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## Heterogeneous or Homogeneous Groups; Student Perspective on the Role of Gender in Teamwork Related to Higher Education

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Teamwork has become a popular learning and evaluating approach employed by educators at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. A number of studies revealed that the gender composition of teamwork makes the task effective and productive. The problem of the present research springs from the lack of collaborative skills and confidence in undergraduates when working in mixed-gender groups during the sessions of learning English as a Second Language. Thus, the objective of the study is to examine the students' perception of the advantages and disadvantages that students experience when they are grouped into homogenous and heterogeneous gender groups in collaborative assignments while investigating their preferred method of gender grouping. Hence, a random sample of 146 first-year undergraduates; 39 males and 107 females who study at the Faculty of Management and Finance, the University of Ruhuna participated in the study. A mixed method was employed and the data was collected through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. According to the findings, there are several advantages and disadvantages of homogeneous and heterogeneous gender groups. Furthermore, 97.3% of participants prefer heterogeneous gender grouping in collaborative assignments because of the diversity of personalities and productivity associated. In conclusion, fostering a cooperative learning environment with gender-diverse grouping is effective and productive for collaborative assignments in higher education.

**Key words:** *Collaborative, Assignments, Gender, Homogenous, Heterogeneous*