

Attitude of Sri Lankan Performing Arts Undergraduates toward Their University Learning Management System: Implications for Upgrading the System and Its Use for English Language Development

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Abstract

The use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) in educational institutions has become imperative since the unprecedented onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. A well-designed learning management system is known to enrich instruction, and its acceptance by learners is crucial for it to be accepted as a successful learning tool. This study was conducted; firstly, to investigate a group of students' attitude toward the use of their university LMS in terms of its perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU) and their acknowledgement of its use in general. Secondly, this research attempted to discover the target population's perceptions of learning English as a Second Language (ESL) through this system. Using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as its basis for investigation, the study employed the case study method to consider the attitudes of a group of performing arts undergraduates with regard to their use of the university LMS for pedagogical intent. Through purposive sampling, 158 volunteer student respondents completed an online questionnaire that was designed to gather qualitative data to measure learners' perspectives in terms of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user satisfaction. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics whereby mean scores and standard deviations were calculated. The study findings demonstrate that the respondents had a highly positive attitude regarding the benefits that this system has to offer for learning purposes. Moreover, it became evident that the study participants were proficient users of the University's Learning Management System which was considered as user-friendly, easy to navigate, visually appealing and efficient. Regarding the use of the LMS for developing English as a Second Language, the target group expressed significantly high levels of satisfaction in terms of the usefulness of the learning content shared through the system. They also seem to appreciate the supplementary ESL material shared and the access to a custom-designed grammar course embedded into the system. Based on the study findings, it can be recommended that the university continues using its LMS even after the fully online teaching/learning period is over since, based on the results of this study, its capacity to promote autonomous learning and the flexibility it offers in delivering content through multimode methods appear to indicate acceptance of it as a fully-fledged pedagogical tool.

Keywords: *Learner-attitude, e-Learning, learning management system, University of the visual and performing arts*

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