

Generating ideas and formulating research topics: an investigation on sources and constraints.

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Abstract

This paper reports the findings of a small scale research which investigates how researchers generate ideas to formulate their research topics for post graduate dissertations and the constraints they undergo in this process. Due to various misconceptions and restrictions, researchers usually face challenges in identifying potential topics for their research. Twenty one researchers in various disciplines of the faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna including the author, who are involved in post graduate research (both M.phil and Ph.D) were selected as samples for this study. The information about the sources for generating ideas and the constraints they underwent when formulating their research topics were elicited through a questionnaire and informal discussions and their responses were analyzed qualitatively in order to list out the number of idea generating sources as well as the constraints faced by the researchers. Thus this study provides insights into the process of generating ideas and formulating research topics at the post graduate level.