

EDITORIAL

CHEMISTRY AND LABORATORY WORK

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Dear AJCE Communities,

I hope you all agree that laboratory work needs to be an integral component of the study of Chemistry, theoretically speaking at all levels of the education system. In fact many argue that Chemistry is an experimental science.

In practice, however, there are many challenges in engaging students in chemistry laboratory work, particularly in less developed countries. Lack of budget in equipping the labs, constrains in foreign currency to purchase genuine chemicals, lack of trained personnel to handle and maintain the equipment, overemphasis of classroom and national Chemistry exams on mere theory (at the expense of practical/process skills), the way chemistry lab activities and organized and carried out (like as mere theory verification means and highly structured—cookbook approach) are some of the challenges.

In response to these challenges, the authors of this issue of AJCE are dwelling on various strategies. Whereas John Bradley looks at microscale chemistry, Hans-Dieter Barke and Nina Harsch say goodbye to the “laboratory jargon” revolving around acid-base theories. On the other hand, whereas Sintayehu Leshe deals with developing and implementing assessment moderation procedures to evaluate written laboratory reports, Zewdu Bezu and his co-authors look at improving the implementation of pre-laboratory flow charts, cooperative learning and laboratory report writing in first year Organic Chemistry I laboratory class.

I hope you will enjoy reading them all!

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