chlorox was the best disinfectant against both the *S. aureus* and the *P. aeruginosa* at the recommended use dilution.

I am sure that this volume will fit with the needs of diverse groups working in different fields of study.