

Preliminary analysis on Diploma Students' Satisfaction in Online Learning during the COVID- 19 pandemic: Sri Lanka Library Association

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Abstract

This study aims to measure the satisfaction, successfulness and challenges faced by the Diploma students of Sri Lanka Library Association during the pandemic period. The survey was conducted using Google forms. Approximately 225 questionnaires were sent to the students via WhatsApp, and 194 (88.5%) responses were received. SPSS software use for the data analysis. The results showed that more than 50% of the students agreed to online education during the lockdown. Students indicated that online mode is secure their health (98%) during this lockdown than having face-to-face classes. The study indicated that 97(49.9%) students were highly satisfied with online teaching, and 36.5% were neutral. The majority of students (78.9%) used smart phones however, the usage of desktops, laptops, and tablets was not highly utilized (19%) for e-learning. Alternatpively, 41.8% tried to find notes through the web page and whatsApp groups, while 23.7% of students sought help from friends to recover the lessons. The challenges reported included not being able to clearly hear the lecture 88 (45.4%), expensive equipment 85(43.8%), poor internet connection 84(43.3%), difficulty in timely logging on 84(43.3%), and feeling of isolation while attending class 82(42.3%). It is recommended to enhance the practical effectiveness of the online course.

Keywords: *Online education, Diploma students, Students satisfaction, Sri Lanka Library Association, E-learning*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact across the globe, affecting individuals and communities everywhere. Consequently, online teaching has emerged as the sole viable solution for educational institutions to continue their education programs in the pandemic situation. This approach is also known by alternative terms such as e-learning, blended learning, online education, web-based education, and web-based instruction (Bao, 2020; Urme & Barua, 2023). The transformation from conventional to online learning and teaching is a significant challenge for both students and lecturers of Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA) requiring adaptation to novel educational and teaching models during the exceptional time of the pandemic. The substantial effort has been made to create the effective online teaching with affordability and which to make satisfactory for the SLLA students to grasp the lessons. As mentioned Haththotuwa & Rupasinghe, (2021), Zoom has become a popular teaching platform for delivering online lectures in Sri Lankan educational institutes and universities. However, the SLLA education program was streamlined to suit the online environment by subscribed the ZOOM and the awareness programs were conducted with students and lecturers. Although, the SLLA has conducted face-to-face and distance education programs the e-learning has become the only solution for this global pandemic, even with the challenges posed to both educators and students.

Problem Statement

Most of the higher education institutes and universities have conducted surveys to measure the perceptions on the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the online platform. However, despite the Sri Lanka Library

Association's transition to online education from conventional teaching learning methods, no research has thus far been undertaken to assess the success of online learning. Therefore, this study was carried out to measure the success, satisfaction and challenges of students faced by students enrolled in the Diploma course at SLLA during the academic year of 2021/2022.

Objectives

In this environment the following objectives has been set for the study.

- To investigate the students' success with various mode of teaching methods
- To measure the level of satisfaction of having online education
- To identify the difficulties encountered by students during online education.

Materials and Methods

The target population of this study comprised active students who enrolled to pursue the Diploma (1 Year) courses at the SLLA. They constituted the inaugural batch to experience the complete lecturer series via zoom. Data were collected through a Google Form survey questionnaire and prepared it to match the local research setting and distributed through whatsapp groups. The questionnaire consists of demographic questions in the first part and students' perceptions on Zoom in the second part. The third part is consisted satisfaction of online classes and through the final section it was gathered the challenges faced by the students in having online education by using five-point Likert Salce. Out of a total of 219 fresh students, 194 students were responded,

resulting in a response rate of 88.5%. Data were analysed by using SPSS software.

Significant of the Study

The results of the study contribute to enrich the blended approach in the Diploma programme. Furthermore, it aids to identifying the challenges related to online teaching and learning within course, and the practical difficulties, if any to mitigate such problems for future teaching and learning of the courses at SLLA. During coronavirus-19, as no research was published on SLLA context, this study holds additional value in terms of originality.

Results and Discussion

Majority of the survey participants were females 171(88.3%); and the male was around 23 (11.7%). Nearly 30% comprised 26 - 30 age range. Most of the students were from Arts stream 145 (74.7%) followed by commerce stream 34 (17.5%) were applied for the Diploma course. Out of the study sample, only 112(57.7%) students were employed in various places. Regarding the successfulness of the course, more than 50% of the students were agreed to have online education during this lockdown. In addition, students ensured that the online mode is securing their health (98%) during this pandemic lockdown rather than having face-to-face classes. Moreover, the study indicated that 97(49.9%) students were highly satisfied with online teaching and 36.5 were neutral. Nafreez et al., (2020) indicated that the study carried out at Southeastern University revealed that more than 50% of the students were happy with online education during the lockdown. The majority of students (78.9%) have used smart phones however, the other accessories

like desktops, laptops, and tabs are not much utilized (19%) for online learning. As an alternative method, 41.8% tried their best to find notes through the web page and WhatsApp group, 23.7% of students are seeking the help from friends to recover the lesion. The challenges were reported as not clearly hear the lecture 88 (45.4%), more expensive equipment 85 (43.8%), poor internet connection 84(43.3%), cannot timely log on 84 (43.3%), and isolation or the loneliness 82(42.3%) were the problem faced by students.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is recommended that more interaction need to be maintained considering the levels of students' dissatisfaction on online learning. As the findings showed that there have been many barriers towards online learning, redesigning online courses with the application of constructive alignment would be recommended to enhance the practical effectiveness of the same.

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