



**A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NOVICE RESEARCHERS’
EXPERIENCES IN COMPLETING THEIR UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH PROJECT**

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Research is an integral part of most of the undergraduate honours degree programmes and undergraduates are expected to complete a research project at the end of the final year. The final year students of the BA in English and English Language Teaching degree programme offered by the Open University of Sri Lanka are also expected to complete an independent research project and submit a dissertation. This task utilizes a range of skills already developed in the four-year programme which includes academic writing skills, information gathering skills and application of principles of research methodology and it is mentored by a member of the academic staff. This process also poses a series of new challenges and opportunities by comprising tasks that require independent work such as identification of an area of research, creating a feasible research design, data gathering, data analysis, and writing up. Given the new demands of this particular component of learning it is important to understand the challenges faced by students and the strategies that they employ in successfully navigating the various components of this process. Hence, the present study attempts to study the research experience of BA in English and ELT undergraduates who completed the project in the year 2017/2018 and identify the challenges faced by them. The study revealed areas which need attention when providing support to undergraduate research students.

Keywords: Undergraduate research, Challenges of novice research, Thematic analysis

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