

How Interaction Affects Determining the Students' Satisfaction in Online Education: A Study on a Sri Lankan State University

T. Yogadarshani^{1,*} and D.M.M.I. Dissanayake²

^{1, 2} Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihintale, Sri Lanka

*Corresponding author: yogadharshinithangaraj@gmail.com

Abstract

Most of the higher educational institutes in Sri Lanka are now in a transition period moving from traditional face to face teaching to online teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. This unexpected move changed the students' satisfaction with the new learning environment since students are engaging in educational activities online from their homes. Since, interaction plays a crucial role in online teaching and learning, identifying student satisfaction is vital to ensure the effectiveness and the success of the new paradigm. Accordingly, the main objective of this study was to identify how interaction affects determining the students' satisfaction in online education. The research context was limited only to the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka and 100 students participated in the study. Descriptive statistics revealed that the existing level of student satisfaction in online education is at an average level due to the lack of technological infrastructure facilities and student anxiety with the new context. Hence, initiating technology awareness programs in order to increase the students' confidence is highly recommended. In addition to that, both student-teacher interaction and student-student interaction were found to be significant and stronger contributors to student satisfaction than student-content interaction. The study suggests that designing types of activities with facilitating active collaboration between teacher and students and among students, allow group work enabling discussions and sharing opinions, provide and receive immediate feedback, provide an authentic learning experience, and ensure the active presence of teacher will improve the interaction and satisfaction of the students.

Keywords: Interaction, learning environment, online education, student satisfaction