

JIMMA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

**THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF CONDUCTING SENIOR ESSAY
RESEARCH FOR JIMMA UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE REGULAR
STUDENTS**

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**A SENIOR ESSAY SUBMITTED TO FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND
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ACRONYMS

AAU	-	Addis Ababa University
BA	-	Bachelor of Art
BED	-	Bachelor of Education
BSc	-	Bachelor of Sciences
CBE	-	Community Based Education
CBTP	-	Community Based Training Program
FBE	-	Faculty of Business and Economics
FHSS	-	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
IER	-	Institute of Educational Research
ISR	-	Institute of Student Research
JEHE	-	Journal of Ethiopian Higher Education
JU	-	Jimma University
MPH	-	Master of Public Health
MSc	-	Master of Sciences
PHF	-	Public Health Faculty
RPO	-	Research and Publication Office
SRP	-	Student Research Program
SRPC	-	Students' Research program committee
TTP	-	Team Training Program

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to investigate the major challenges and prospects of doing research for Jimma University undergraduate regular students.

So as to accomplish this, 250 students were selected from 3 faculties (FBE, FHSS and PHF) through stratified /multi-stage/ random sampling by lottery method and then the data was collected from these students through questionnaires and from respective CBE and research offices through interviews.

Research as a course was taken by all students with slight difference due to subject matter difference and it is also, important for doing their respective final research which shows research course act as blue print for doing research.

About the major problems or challenges students reported that shortage of time, finance, language problems, data collection problems, shortage of relevant reference materials, personal weakness and other problems hinders the conduction of their research. Other problems of research also which were the result of interviews are plagiarism, problems of publication and dissemination of research findings and lack of conducive environments for research.

The students also reported that their senior essay is important which contributes a lot for improving their personal experience, knowledge and skills and widening the scope and improve instructions of their respective fields of study.

Finally, I concluded that students faced the following most important problems while doing their research;

- *Shortage of time*
- *Shortage of finance*
- *Language problems*
- *Data collection problems*
- *Shortage of relevant reference materials*

CHAPTER ONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Sawyer (2004), who is cited in Teweldebrhan (1987), had noted that the spread of modern knowledge offers possibilities for improvements in the quality of life world wide through the better understanding of modern hygiene, nutrition, environmental protection and governance system among others. Knowledge is therefore critical element of sustainable development in to day's competitive global economy. There is a need for every nation and society to acquire the capacity for generating, acquiring and utilizing modern knowledge for the good of mankind. Such knowledge is a result of an independent intellectual enquiry called research (Ibid).

Research is the tool and avenue for acquiring knowledge for development. Research refers to an independent intellectual enquiry in to adverse disciplines and area of human made and natural phenomenon and occurrences. The modern world is currently being transformed through research. The growth of nation and indeed, the economy of nation's to-day depend on their commitment to knowledge generation and utilization through research.

From the time of the evolution of the community of knowledge, called universities, research had been one of the identifiable hallmarks of universities. Research is strategically important in universities, as it is necessary to facilitate good quality of undergraduate training, help universities to motivate and empower its researches and promote the training of future researcher (Teweldebrhan, 1987).

Thus, one of the primary objectives of higher learning institution besides teaching is the search for truth, advancement and refinement of knowledge by conducting both basic and applied research currently. Research has been considered as one of the key task of institutions of higher learning not only as a matter of formality but for teaching effectively. Research should keep abreast with teaching and should help to raise the quality of teaching.

Hence, as its primary objectives higher learning institution students conduct research activities for assignment particularly for their senior essay paper .This is because research is an important tool for growth, technological advancement and social welfare. It is because of this that all higher learning institutions should encourage, motivate and provide their academic staff members with at least the minimum necessary facilities and training opportunities for successful achievement of their ultimate goals. These objectives can also be realized through training undergraduate students and involving them in research. This is also because research is very important for students to identify the common sense and evaluate the practical ones, to find out new knowledge and to verify the existing ones which directly or indirectly determine the future performance or effectiveness of students in real life situations (Waktole, 2002).

However, conducting research on different issues needs critical thinking, personal as well as material costs and also there are different challenges for students while conducting their research. The challenges can be internal and/or external to them. According to the study done by Daniel (2001) about students competence on research, there are various factors that hinder students research performance which includes inadequacy of reference materials, personal motivation problems, lack of research skill, financial problems and others (Derebssa,2004).

Therefore, this study mainly focuses on examining the major challenges and prospects of conducting senior undergraduate research for students.

Generally, this research paper is divided into 4 chapters. Chapter one which mainly emphasizes on the background of the study, the researchable questions, the objectives, significance, delimitation, limitation and the research methods. Chapter two mainly focuses on the secondary sources used for this study under reviews of related literatures. Chapter three deals with the background of Jimma University. The fourth chapter treats the result, discussion, conclusion and recommendations. In addition to these the research paper also contains the references, appendices (questionnaires and interviews).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The production and conduction of research is very important not only for higher institution students but also useful for other level students. This is because the production and utilization of research enhances personal and social experiences, increase confidence, contribute new knowledge to a particular issue and it also enables to be active and conscious of one self by attaching to up-to-date and new inventions and creations (<http://www.google.com.et>).

Research is the systematic study of a topic in order to find answer to questions. In psychology their questions are invariably (though not exclusively) about an individual. While in chemistry, for example, they are about chemical things. The important issue at stake here is what evidence we can provide for the questions we ask and answer we go. Every day we see, hear and read things based on so-called common sense. However, this commonsense includes beliefs based on prejudice, speculation or just simply misinformation unless we have evidence, from good quality and (it is very important that the research is good quality) (Lang ridge, 2004).

However, conducting research at student and other levels is challenging because it is time taking and not easy rather it is scientific undertaking which needs further undertakings; that means research is not simple task and not overnight mere activity.

Thus, the production and conduction of research is challenging, time taking and expensive activity in which many conditions need to be required: defining the problem, locating relevant sources in research literature, making notes on sources one has found and writing his view, ability to interpret the collected data, ability to apply research findings and basic knowledge measurement and statistics (Best, 2003).

According to the study done by Daniel (2000), which is stated on Institutes of Educational Research (IER, 2002), about student research competence in Addis Ababa university and he analyzed and forwarded that students' level of competence in research is not standardized and there is a great variation among them due to different factors like gap in communication skills, difference in personal capacity, the shortage of reference materials for their respective topic, no enough time for research course undertakings and others.

Another study in relation to this was done by Waktole Sort (1996) about major research problems in higher learning institutions a case study in Jimma College of agriculture. According to him though research for staff is crucial and very important to bring about innovations, motivations to solve the basic and deep rooted problems, however, it faced many problems to accomplish it. Some of these include problems of research funding, inadequacy of research infrastructure, lack of transport facilities, and low salary scale for research shortage of time, personal weakness, and lack of serious administration of research, undefined research priority and poor linkage with national international, institutional organizations (Waktole, 1996).

This study is undertaken to assess the micro level analysis of the problems of research conducting at students' level in relative to the research done by Waktole. That means that Waktole's research analyzed the macro level (staff research) problems where as this study is mainly assess the major challenges and prospects of conducting senior essay research for Jimma university under graduate regular students. Hence, there is a gap in time and level of analysis (slightly point of emphasis). Thus, absence of organized research has been conducted to the problems and personal interest initiated me to conduct this research.

Another reason to select this research topic from others numerous topics is that the problem of research either in its conduction or dissemination and utilization becomes highly observable among Jimma University students who conduct research for their senior essay as a requirement of BA, B.SC, B.Ed and others. Therefore, the above and other factors initiated me to select it. Therefore, to explain these problems the study tries to answer the following basic research questions.

1. What is the influence of research course for students to conduct research?
2. What are the major challenges and prospects that are associated with conducting senior essay research?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objectives

The main objective of this study is to find out the major challenges and prospects of conducting undergraduate research for Jimma University Senior under graduate students.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

Based on the general objective stated above, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the effect of research course for students to conduct research.
2. To find out the major challenges that are associated with under graduate research for students.
3. To find out the significance of conducting research for students and for their fields of study.
4. To recommend possible solution for those problems.

1.4. Significance of the Study

As it is mentioned above higher learning institutions should be research oriented to enable students to solve practical problems in the society. Thus, specifically, this study could have the following significance:

1. It will serve as a stepping stone for researchers who want to conduct detailed study

on the same tem (topic).

2. It also provides information about the status of student research work and paves the way for the necessary measures required to improve it.
3. It will used as a point of reference for students to under take research.
4. It gives a bird's eye view insight about the major problems and prospects of conducting under gradate research for students.

1.5. Scope of the Study

Despite assessing the importance of research activities and its challenges for higher institutions as whole in the country, this research is mainly assessing the importance of research activities and its challenges in Jimma University. It mainly investigates the main problems faced by students while conducting their research and its contribution and finally put forward possible recommendations (solutions).

The study focuses on 3 faculties in the main campus of Jimma University which are: faculty of Public Health having 4 departments, faculty of Business and Economic having 7 departments and faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences having 2 departments.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

It is known that one faces a problem while doing a research. Hence, I also faced different problems during the study. The problems more often came during data collection, the process of data organizations and analysis. In this case, the following are the limitations of the study.

1. Some of the students were not responding to questionnaires due to more openness of the questions.
2. There was time constraint in doing this research especially during the stage of data analysis and report writing
3. There were no enough reference materials even almost none, concerning this research topic.
4. Shortage of finance and other facilities.

1.7. Research Methods

The study was conducted in the year 2008/2009 with across-sectional study and done from January to May in Jimma university main campus to assess the major challenges and prospects of conducting senior essay research for Jimma University under graduate regular students. This study emphasized on 3 faculties having a total of 1488 regular student.

Hence, this study mainly deals with the problems and contributions of senior essay research for undergraduate regular students of Jimma University. For this purpose approximately 17% (250) of the total population was taken as informants with the assumption of increasing the representative ness and validity of the data.

For this study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches of research have been used. These two approaches have been used because there are qualitative data that were interpreted qualitatively and quantitative data are mostly number oriented which are both primary and secondary. The data was collected by using different techniques of data collection from the sample students. For this study both primary and secondary data were used to collect the necessary information from respondents. The primary data was used to collect first hand information from students and interviewees. The secondary data also used to substantiate primary data.

Hence, the primary data were collected by using both semi-structured personal interview(in-depth) and questionnaires.

Interviews: in-depth interviews were used to assess the major problems and prospects (contributions) of conducting senior essay research for student which was used as a pretest to the problem. This method was used to collect data from institute of student research, CBE offices of PHF, FHSS and FBE and from research and publication office.

Questionnaires: Self administered questionnaires which are both open and closed ended were distributed to the sample undergraduate regular students after justifying the objective and purpose of the study.

Secondary data was collected, from different materials, books, journals which are related to the topics and documents which are both published and unpublished, to substantiate the primary data.

1.7.1. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

1.7.1.1. Sample Size

The study was conducted on 3 faculties of Jimma University main campus. There are 1488 undergraduate regular students in these faculties in this academic year. From that number of students 250 were selected as a sample. To determine the sample size the following steps were used.

A). Total number of students (N) = 1488

Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) = 812

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences= 230

Faculty of Public Health = 446

B). Determine the proportion

The sample size (n) required was 250 as given above, so the proportion will be $n/N = 250/1488 = 0.168$ or by using $n_i = \frac{N_i n}{N}$ - to determine sample size,

N

Where, n_i = sample size for ----- i. stratum

N_i = population size for ----- i. stratum

n = Total sample size

N = Total population

C) Multiply the number of students in each faculty (strata) by the obtained proportion in (b) which would give the number of students included in the research from each faculty

$$\text{For FBE} = 812 \times 0.168 = 136$$

$$\text{For FHSS} = 230 \times 0.168 = 39$$

$$\text{For PHF} = 446 \times 0.168 = 75$$

$$n=250$$

The sample population 250 students were drawn from their list randomly through fish draw method called lottery.

1.7.2.2. Sampling Techniques

To determine the above sample size from each faculty non-probability sampling technique of purposive sampling was used to select 6 faculties from 8 faculties. That means the 6 faculties were selected based on the purpose that these faculty students conduct research as their senior essay paper other than project. Then, the 3 faculties were selected randomly through lottery method due to time and financial constraints.

To select the actual sample from 3 faculties, since the faculties are grouped in to substrata (departments) where the actual number of sample undergraduate students found and selected by using stratified (multistage) random sampling. This means after stratifying the source population in to faculties and departments, then the actual samples were taken from each department proportionally through random sampling method by using lottery. This was used because in this technique each member of the population being studied has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. Then the sample population was proportionally assigned to each faculty to each department by using the following formula;

$$n_i = \frac{N_i}{N} \times n$$

N Where, n_i = sample size for ----- i stratum

N_i = population size for ----- i stratum

n= total sample size

N= total population

Then, the following results were obtained.

Total number of students in each faculty	No. of sample size for each faculty
Faculty of business and Economics (N1) = 812	n 1 = 136
Faculty of public health (N2) = 446	n 2 = 75
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (N3)=230	n 3 = 39
Total (N) =1488	n = 250

1.7.3. Method of Data Analysis and Interpretation

After the data was collected, it was analyzed, presented and interpreted by using descriptive methods. That means the data analyzed and interpreted both qualitatively and quantitatively .Thus, these methods are percentage, tables, pie charts and bar graphs. Finally the result of the research is presented to users or respective bodies in the form of written report.

1.8. Data Collection Procedures and Ethical Considerations

To accomplish research ethical issues are important along with data collection processes in all stages. So in this study the following ethical issues were considered in all stages of the research.

1. Permission was asked from department of sociology and social work and from Jimma university registrar to collect the list of undergraduate students.
2. Explanation of the objectives and significance of the study was given to the sample students and different Community Based Education (CBE) and research offices.
3. The questionnaires and interviews format and other format of the research were approved by the advisor.
4. The different draft of the proposal and final research was approved by the advisor.

5. Finally, after it was written, edited and printed it was given to the advisor and presented to respective bodies (examiners) and students in the form of written report and oral presentation.

1.9. Operational Definitions of key Terms

To avoid the misleading, vagueness and confusion of words used in this research the following terms were defined operationally in this context

1. **Plagiarism:** is the use of other person's idea and wording with out having appropriate credit. It has both academic and legal punishment or it is the unacknowledged used of others ideas and work.
2. **Literature review (literature search):** is the process of explanting the existing literature to ascertain what has been written or published only your research topic and how previous research has been conducted.
3. **Quantitative research:** is a research method that concerns the quantity or measurement of some phenomenon i.e. it is conclude with quantifying (measuring and counting) phenomena.
4. **Qualitative research:** is a research method that is concerned with the quality or qualities of some phenomena unlike quantitative research qualitative research is principally conceived with text and meaning.
5. **Senior essay research:** is research done by undergraduate students for the partial fulfillment of their bachelor of Art (BA).
6. **Prospect:** is the importance and contribution of doing some thing

CHAPTER TWO

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. How Research Begins?

It is often hard to imagine how the researchers thought of doing the research in the first place. The popular image of scientists suggest that their research begins with brilliant flash of insight- that they suddenly have an idea that no body else has thought of . This image of research is misleading; it suggests that all you need for research to begin is to come up with a brilliant, new idea. If this were the case there would be far less research than there is because brilliant ideas are always in extendedly short supply (Delbalso and Lewis, 2001).

It is true that research begins with an idea or a question that concerns the people willing to do research. personal experience can play an important role in shaping peoples research interests. Refugees from Nazi German in the 1930s played prominent part in conducting social scientific and historical research in to totalitarianism and dictatorship in the 1940s and 1950s. Feminist ideas for social research emerged in the 1970s after an ever- increasing number of women began to graduate from universities. Current social

phenomena and social problems are likely to be of interest to many researchers even if they themselves are not directly affected. For example, since the arrival of the personal computer has been a rapid growth of social science research in to the impact of computer technology on work, leisure, education and an emerging “new economy.” The expansion of world trade has led to further interest in international relations, the future of nation-states and influence of multinational firms (Ibid).

Most research is stimulated by the research of others. From the point of view of the individual researcher this intellectual stimulation- a game of ideas that may not connect directly to personal experiences a major social problem, or a contemporary event, but that is nevertheless interesting and worth exploring further other people’s research can be a stimulus to further research in various ways (Delbalso and Lewis, 2001).

Research may be marked by controversy and disagreement. For example, there is much research in to the relationship between media violence and aggressive behavior, but a great deal of disagreement exists about what the data show or prove. Researchers often discover new information that is surprising but not explainable. The statisticians at statistics Canada recently discovered that, with the exception of youth crime, police report indicate a decline in crime rates over the last several years. Apart from contradicting “common sense” assumptions and impressions created by the media, these statistics created by the media, these statistics were presented as bare facts with out any explanation or interpretation. This lack of interpretation provides an opportunity for other researchers to develop satisfactory analysis and explanations.

Generally, the very beginning of research is complicated. Personal experience, current social issues or problems, the stimulus of other people’s research often combine to pull people in to research often combine to pull people in to undertaking social science research (Delbalso and Lewis, 2001).

In combination of the above pulling factors of undertaking research, other factors also initiate the starting of research in academic issues. Mostly this was begun in relation to the development of higher learning institutions for the development of practical

knowledge and for truth. Ethiopia having its own higher learning institution is not an exception to this. As a result, we see how research undertaking began in Ethiopian higher learning institution (Ibid).

2.2. Historical Development of Research in Higher Learning Institutions in Ethiopia

The modern tertiary education started in Ethiopia with the establishment of the university college of Addis Ababa in 1950 G.C. It is thus nearly half of a century since higher learning institutions started in Ethiopia. About 35 years ago the charter of Haile Selasie I university clearly stated research as one of the major function of the university. And this leads to the creation of several research institutions in the university at various levels with various objectives. The Ethiopian government has been financing the institution of research and several donor agencies have also contributed a very considerable fund (Endashaw, 1996).

However, these efforts have not been an effective and as consequential as expected due to the fact that no periodic studies are made to seriously evaluate research directives and priorities at higher learning institutions to aid policy making in the sphere of research development in higher learning institutions. Any urgent attention is required to these impediments which seem to stand on the way of research development at those higher learning institutions. It is a high time that various impediments are periodically assessed and clear polices and procedures developed. This can be achieved only if responsibility and accountability for charting out a research development program based on centrally determined objectives polices and priorities are institutionalized i.e. there is a proper institutional management of research (Ibid).

Although research and development results are disseminated in local and international journals and although conferences are organized by various facilities, all these are seen in adequate to bridge the gap between the available information and the information internalized by various development ministries. There is a need for a clearing house of information so that each development ministry is provided with clear concise and

comprehensive dossiers of research outputs from higher education institutions. Among the various higher learning institutions Addis Ababa University being the oldest and with the largest manpower is expected to play important roles in research and development (Teweddebrhan, 1987).

2.3. Research at Higher Learning Institutes

Teaching and research are the two primary tasks, carried out in an integrated manner by any university. In principle, all academic staff members are required to do as much research, if not more, as teaching; an approach traditionally followed by universities world wide. Ethiopian universities are no exception and they have developed general guide lines that govern the link between teaching and research. Research as an important component of university activities had been recognized some 25 years ago when administrative position at the level of an Associate Academic vice- president for research and publications was created. In the 1970s the name was changed to that of a research and publications officer under the academic vice- president even though the functions of the past have not changed (Endashaw, 1996).

2.4. The Status of University Research in Ethiopia

It has been widely accepted that institutions of higher learning should be concerned with production and reproduction of knowledge, generating and disseminating new ideas. Instructors of higher institutions need to integrate teaching and research. In technologically advanced world universities are the mainsprings of science; they not only produce high level man power but also constitute the main center of research. In Ethiopia though all the universities are vested with full powers under their charters to undertake research, very little research is actually carried out in our universities compared to their potentials. This is partly because the resources allocated for research have been extremely meager. The teaching load is usually excessive in most cases, which leave university staff very little time for research (Derebssa, 2004).

Most of the Ethiopian higher learning institutions are still in phase of transition in terms of infrastructure and personnel resources and thus do not provide dynamic environment

for the production of new knowledge through research activities. Generally, higher education in Ethiopia is neither sufficiently equipped nor ready for the development of research. Moreover, research is being insufficiently used in decision-making and practice and instructors in higher learning institutions are conducting an insufficient amount of practice- related research. Most instructors typically rely up on trial and error methods to improve their planning and practice.

While research has direct and quick impact on practice in higher institutions, its applicability is generally limited. Its status has been uncertain and it has functioned in a milieu of insecurity and isolation. The challenges are due to the factors with and outside the higher institutions, which tend to make research difficult (Ethiopian Journal of Higher Education (EJHE) June 2004, Vol.1 No.1).

A genuine transformation in the prevailing environment and attitudes in our academic institutions is urgently needed as scholarly and creative work is a sign for the very existence of university system. Teaching and research are the two primary tasks carried out in an integrated manner by any university. In principle, all academic staff members are required doing as much research as teaching an approach traditionally followed by universities world wide.

Ethiopian universities are not exception and they have developed general guidelines that govern the link between teaching and research. According to the current Ethiopian Education and training policy, higher education should be research oriented and in the legislations of higher institutions (Higher Education Proclamation, 2004) research is also considered as one of the primary tasks of the institutions (Derebssa, 2004).

Traditionally, the main domain of research of universities in the advanced countries has been basic and fundamental research. There is world wide consensus that universities should be able to continue this bias, as the strength and competence even in applied research is ultimately dependant on the capacity of scientific community in basic research. There has, however, been major shift in the universities since world war II to conduct research in particular (EJHE, 2004, June number 1 volume1).

2.5. Constraints of the Research Process

Research requires resources of all kinds and part of the researcher's time, energy and skills is spent in trying to obtain and manage the needed resources. In addition, research is a human activity- the researcher brings to it a variety of social and personal assumptions and perspectives. A variety of social circumstances influence how research issues become important and how they are thought about and researched.

2.5.1. Resources

People who undertake research for the first time are shocked to discover that so much of their time and energy is taken up with organizing these resources so that the research can actually get done. You need to assess the amount of time, money and other resources you are going to need prior to setting out to do the research. These considerations have to be part of the development of the research plan, the second step in the research process. A researchable topic is one that is not only feasible in terms of its meaning and significance in relation to other research, but also practical interims of the resources that the researcher has access to (Delbalso and Lewis, 2001).

2.5.2. Elusive Targets; Problems with Human Data

Social researchers also face a variety of constraints arising from their subject matter- other human beings. The most important of these constraints involves ethics. Experiments on human subjects are obviously limited by basic obligations to treat others with decency and dignity. But almost all social research methods raise ethical questions concerning how much stress the research should be permitted to impose how much information should be extracted and how much people's right to privacy should be protected. All professional social science associations have developed ethical guidelines for researchers. Institutions that support research such as universities and governments routinely monitor studies by applying these guidelines (Ibid).

Human beings can be troublesome to researchers for a variety of other reasons. People may be unwilling to be interviewed or to allow others to observe their activities; only a minority of people will return mail questionnaires; people in power and deviants tend to be secretive about their actions and resist studies of their lives; some people are inarticulate and unable to express their feelings and perceptions clearly.

2.5.3. The Social Context and the Personal Equation

Another set of constraints or pressures arises from the social and personal circumstances surrounding research. Social research looks at a quickly changing and controversial part of reality; society, human relations and human psychological characteristics. Not long ago spousal abuse was not a prominent topic for social research. In the 1970s Canadian social scientists debated and did research on the US domination of the Canadian economy; in the 1990s many of these same social scientists are now doing research on the impact of the “global economy” on Canada. Shifts like these arise from changing social conditions, which contribute to altering definition of what are important issues, ideas and phenomena in society. This shift, in turn encourages researchers to turn their attention to new areas and to lessen their interest in others (Delbalso and Lewis, 2001).

In addition, social research can use a diverse range of designs and methods laboratory experiments, surveys, field work, analysis of documents, statistical analyses and soon. There are many different styles of social research, ranging from the scientific style of experimentation and statistical analysis to the humanistic style of oral history and of many field studies. Each researcher develops an interest in specific issues and a taste for a certain style of research because each of us brings our own concerns, outlooks and skills to research. Some may enjoy working with historical documents or personal letters and trying to recreate the lives and times of individuals and groups in a humanistic style: others will enjoy the challenge of designing experiments or developing statistical

interpretation of economic and demographic data. Each designs and procedures has advantages and limitations; often the strengths of one method compensate for the weakness of others. The different research methods are equally valuable and often can be used in a complementary way. Combining different research methods in the some research design is often essential as is remaining open minded about all the available methods for obtaining empherical evidences (Ibid).

2.6. Motivation for Research

Social scientist often focus on the reasons for peoples behavior, it seems only fair to ask the same social scientists themselves about their motivation for research. Some of the motivations include the following (Babbie, 1989).

2.6.1. Testing Formal Theories

One motivation for undertaking social research is modifying and expanding of social theory some researchers draws on well articulated comprehensive theories for direction in designing their research other operate from more limited theoretical explanation.

2.6.2. Exploring Unstructured Interests

A scientist will have an interest in a topic with out having any clear ideas about what to expect in the way of relationship among variables. Initially the relevant variables are not even clear. The initial research in fact may have the identification of important variables as its primary purpose.

2.6.3. Applied research

This means researchers engaged in research for research projects, usually of applied in nature this research usually plant to determine future course of action on the basis of the research results.

2.6.4. Involuntary Research

This means the researchers undertake research as a result of external pressure to do so. There are two major categories of phenomenon junior faculty members whose professional security or advancement may depend in part on scientific publications and college students who must undertake research to satisfy the requirement of courses in research methods.

2.7. Purposes of Research

Social research has so many purposes three of the most common and useful purposes are exploration, description and explanation (Babbie, 1989).

Exploration: - this means a research conducted to explore a topic, to provide a beginning familiarity with that topic this is used typically when a researcher is examining a new interest or when the subject of the study itself is relatively new and unstudied.

Description: - this main purpose of many social scientific studies is to describe situations and events. The researcher observes and then describes what was observed.

Explanation: - this is related to explaining the social events and researcher has an explanatory purpose if he/she wishes to know why something exists.

CHAPTER THREE

III. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

3.1. Historical Background of Jimma University

Jimma University (JU) is a Public Higher Educational Institution established in December 1999 G.C by the amalgamation of Jimma college of Agriculture (founded in 1952 G.C) and Jimma institute of health sciences (established in 1983 G.C). The two campuses are located in Jimma city 335Km south west of Addis Ababa with an area of 167 hectors. Ambo College of agriculture (1931 G.C) located at Ambo town 125Km west of the capital Addis Ababa is also affiliated to Jimma University as of May 2003.

Jimma University is Ethiopia's first innovative community oriented educational institution of higher learning. The University adopted the city's name for logically sound reasons. For one thing, Jimma is one of the biggest cities in the country noted for its coffee production. Secondly, Jimma was the seat of the king of the five Gibe states during the 19th C. The main campus is situated in the neighborhood of the ex-place of Abajifar, now an open museum. Jimma is known among other things for its year round green attractive landscape scenery and coffee production as mentioned above. Moreover, people in Jimma and its surroundings are naturally friendly and more so far the Jimma University community (staff and community).

Jimma University as an institution has its own vision, Mission goals and core values.

Vision: Jimma University aspires to be the best leading developmental University in Africa that produces competent professionals responsive to societal needs.

Mission: Jimma University is a center of academic excellence integrating training, research and services. The University trains higher caliber professionals at diploma, graduate and post graduate level through its cherished and innovative community based (CBTP), team based (TTP) and research based (SRP) educational approach. The University making every endeavor to address societal needs and promote holistic and sustainable development in the country.

Goals

- Training competent and responsive professionals who can address the community's problems through innovative and practical means.
- Promote the philosophy of community based education (CBE) with the aim of bringing about palpable change in the community through active community participation to societal and interest group collaboration.
- Contribute to societal development through the training of responsive professional, the conduct of high quality relevant research and professional advocacy
- Promote the principle of educational equity irrespective of ethnicity, religion sex and political background
- Promote women's participation in all shares of development.
- Strengthen partnerships and linkages with local and international institutions for the purpose of rendering high quality training applied research and service.
- Develop sound organizational and management systems for the accomplishment of its objectives.
- To promote HIV/AIDS as core strategic issue in all aspects of the University's activity.

Core Values

The following are the principal values of Jimma University.

- Educational relevance: ensuring pertinence of the educational curricula to societal need.
- High-quality training: - training professional with adequate skill knowledge and attitude which up to the internationally acceptable standards.
- Staff professionalism: upholding the quality of skill, competence and experience in any endeavor.
- Applied research: - ensuring research that is directly applicable to societal needs and development.
- Equity: - the university envisages making all training opportunities accessible to candidates irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, sex and political background.
- Gender sensitivity: - moving to wards gender equity and balance through by the implementation of affirmative action.
- Community participation and empowerment: - active partnership of the community based development activities trough existing community organization and structure.
- Service/education: - providing service to the community directly and through training.
- Transparency: - supporting and maintaining transparency of management and administrative process and classifying routes of accountability to all consumers.

3.2. The Philosophy of Jimma University

3.2.1. Community Based Education

Community based education is a means of achieving educational relevance to community needs and consequently of implementing a community oriented education program. It consists of earning activities that use the community extensively as a learning environment, in which not only students but also teachers, members of the community and representatives of other sectors are actively engaged throughout the educational experience. The core philosophy of the university is:

1. Community based and problem oriented education

2. Multi-disciplinary training.
3. Integrated training service and research.

Community Based Students Research

In order to enhance the students problem solving skill, final year students carryout an independents research project. The study in to be:

- ❖ Problem oriented
- ❖ Community based
- ❖ Scientifically and ethically acceptable feasible and action oriented.

Community based education, in general, has enabled the university

- To train professionals in diverse fields of studies in a community setting,
- To encourage a team approach in treating societal problems
- To work with the local communities with greater conviction
- To undertake problem-based research activities which take in to consideration to priority needs of the community.

3.3. Research and Publication

One of the most basic and distinguishing features of a higher education institution is to encourage its academic staff and students to acquire knowledge through research and scientific activities (investigations).

Research undertaking is among the philosophical commitment of Jimma University with the core objective of materializing the integration of training, service and research undertaking in the university. The research and publication office (RPO) is responsible for coordinating and supporting research work in the university. The fundamental purpose of the research and publication office is to help both the academic staff and the students conduct applied and basic research which are of considerable importance to the socio-economic development of the country.

Hence, the research and publication office publishes significant research findings in its journal entitled Ethiopian Journal of Health Sciences which appears twice a year. About 300 copies of the journal in each volume are printed and distributed to various higher learning institutions, offices, organization and libraries in the country. The research and publication office has so far produced 26 volumes of bulletins and journals each containing 8-10 originals articles on averages as well as 2 special issues of the journal.

3.4. Study Programs of Jimma University

According to the data that was collected from Jimma University registrar office, Jimma University has the following study programs:

I. Regular Degree Programs

- 1.1 Ambo College** –Having 14 degree programs in different fields of study
- 1.2. College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine**–Having 5 degree programmes in different fields
- 1.3. Faculty of Public Health** – Having 4 departments in degree program
- 1.4. Faculty of Medical Sciences**- Having 7 departments in this program
- 1.5. Faculty of Business and Economics** –having 9 departments in BA programs
- 1.6. Faculty of Technology** – Having 3 department in BSc program
- 1.7. Faculty of Education** –Having 8 department sin B.Ed program
- 1.8. Faculty of Law** –Having 1 field of study in LL.B Program
- 1.9. Faculty of Natural and Information Science**–Having 3 departments in B.A and BSc programs.
- 1.10. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**- having 4 departments in BA programs

3.5. Statistical Information

3.5.1. Student Enrollment

The total student population of Jimma University was 14,623 in 2003/4 academic year.

Of these:

- 8,756 were regular student
- 4,544 attend continuing education program
- 1,323 enroll in the summer programme

The figure below shows the student population of the University in 2003/4 academic year

Table 1:- Student population of Jimma University 2003/4 Academic year (Jimma Campus)

S. No	Students	M	F	T
1	Regular	5,786	1,406	7,192
2	Continuing	2,563	825	3,388
3	Summer	1,190	133	1,323
	Grand total	9,539	2,364	11,903

Source: A statistics done by Jimma University registrar office in 2003/4

Table 2:- Student population of Jimma University 2003/4 Academic year (Ambo Campus)

S. No	Students	Male	Female	Total
1	Regular	1274	290	1564
2	Continuing	947	209	1156
	Grand total	2221	499	2720

Source: A statistics done by Jimma University registrar office in 2003/4

3.5.2. Staff Profile

According to the statistics of 2003/4 the university has a total of 1920 staff, out of which

- 616 were academic staff
- 193 health professionals
- 1,111 Administrative staff

Jimma University population of 2004/5

I. Regular

Table 3:- regular student population of JU in 2004/5 (Two campus)

S. No	Students	Male	Female	Total
1	Jimma campus	7,455	2,056	9,511
2	Ambo campus	1083	340	1,423
3	Grand total	8,538	2,396	10,934

Source: A statistics done by Jimma University registrar office in 2004/5

II. Extension

Table 4:- Evening student population of JU in 2004/5 (two campus)

S. No	Students	Male	Female	Total
1	Jimma Campus	2945	956	3901
2	Ambo Campus	1062	214	1276
		4007	1170	5177

Source: A statistics done by Jimma University registrar office in 2004/5

III. Summer Jimma Campus

There were 2084 students of which 1760 were males and 324 female in the main campus only.

According to the data collected from JU registrar bureau, the student population of JU in 2008/9 academic year are depicted below (Agriculture and main campus).

Table 5:- Student population of Jimma University 2007/8academic year (Jimma campus)

S. No	Students	M	F	T
1	Regular	12,876	3114	15,990
2	Continuing	2349	699	3048
3	Summer	5103	641	5744
	Grand total	20328	4454	24782

Source: A statistics done by Jimma University registrar office in 2007/8

N.B the years used in this research were in GC (Gregorian calendar)

CHAPTER - FOUR

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Result

This part of the research deals with the interpretation, analysis and presentation of collected data in to meaningful information by using tables, bar-graph, pie-chart and percentage. The data was collected from undergraduate regular students of Jimma university main campus, from 2 CBE offices, research and publication office and institute of student research. In this academic year (2008/9) there are 1488 undergraduate regular students from 3 faculties: Business and Economics, Humanities and Social Sciences and public Health .Out of 1488 students, 250 students were selected from these faculties by using stratified random sampling techniques.

Therefore, the sources of data for this study were 250 undergraduate regular students of FBE, FHSS, PHF and CBE offices of respective faculties, institutes of student research office and research and publication office. Then I distributed the questionnaire to students and interviewed the above offices heads through interview.

This chapter, mainly emphasis or consisted of the background information, the effect of taking research course on conducting senior essay research, the major challenges and

prospects of conducting research for the sample students. Each part is treated one by one as follows.

Table 1: socio - demographic background of sample students.

S. No	Characteristics			Number	Percent (%)
1	Faculty	Business and Economics	Male	109	44
			Female	27	11
			Total	136	55
		Public Health	Male	64	26
			Female	11	4
			total	75	30
		Humanities and Social Sciences	Male	32	12
			Female	7	3
			Total	39	15
Total				250	100
2	Level of education	3 rd		228	91
		4 th		22	9
		Total		250	100
3	Age	18 -25		235	94
		26 -30		13	5.2
		31 -36		2	0.8
		above 36		-	-
	Total		250	100	

Source: Sample undergraduate regular students of JU, April 2009

The above table shows the socio- demographic background of sample respondents' .particularly, it addresses the level of education, sex and age. As presented in the table above 3 faculties undergraduate regular students of Jimma University which from FBE, PHF and FHSS each comprises: 109 (44%) males and 27(11%) females, 64 (26%) males and 11 (4%) females, and 32 (12%) males and 7 (3%) females students respectively. Their level of education also third year which comprises 228 (91%) and fourth year which comprises 22 (9%) as their last year for graduation. The age also varies and ranges from 18 -25 = 235 (94%), 26 - 30 =, 13(5.2%) 31– 36= 2 (0.8%) and no respondent have the age above 36.

Therefore ,according to table1 shown above, males 205(82%) are greater than females 45(18%) and most of the respondents were taken from FBE which comprises 136 (55%) followed by PHF having 75(30%) respondents .This difference is the result of proportional difference of sample taken from 3 faculties.

4.1.1. The Trend of Students' Research in Jimma University

This part mainly deals with the historical development of students' research and its emphasis area at Jimma University. So as to do this an interview which is in depth was undertaken for 2 CBE selected offices, institute of student research office and research and publication office. The result the interview has been summarized below.

Analysis of the Interview

According to CBE coordinators of PHF and FHSS, institute of student research and research and publication offices, the origin and development of student research is a result of long time experience and as part of global moment of paradigm shift in educational philosophies, Jimma institute of health sciences currently Jimma university was born an innovative idea of making tertiary education relevant to societal needs for development, improved living standards and quality of life. According to the head of student research, to materialize these innovative curricula, Jimma University has adopted

community based Education (CBE) as a philosophy of meeting societal expectation for development and welfare of human kind from higher learning institutions. He also responded that in addition to other two components of CBE strategy namely community based training program (CBTP) and Team training program (TTP), student research program (SRP) is designed to enable each degree under graduate student to design and conduct an operation research with a scientific report. The CBE coordinator of PHF also stated that since students participate in two phases of CBTP to understand, identify and resolve community problems which enables them to conduct their senior essay research easily and independently, by so doing the students will develop a critical thinking capacity and problem solving skills.

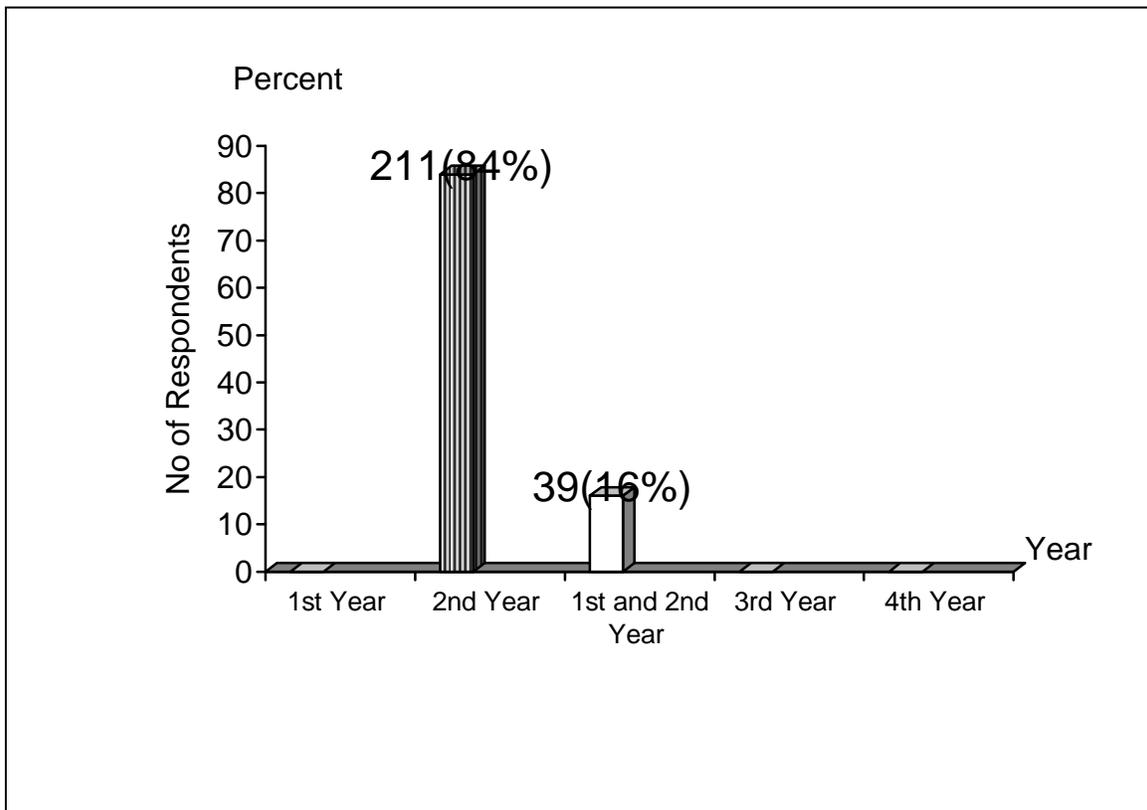
Moreover, they also responded that such an independent research project is carried out by each degree graduate as a partial fulfillment of their degree. This undertaking makes Jimma University unique in the county and probably in the world. The head of research and publication office responded that independent student research is the only philosophy of Jimma University along With CBE because most other university students of Ethiopia conduct research, for their requirement of degree, in group.

Generally, according to those offices, though there are improvements in students' research, there are also challenges associated with its undertakings. The challenges are associated with the increase of student number from time to time and other socio-economic factors and some of these improvements include the publication of students' research and their recognition in local, national and international level in which students becomes awarded particularly medical and health students.

4.1.2. Research Course at Jimma University

This portion explains about research course at class room and its relation ship with undertaking senior essay research for students. Particularly this part deals about when students take research course and how many times what is the significant of taking it for undertaking research. For this purpose the sample 250 under graduate regular students were asked about it and their response indicates that all respondents were taking research course at different period of time. The time is in year and shown below.

Bar-graph 1. The time of taking research course



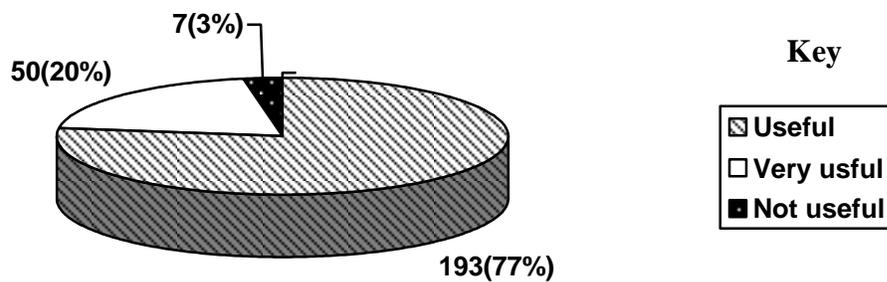
Source: Sample undergraduate students of JU, April 2009

The bar-graph shows the time when students take research course and according to it the sample students were taking research course at second year 211 (84%) and at 1st and 2nd year 39 (16%), respectively and at 1st year only no student and also no sample students

take research at 3rd and 4th year. Hence, most of the students take research course at second year.

Those who have taken research course irrespective of the time also valued it as useful very useful and not useful for equipping them with theoretical knowledge and practical research skill.

Pie- chart – 1: proportion of respondents who value research course



Source: sample under graduate regular students of JU, April 2009

The above pie-chart 1 reveals that 193(77%) students valued research course as useful, 50(20%) students also valued it as very useful in equipping them with practical and theoretical knowledge and for doing their research. 7(3%) students responded that research course is not useful for them in doing research.

Therefore, according to the data from the above chart, research course is important for most of the students for doing research.

Out of 250 respondents those who valued research as useful 193 (77%) and very useful 50 (20%) responded that taking research course at class room is very crucial for practical

knowledge and conducting their senior essay. They also argued that research course has significant effect on undertaking senior essay research for students. According to 243(97%) students, the contribution of taking research course can be justified as since assignments for research course enabled them how to design, prepare and organize fragmented raw data in to meaningful information which directly or indirectly important to prepare and conduct an organized and qualified research.

Thus, according to them taking research course changes theory in to practice. These communicatively, according to them, consolidate the task of easily conducting their research by guiding how to conduct it, providing brief blue print and finally act as a point of reference for doing research.

4.1.3. The Major Challenge of Conducting Student Research

Student research is one of the primary objectives of higher learning institutions which are designed to implement the theoretical learning in to practice. This implementation needs different techniques, resources, time and skills to accomplish it.

So, despite, its importance research at student level has so many challenges and problems to conduct it effectively and properly. These challenges range from internal to external problems to researchers. As stated by respondents, these directly or indirectly hinder the potential as well as the effectiveness of their research.

In relation to this, the study was mainly emphasized on the commonly experienced challenges for respondents. These respondents were 250 undergraduate regular students from 3 faculties and 2 CBE offices, institute of student research head and head of research publication in which the data were collected from them through questionnaires and interviews. According to them the major challenges includes material human and institutional problems.

Hence, though the following identified major challenges may varies from one researcher to another and from one fields of study to another, in this study mostly the common challenges and their similar side are discussed. All respondents faced with one or more

challenges irrespective of its extent and type while doing their research. These challenges were discussed below.

1. Data Collection Problems

Any research in general and student research in particular becomes a futile journey unless equipped with proper data which shows the importance of data for research undertakings.

Despite its importance, most of the researchers faced data collection problems which varies from one faculty to another even from one a topic to another. For this problem the data that were collected through interview are presented as follows.

The CBE coordinator of PHF responded that, though data collection problems are the common problems of different faculty students, it is relatively differs from one field of study to another based on its respective subject matter difference. According to him, these variations are the result of difference in time for taken research course, personal commitment difference and the nature of the respective faculties and others.

According to those interviewees, the most common data collection problem includes, un willingness of respondents to provide enough information, lack of enough personal experience and lack of knowledge how to collect data effectively for researchers, shortage of time, financial problems and language barriers.

Finally, the head of research and publication office recommended that, "students who under taken any research in general and students in particular have to take care about the sensitivity and importance of data for effective research, so as to achieve this they have to adjust themselves to challenge such problems."

The data collected from respondents about this problem also shows the presence of the problem with slight difference among different fields of studies.

Table 2: The number of respondents who face problem of data collection

Faculty	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Business and Economics	120	48

Public Health	70	28
Humanities and Social Sciences	30	12
Total	220	88

Source: undergraduate regular students of JU, April 2009

The above table 2 shows that 120 (48%) students from FBE 70(30%) students from PHF and 30(12%) students from FHSS were faced with data collection problems while doing their research.

Therefore, according to this table most students from 3 faculties were faced with data collection problems.

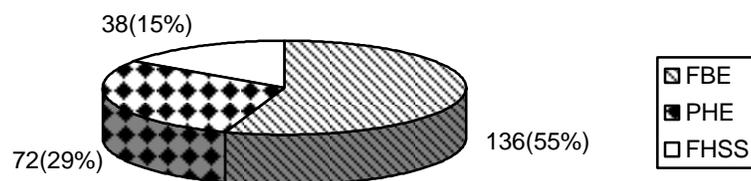
2. Shortage of Finance

One of the key factors that affect the volume and quality of research in the university, said the head of student research office, are under –funding. Which means shortage of finance for research is manifested in university budget. The head of research and publication office also responded that funds for conducting research in the university are currently low which decrease from time to time. For example, he also responded “before 5 years funding for student research was 700 birr but after that time it becomes 300 Birr which is caused by many reasons like the increase of student number as well as the intensive and costly nature of research under takings.”

The CBE coordinator of FHSS was also responded that though the amount of finance needed for student research varies from one faculty to another based on its subject matter, they commonly face financial problems as the most important problem. For example, the CBE coordinator of PHF also argued that research undertaking for senior under graduate regular health students is so costly and needs critical considerations since most of the time they do their research on human beings and animals experimentally and use costly utensils and materials.

The data collected from respondents about the same problem also ensured the presence of the problem among different faculties.

Pie- chart 2 the problem of finance for different faculty students



Source: sample undergraduate regular students of JU, April 2009

The above pie-chart 2 reveals that 136 (55%) students from FBE, 72(29%) students from PHF and 38(15%) of FHSS students were faced with shortage of finance in doing their research.

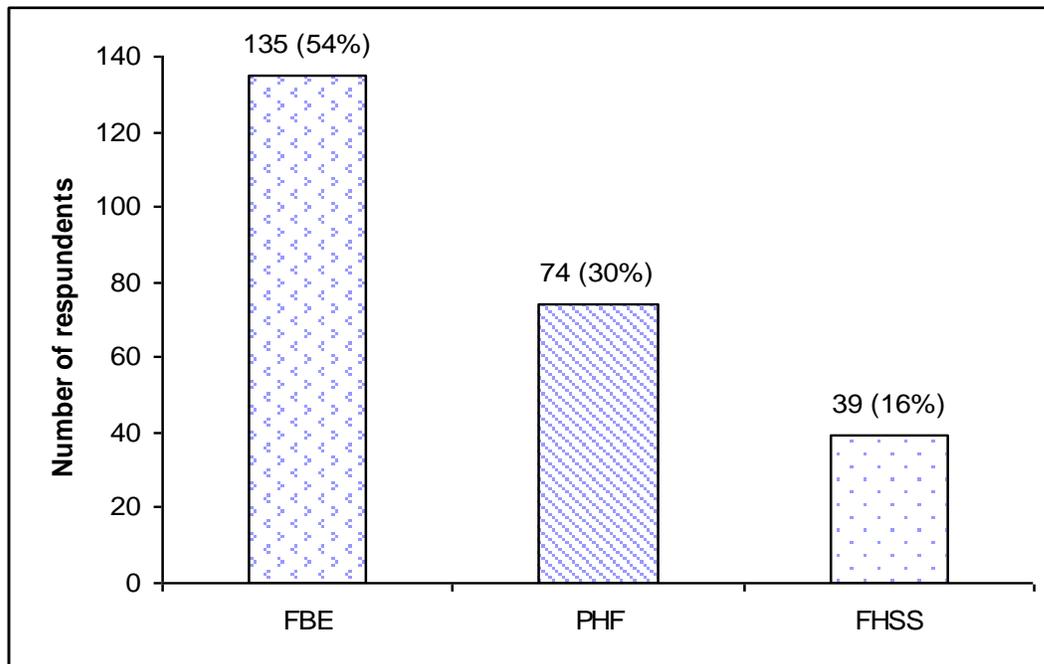
Therefore, according to the above pie- chart, with respect to their proportion most of the students in the 3 faculties were challenged with shortage of finance for doing research.

3. Shortage of Time

In higher learning institution teaching is considered as the primary objective which in turn narrows the time that is necessary for practical research, replied the head of research and publication office. The CBE coordinators of FHSS and PHF were replied that shortage of time for students to under take their research is the most important of all problems which is followed by shortage of fund. According to the head of student research institute, shortage time in research production and utilization for students includes, students research have not its own specific time to prepare the proposal, the practical data collection and to compile the raw data in to meaning full information and also research given as a course has not enough time as compared to other courses.

The data collected from sample students about this problem shows almost all respondents from 3 faculties mentioned shortage of time as the most challenging of all problems in doing their research. This is because there is no that much practical and pertinent knowledge of research, shortage of enough time for the course as a result their respective advisor unable to provide fruitful comment for them.

Bar graph 2: The proportion of respondents who faced shortage of time



Source: undergraduate regular students of JU, April 2009

The above bar-graph 2 shows that 135 (54%) students from FBE 74 (30%) students from PHF and 39 (16%) FHSS students were faced with shortage of time in doing their research.

Therefore, according to the data of above graph, since research undertaking takes much time, most of the respondents were faced with shortage of time from the beginning up to the end while doing their research.

4. Ethical Issues

Ethical issues are the most important factors that have to be considered in any research particularly for student research effectiveness. This means ethical issues affect research undertakings directly or indirectly. In relation to this problem the CBE coordinator of PHF argued that, students' of public health face ethical problems while doing their research and collecting data. He also stated that this problem is more predominant for health and medical students because of the nature of the subjects matter: these students conduct research experimentally on individuals and animals which need great care and strict ethical consideration of each and every aspect of the activities other wise led to serious damage.

The head of research and publication office argued that this problem is the problem of all students regardless of its extent. He also stated that ethical problems of students includes not sensitive for others dignity, privacy and problem of treating others while collecting their data.

The data collected from undergraduate regular students about the same problem shows that the problem is not that much significant for most of the respondents except few respondents from 3 faculties with different proportion. This means according to the data from respondents 12(5%), 5(2%) and 2(0.8%) students from PHF, FBE and FHSS respectively were faced with this problem.

5. Plagiarism

This is another hindering problem that reduces students' motivation and creativity while undertaking their research for the partial fulfillment of their degree. Plagiarism, according

to the head of research and publication office means, "Misuse, misinterpretation, direct use of another researchers work with out acknowledging." He also argued that this problem becomes the common problem of staff as well as student researches.

Those students who commit the act of plagiarism are said to be professional criminals and the act also results, according to CBE coordinator of FHSS, in decreasing the motivation of student creativity, reduces the quality of research findings which entails another failures in equipping with practical research skills and identifying and solving another problems. The CBE coordinator of PHF also argued that students who use others work directly as their work is caused by one and another reasons. These includes due to lack of research knowledge-problem identification, developing proposal, designing questionnaires, lack of statistical skill to manipulate data inferentially, lack of motivation for doing research independently, lack of enough time and fear of research as tedious task with out any practical evidence. The heads of institute of student research also argued that "most of senior undergraduate students use the works of others, directly as their work, partially or fully which affect the environment of research under taking." He noted that using the methodologies, reviews and objectives of another work properly in his or her context with its proper acknowledgments is not considered as plagiarism rather the task of good researcher.

6. Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings

The main aim of doing student research and general staff research is to present and publicize the findings to the respective and potential users. This means the dissemination, publication and utilization of student research findings are important as a basic means of expanding the positive impacts of research on development practices.

However, this is not that much open in university level. So as to check this in-depth-interviews were asked for the above mentioned interviewees (2CBE of offices, ISR and RPO) and their responses are stated below:

According to the head of research and publication office though the publication and dissemination of student research is important, these areas have been given less attention

from the side of student themselves and the university research concerned offices. This is because, according to CBE coordinator of PHF and FHSS, most student research reports have tended to remain on bookshelves, unread and untouched by policy makers, other researchers and for practitioners. They also argued that efforts to attract policy makers in these reports have elicited compliant that they are too bulky, or are written in a formal language which is quite incomprehensible to readers and that the subject matter of the report is of little relevance to policy formulation and implementation.

Hence, the head of research and publication office concluded that even though a few students research have been published and disseminated in national and international level, it needs an extra effort since most the researches are not published, publicized or disseminated due to internal and external problems.

7. Shortage of Reference Materials and Equipments

According to the data which were collected from those interviewees, problems hindering research conduction and utilization varies in kind, extent and time of occurrence and from these shortages of reference materials and equipments becomes an important problem which hinders research under takings. The head of research publication office argued that unless any research is supported by meaningful, updated, new and current literatures, it becomes meaningless and fruitless to provide the designed objectives and reports. The data from the office of student research institute also explained that: shortage of reference materials and equipments like documentation center problems, lack of computer with accessories for processing data, conducive working place and office equipments and sufficient meanses of communication were some of the problems that face researchers to conduct their research.

In relation to this problem, the sample students were also asked and their responses are presented below.

Table 3: Availability of equipments and important reference materials

Facilities	Sufficient	Not sufficient	Not available	Total
------------	------------	----------------	---------------	-------

	(No. of respondents)	(No of respondents)	(No of respondents)	
Computers	5 (2%)	42 (17%)	50 (20%)	97 (39%)
Stationery	2 (1%)	30 (12%)	79 (32%)	111 (45%)
Internet Connections	3 (1%)	25 (10%)	60 (24%)	88 (35%)
Relevant reading materials	27 (11%)	40 (16%)	49 (20%)	116 (47%)
Total	37 (15%)	137 (55%)	238 (95%)	412 (165%)

Source: sample under graduate regular students of JU, April 2009

N.B. More than one option was selected by the same respondents

The numbers in the bracket is percent value

According to table 3 above, the most important facilities that are useful for doing research includes: computers for different purpose sufficient for 5(2%) students not sufficient for 42(57%) respondents and not available for 50(20%) respondents, stationeries (pen, pencils, rub, etc) were sufficient for 2(1%) not sufficient 30(12%) and not available 79(32%) respondents. Another equipment which was important is internet connections and it was available for 3(1%), not sufficient for 25(10%) and not available for 60(24%) respondents. Finally, relevant reference materials were also sufficient for 27 (11%), not sufficient for 40 (16%) and not available for 49 (20%) respondents.

Therefore, according to the above table 3, shortage of equipments such as stationery, computers and shortage of relevant reference materials highly hinders students' research undertakings.

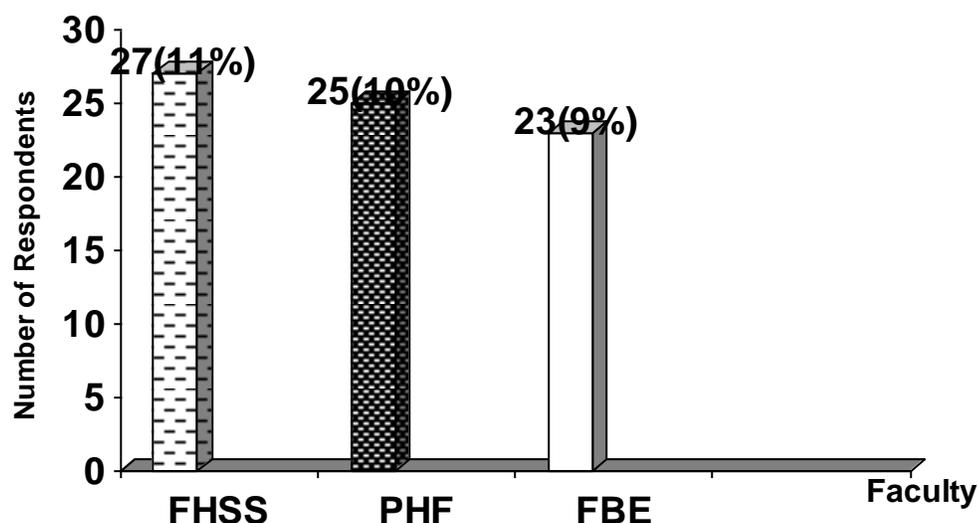
8. Personal Weakness

Research activities need personal determination and motivation since University teaching and researches are thorough and time- consuming activities. Which requires well experienced, skilled researcher, personal determination and motivation to accomplish effective and organized research argued the CBE coordinator of PHF.

On the country, however, according to the head of research and publication office personal capacity of student for doing research as well as staff researcher in different issues is not that much high. For example, research capacity among some faculty members and senior students especially in quantitative data analysis and effective use of computer is low. He also argued that students' capacity to deal with and disseminate research result is low which is due to factors internal and external factors such as being busy with other tasks, carelessness to read more about research, to find relevant review materials and lack of motivation and incentive, and low recognition for high quality research findings.

The data was also collected from sample under graduate regular students of this academic year about their personal capacity of undertaking research. Out of the total respondents 76(30%) respondents were argued that their capacity to conduct research is negatively affected by internal and external problems. These includes unable to clearly understand the purpose of practical research, poor eagerness to improve their ability, unable to know clearly about the meanings and application of research which cumulatively forces them to select their topic carelessly and copying the works of others.

Bar graph 3: The proportion of respondents who faced personal weakness for doing research.



Source: sample respondent undergraduate regular students of JU, April 2009

According to the above bar-graph 3, 27 (11%) students from FHSS, 25 (10%) students from PHF and 23 (9%) students from FBE were responded that their personal weakness hinders research undertakings.

Therefore, according to the data of above graph students' personal weakness determines and also hinders the analysis, interpretation and general performance of their research.

9. Teachers Load and Research undertaking

This is related to the relation of advisors and students, in research. As a problem it directly or indirectly the source of disagreement between advisors and students in research. In relation to this the result of the interview stated as follows.

According to the head of research and publication office, "for achieving excellence in teaching and research, the scientific and technical staff in universities has to be provided with more time." He also argued it is usually stated that each teaching staff is expected to devote about 25% of his or her time to research work, but very little of them subscribe to this expectation.

The CBE office of FHSS responded that in addition to advisors over load for activities other than research work, their experience and knowledge of research also determines student advisor relationships. This means, according to him, some advisors are assigned for not less than 10 students at their fresh BA level which creates loose relationship between the two.

However, out of 250 respondents 207(83%) students responded that their respective advisors contribute a lot for them in providing comment for errors, guiding the general outline and content of the proposal, report and sharing his/her experiences for them. But students 43 (17%) students were faced with this problem and some of them replied that they unable to agree with their advisor while in conducting their research because their advisors have no enough time and not set specific time for giving advice, there are many advisee students for one advisors and some times lack of pertinent knowledge and experience about research on the side of advisors and not providing advice at all.

Table 4:- the number of students who face advisor problems

Faculty	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Public Health	20	8
Humanities and social sciences	13	5
Business and Economics	10	4
Total	43	17

Source: sample undergraduate regular students of JU, April 2009

The above table 4 shows the proportion of students who faced problems with their advisor while undertaking their senior essay research which includes 20 (8%), 13 (5%) and 10 (4%) respondents from PHF, FHSS and FBE respectively.

Therefore, according to the table students faced problem with their advisors and PHF students 20(8%) shares the dominant followed by FHSS 13 (5%) students. This implies that regardless of their fields of study students faced problems with their advisors.

10. Language Barriers

Research production and utilization needs clear communication and knowledge of English grammar, sentence construction, and well organization of raw data in to meaningful information other wise these become great problems. To this end an interview was undertaken for the above mentioned interviewees. According to the CBE coordinator of FHSS problems of language, in research are not only in communication but also processing and conducting of the whole research. That mean according to him language problems for students in research includes: unable to understand respondents' response due to language difference, even with having the same language, problem of grammar usage, sentence construction problems and problems of writing the collected data in to meaningful and organized frameworks which cumulatively takes time for advisors to correct it.

The data that was collected from students about the problem of language in the process of research presented as follows.

Most of the respondents were challenged with language problems some of them faced with misunderstanding in writing of their research and some of them also faced misunderstanding in communication while collecting their data which reduces the quality and quantity of the information. .

Table 5: Proportion of students who faced with language problems

Faculty	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Humanities and Social Sciences	31	12
Public Health	67	27
Business and Economics	125	50
Total	223	89

Source; sample undergraduate regular students, JU, April 2009

According to the result of table 5 above, 31(12%) students from FHSS 67(27%) students from PHF and 125 (50%) students from FBE were faced with language problems in collecting data and doing research.

Therefore, this table implies that language problems, such as in gathering data and writing the raw data in to meaning full information, hinder students' research undertakings.

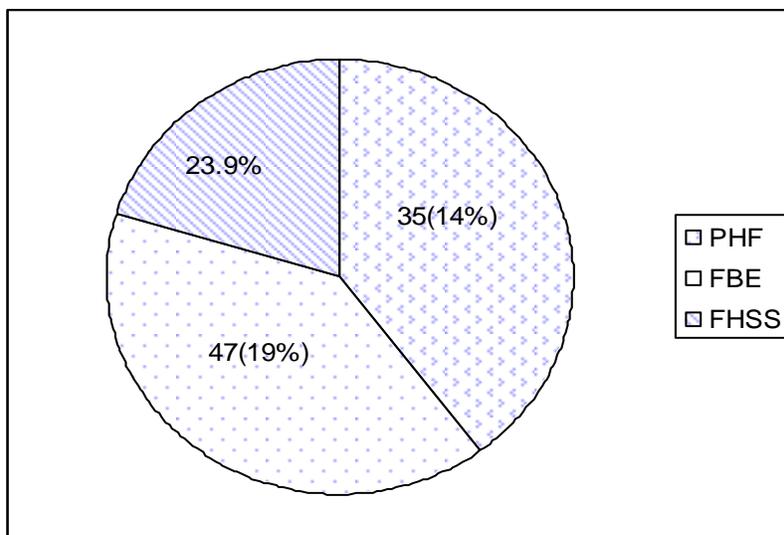
11. Respondents' Fatigue

Research with out data that collected from respondents becomes meaningless which exemplifies the importance of respondents as the back bone, essence and effectiveness of the research for students. The information about this problem was collected through in-depth- interviews from the above mentioned interviewees discussed as follows:

According to the head of research and publication office, undergraduate students faced with a lot of challenges while conducting their senior essay research from the very beginnings and this problem is one of the most hindering challenges. He also argued that the fatigue ness of respondents means they unable to responded the interviews and questionnaires, focus group discussion and other meanses of data collection, carelessly fill it, due to the repeated ness of questions to them and being hopeless. The CBE coordinator of FHSS said that, unwillingness of respondents and communities to provide the necessary information also hinders the effectiveness of students' research. As a result, those students forced to undertake the analysis with out enough information which highly affects the research quality. For the cause of respondents unwillingness ,the head of student research institute also argued that, students means of communication such as language differences and unable to ask their respondents in attractive and understandable way which is the result of the personality of researchers.

In order to check these above given problems sample under graduate regular student were asked the problem of respondents' unwillingness. From the total 250 samples 105 respondents were faced with this problem which includes, respondents lack of knowledge about the purpose research and they believe that researchers are nothing to do with their problems shortage of time, being tired and asked repeatedly.

Pie chart 3: The proportion of students who faced respondents' fatigue



Source: sample undergraduate regular students, JU April 2009

The above pie- chart 3 shows the presence of respondents fatigue for those sample students though most of the respondents 145(58%) were not faced such problems while collecting data. Those respondents who faced this problem includes 47(19%), 35(14%) and 23(9%) students from FBE, PHF and FHSS respectively.

Therefore, unwillingness of respondents while collecting data for research also affect research undertaking for researchers.

12. Problems of Secretary Services

This problem is another hindering factor which affects students' research undertakings. According to both students and those interviewees the main problems associated with these includes: behavioral challenges which means some secretaries unable to deal with students peacefully, they didn't finish the research with the stated time for submission, write the paper with improper format along with writing unrelated words ,sentences and figures, large number of students assigned a single secretary and over load of secretaries with another activities which created shortage of time for writing ,editing and printing of the paper .

Another problem related to secretaries which hinders research undertakings are the inconsistency of light power, flexible cost for research, computer viruses which destroys different data and unstable computer access and operations.

13. Other Challenges

These challenges are problems which hinders research undertaking for senior undergraduate students that are not mentioned in detail as the above problems. These challenges ranges from internal to external problems to the researchers which include: Weak supervision and assistance of students, cross-sectional nature of research, improper usage of time by students, reluctance of students to tackle challenges, lack of transport facilities, poor documentation system of research results, recurrent nature of social problems and vague research work guidelines for each faculty.

4.1.4. The Contribution of Senior Essay Research

Though senior essay research by its nature is time taking and needs an intensive under takings and has its own challenges and problems that were mentioned above, it is important and contributes a lot for the researchers, their fields of study, and the general community.

In relation to the contribution students of research the same respondents were asked and their responses are discussed below:

4.1.4.1. Result of the Interview

As the source of data for this research collected from interviewees and their responses were: the two CBE offices (FHSS, PHF) argued that undertaking research is an important activity which contributes a lot for acquiring general, theoretical, practical experiences and knowledge and also provides recognition for Jimma University through awarding nationally and internationally for quality students' research. The head of research and publication office also argued that students' research is important for the studied population through identification and solving of their problems. According to CBE coordinator of FHSS, with its history descended from CBE, students research is important to investigate and identifying sociological and psychological problems and also enables students to acquire basic research knowledge, experience, and if done properly and effectively, to create awareness for the problems identified. He also added that

research contributes a lot for students' academic excellence and policy making which promotes keeping update of one self.

The head of student research institute also argued that research undertakings by students have local and global contributions in reference to ones place where undertaking it and topics and these contributions includes it promotes staff growth, increase recognition and fund for Jimma university, it also makes advisors to be active and updated and, if properly undertaken, used for policy planning and to evaluate the status of students' research ability.

The data that was collected from sample students about the same issue also shown below:

Table 6. the responses of students about the contribution of their research

Item	Responses			
	Yes		No	
Do you think your research contributes anything for you?	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
	245	98	5	2

Source: sample undergraduate regular students of JU, April 2009

Table 6 above reveals that 245(98%) and 5(2%) students responded that research is important for them selves and not important respectively.

Those who answered yes argued that their research is important for themselves and their field of studies through widening its scope and proposing new methods and also contributes for their academic and general policy planning. Though these 245(98%) respondents were from different faculties their response were more or less common with regard to their respective fields of study. Here are their common responses. Their research is important for their personal knowledge, general community and other personalities and it also particularly.

- Enabled them to identify the major societal problems
- Enabled them to understand and apply research methods, ethics and conducting rules.
- Will used as abase line for future intervention
- Enabled them to found new and valuable information about ones problems
- Important for policy planning and monitoring activities

- Answered basic research questions and provided evidence for the stated objectives.
- Enabled students learning to think innovative and creative ways
- Enhanced the habit of working successfully with diverse group of peoples
- Used to promote and strengthen ones thinking ability
- Improve ones knowledge and skills
- Promote good communication skills and working independently
- Used as a requirement for graduation
- Enabled them to understand and know different peoples behaviors
- Used to improve ones future experience
- Enhances the quality of instructions.

4.2. Discussion

The main objective of the study was to examine the major challenges and prospects of conducting senior essay for Jimma University under graduate regular students.

Hence based up on the result found it is presented in line with the major questions raised in this study.

A total of 250 students were included in the study making the response rate 100%. Most of the respondents have age b/n 18-25 which comprised 235(94%) followed by 13(5%)

respondents having the age with the range of 26-30 with respect to the proportion of their total number most of the respondents were selected from FBE 136(55%) of which 109(44%) males and 27(15%) females. Their levels of education also 3rd year and out of 250 respondents 228(91%) were 3rd year graduate.

This was mainly the result of interview and revealed that students' research started at Jimma University as a component of community based education program to enhance students' practical knowledge towards identifying and solving community problems. It was also found that CBE with its components has been found in university, as its only philosophy, to meet societal expectation and to strengthen students' personal knowledge and experience. For example, the head of research publication office revealed that independent student research is the only philosophy of Jimma University along with CBE. But other university students of Ethiopia conduct research for their requirements of degree in group.

4.2.1. Research Course and Senior Essay Research

The result of this study found that all respondents were taking research course at different years and out 250 respondents most of them 211(84%) were taking it at 2nd year and 243(97%) respondents were also argued that research course is important in designing, preparing, organizing proposal, guides how to conduct research and providing brief blueprint for an action.

Though there is a difference in its nature in respect to the subject matter, research course directly or indirectly improves students' practical knowledge of research.

In relation to this literature also confirmed that students who takes research course knows more recent, up-to-date and new data and information and acquire practical research experience than those who did not take research course at classroom.

The major findings about the major challenges were the result of in depth interview and questionnaires from different offices and sample students respectively.

The result of these two revealed that though there are slight differences among different faculties in intensity of the challenges, generally the major ones were more or less similar

irrespective of their level of education and topic of research. These challenges according to their severity for the 3 faculties were:-

Shortage of Time

In relation to this, the result of the interview revealed that shortage of time, which is explained due to lack of its own time for research, and due to over load of students with other activities. This also found that since research is not an overnight activity shortage of time is most challenging problem.

The result of data from sample students found that this problem was the most challenging one which shows out of 250 respondents 248 (99%) were face with shortage of time.

In relation to this Derebssa (2004) argued that the teaching load is usually excessive in most cases, which leaves university staff very little time for research.

This infers that shortage of time becomes the most important problem which affects students' research under takings. This is mostly because of small proportion of time allocated for research compared to teaching.

Shortage of Finance

The result of the interview shows that though it is important for research, the problem of finance found as the most challenging problem next to shortage of time due to the factor that low budget is set for research than for teaching and also the result of increase of students' number from time to time. As a result, the budget decreased from 700 to 300 birr for each student researcher.

The result of the questionnaires from respondents found that out of 250 respondents 246(98%) students were faced with this problem which shows the severity of the problem for student researchers.

In relation to this, Delbalso and Lewis (2001) argued that researchable topic is one that is not only feasible in terms of its meaning and significance in relation to other research, but also practical in terms the resources that the researcher has access to. This implies resources particularly finance determines research under takings.

Similarly, Teweldebrhan (1987) also stated that in adequacies of funding negatively affect research work. So to reduce this problem local funding must be made available by higher learning institutions.

Language Barriers

In relation to this, the result of the interview found that irrespective of the level of education, topic and fields of study research undertaking, for students, particularly at the stage of data collection, needs clear communication and knowledge of good grammars. But students faced with these problems while doing their senior essay paper which decreased the quality of data and take time to correct it.

This infers that language problem also affected students' research performance which is the result of personal as well as external problems which includes; difficulty of dealing with respondents easily .

Out of 250 respondents 223(89%) students faced with the problem of language in communication with respondents and in writing their research.

Shortage of Reference Materials and Equipments

The result of the interview revealed that shortage of new, current and relevant literatures and shortage of computer, stationers, and internet connections also hinders students' research.

Most of the respondents faced with shortage of stationery 109(44%) followed by shortage of computers 92(37%) and relevant reference materials 89(36%).

Data Collection Problem

In relation to this, the result of the interview found that there is a difference of data collection problem among different fields of study. This also found that this problem is the problem of researcher and respondents which includes unwillingness of respondents to provide data, lack of personal experience, shortage of time and respondents fatigue.

The result of the questionnaires also revealed that out 250 respondents 220(88%) students were faced with data collection problems. In relation to these problems, 105(42%)

respondents reported unwillingness of respondents as the most important challenge for doing their research.

In relation to this problem, Delbalso and Lewis, (2001) explained that people may be unwilling to be interviewed or allow others to observe their activities; only minority people will return questionnaires. People in power and deviants tend to be secretive about their action and studies of their lives. This implies that some people are inarticulate and unable to express their feelings and perceptions clearly which directly or indirectly hinder students' research undertakings.

The result of the interview revealed that students' personal weakness in computer usage presentation, analysis and constructing meaningful interpretation of the data also hinders research undertakings.

Out of 250 respondents' 75(30%) students from 3 faculties reported that they faced with personal weakness problem in understanding the practice of research, in selecting a topic from diverse topics and analyzing of the collected data.

The result also revealed that other challenges which hinder students in research undertaking includes, plagiarism, disagree with advisors, ethical issues, publication and dissemination research findings and other problems.

Similarly, the literature also revealed that personal knowledge, competence and skills determine the quality of research which means lack of such competences and experiences highly hinders students' research performance.

About the contribution of senior essay, the result of interview and questionnaires revealed that despite the challenges associated with, doing it, research is important for student themselves and others. It was also found that effective research is important for researchers to improve their theoretical and practical knowledge, to identify community problems and also act as a point of reference for the future experiences.

The result of the questionnaires from sample students found that out of 250 respondents 245(98%) of them were reported that their research has its own contribution for

themselves and for their respective fields of study. It enabled them to improve their knowledge and skills, used as criteria for graduation, to enhance ones present and future experiences, to improve the quality of instruction and also widens the scope their respective fields of study.

Similarly, the literature proved that the production and conduction of research is very important not only for higher institution students to enhance their personal and social experiences, increase confidence contributes new knowledge to a particular issue.

Hence, this shows that, research undertaking as a philosophical commitment deals with materializing the integration of training, service and research in the university.

4.3. Conclusion

Based on the findings made I concluded the following:

Research as one of the primary objective of higher learning institutions besides teaching becomes the common course given for most of the students and done by staff members. Research as a course given for most students of Jimma University and finally students at their graduation conduct research as criteria for their BA.

Students' research mostly called senior essay was historically found as a branch of CBE which is oriented to wards identifying and solving community problems. Senior essay becomes done independently so as to make students well experienced and equipped with practical knowledge since CBTP as an important program, help them to conduct it easily.

All of the respondents take research course at different times which different from one fields of study to another due to subject matter difference and out of the total respondents most of them which comprises 243(97%) were reported that research course and senior essay are highly related and the course is very important for accomplishing senior essay starting from its name and provide information for topic selection. Taking research course irrespective of its nature used to select, delimit and prioritize one topic from

diversified topics, enabled the researchers to understand the knowledge of research conduction and finally enabled them formalize the paper in meaningful way.

Though research course is important for doing senior essay paper, it is not simple task rather it needs time, materials and personal capacity which are more or less not available and hinders its effectiveness. These major problems that students faced while doing their research. With slight difference in proportion and extent among sample faculties which is studied below:

All the students reported that they faced with different problems starting from the very beginning. Out of those students who faced shortage of time, shortage of finance, language problem data collection problems and shortage of relevant reference which comprised 248(99%), 246(98%) 223(89%) 220(88%) and 198(80%) respectively were the major challenges that hinders students research undertaking. There were other problems which generally includes institutional, cultural and logistic problems in nature.

In relation to the contribution of senior essay 245(98%) of the students indicated that it is important and contributed a lot for their personal experience and for general knowledge. They reported that their research important which improved their ability and widens the scope of their subject matter and also used for reorganization and awarding of Jimma University for quality research.

4.4. Recommendation

Based on the findings made and conclusions the researcher recommended the following in line with the objective of the study.

1. Since research course and senior essay undertaking have close relation ship, so it is better for each faculty and respective departments to strengthen the positive relation between the two through assigning well experienced man power for the course and motivate students to do research.
2. If is better for Jimma university academic commission in general and each faculties in particular to provide enough time for research course as well as its own specific time for senior essay undertaking. Since most of the students faced shortage of time for the course and senior essay.
3. To improve students research an increase in fund allocation to wards research is indispensable. That means since shortage of finance hinders doing effective research, so it is better to increase the level of current fund especially local funding have to be available.
4. The students have to improve their language in communication and writing with the help of respective faculties since this problem hinders students' research undertaking.
5. Increase of student number from time to time affect the research environment, so it is better for respective faculties to increase skilled man for research course and senior essay and staff research.

6. Shortage of reference materials also a decisive factors and hinders students research undertakings. As a result, it is advisable for some fields of study to reduce such problems through buying and publication of relevant, new and current materials.
7. It is better for respective advisors to arrange consolation hours, so as to help students in providing proper and family advice. Since on this study the students indicate that some advisors have not arrange consolation hours and also better for advisors to follow up their advisees research to reduce plagiarism.
8. It is better for some students to improve their weakness in undertaking research through reading asking and acquiring long term experiences.
9. The university in general in each faculty along with its respective departments has to reduce the above identified problems for doing effective and practical students and staff research.

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APPENDIX A

JIMMA UNIVERSITY

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK**

Questionnaires for JU Undergraduate Regular Students

Objective: The objective of this questionnaire is to collect relevant data that could serve to assess the major challenges and prospects of conducting senior essay research for JU senior undergraduate regular students. These questionnaires are both open and close ended which will be distributed to the sample students in the class room when the teacher is willing to allow them to complete it in the class room and other appropriate pleas.

For this research, you are kindly requested to feel free in giving your own answer to the following questions.

Thank you in advance for honest and communicable responds!

Instruction: Put “✓” Mark in the box in front of the options and fill the blank spaces accordingly. Don’t write your name

Part I. Socio-demographic Characteristics

1.1. Age :

18-25

26-30

31-36

above 36

1.2. Sex:

Male

Female

1.3. Faculty:

Business and economics

Humanities and social sciences

Public health

1.3.1. Department _____

1.4. Level of education

3rd

5th

4th

6th

Part III. Questions related to the major challenges/problems/of conducting research

Did you face any problem while conducting your research from the very beginning?

Yes

No

If your answer is “Yes” for 3.1. above, answer the following questions

What are the main problems you encountered while conducting research?

- a) Internal problems b) External problems c) both

If your answer fro 3.2.1. above is “a”, what are the internal challenges /problems/? Please specify _____

If your answer for 3.2.1. is “b” what are the external problems?

- Absence of reference material financial problems
Disagree with advisor Data collection problems
If others, specify _____

Which factors mostly prohibit the effectiveness of your research undertaking?

- a) Internal factors specify the most challenging ones _____

- b) External factors specify the most challenging ones _____

- c) Both

To what extent your get proper and timely advise from your advisor?

- Satisfactory some what satisfactory unsatisfactory

Have you faced any problem while collecting your data? Yes No

If your answer is “Yes” for 3.2.6 above, mention these problems?

1.2.8. Have you faced any problem while collecting your data? Yes No

1.2.9. If your answer is “Yes” for 3.2.8 above what are the problems?

- Language barrio shortage of time Lack of willingness pf students

1.2.10. Do people cooperate in providing the research data when requested?

- Yes No

1.2.11. If your answer is “No” for 3.2.10 above, what do you think their main reasons?

Please, specify _____

Part IV. Questions related to the contribution of senior essay research

Do you think that your research has any contribution for you and your fields of study?

Yes

No

If you answer is “Yes” for 4.1 above, what is its contribution?

For improving experience

for problem identification

For improving ones knowledge and skill

for discovery

Others, specify _____

What is the contribution of your research for your field of study please specify

Do you think that your advisor contributes any thing for your research?

Yes

No

If your answer is “Yes” for 4.5 above what is the contribution of your advisor for conducting your research? Please specify _____
