
A Survey on Identifying the Challenges of Online Learning for Students in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ruhuna

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Abstract

The COVID19 pandemic has motivated the education system to find alternatives to the traditional teaching-learning methods. As a result, online teaching and learning have been used on an unprecedented scale. The objectives of this study were to examine the effectiveness of online learning activities for Humanities and Social Sciences undergraduates in University of Ruhuna and identify the challenges that lay ahead. Data from a questionnaire given to all students in the 1000 and 2000 levels who came from 19 districts were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The research found that signal strength with the inadequate internet facilities, bad weather conditions, and power cuts in the areas are affecting online learning. 76% stay at home, and 16% stay outside to get a better internet connection to their devices. Also, it was identified that 95.8% of them had not taken any online classes earlier. Regarding internet usage, it was found that 90% use mobile devices while 21% use computers and 80% use mobile data connection, while 84% use prepaid connections. Moreover, it was identified that students prefer a combination of traditional lectures and online lectures. Also, they like live classes rather than the recorded lectures because of the opportunity given to ask questions, getting to answer polls and breakout room activities. However, online learning is faced with challenges such as the equality and accessibility of technology, improved performance, delivery value and affordability, literacy, and self-discipline requirements. It is necessary to solve minimum social interaction, adequate teacher training and motivation to improve sustainability.

Keywords: Covid 19, ICT, Online education, Online learning, University education

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