

# **Why Do Undergraduates Pursue English Studies: Special Focus on Undergraduates at Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka**

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In the contemporary Sri Lankan education arena, English has obtained its own value and power not only as a language but as a subject to be pursued, most prominently in secondary and tertiary level education. Hence, most of the universities offer English as a second language as well as a major or minor subject to be studied. However, researcher observed that comparatively less number of students tend to select English Studies at tertiary education. Therefore, it is important to explore their perception on selecting English as a major or minor subject. Thus, the present study aims at ascertaining undergraduates' intention on pursuing English as a major or minor subject at the university. Consequently, the research problem was formulated as "Why do undergraduates pursue English Studies?" To achieve the prime objective of this study, a sample of 90 undergraduates who pursue English as major or minor subject was selected using stratified sampling technique. Further, the sample consisted of second and third years; 30 from each batch, attached to the Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages at Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. Moreover, primary data were collected by implementing a questionnaire survey and interviews. The analytical approach of the research revealed that most of the respondents (38%) have the intention of obtaining a well-paid job while 32% of the respondents want to enhance their knowledge in English language and literature by pursuing English studies. In addition to that, 19% of the respondents have selected English in order to become English teachers in future. 8% of the students have selected English studies as they wish to go abroad after the graduation and only 3% expressed other concerns such as being interested in the subject English, experiencing the great literary works around the world etc. Hence, the results of the current study are beneficial in designing curricula for effective teaching as well as for enlightening learners in pursuing English in their tertiary level

education having understood their intentions. In conclusion, effective motivational strategies can be applied in order to make the teaching and learning process a success.

**Key words:** *English, Major, Minor, Pursue, Undergraduates.*