



Impact of Technology on Training and Development in The Covid-19 Era: A Study of the Sri Lankan Administrative Service

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the delivery of training in the Sri Lankan Administrative Service, which relied on the traditional face-to-face method of training delivery. Under the Government Training and Development Policy, the use of e-learning is identified as an innovative approach to the delivery of training, and thus, its implementation accelerated with the outbreak of COVID-19. Training has become more critical given the growing complexities of running public organizations coupled with the rapid change in the environment in which these organizations operate. However, the effectiveness of the use of e-learning during the COVID-19 era in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service has not yet been examined. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the benefits and challenges associated with the adoption of e-learning in the Sri Lanka Administrative Service during COVID-19. Relying on the qualitative research approach, this research utilizes primary administrative data and interviews of fifty Sri Lanka Administrative Service officers who attended training from 2018 to 2021 for the analysis. The findings show that e-learning has positively influenced training and development through expanded access, convenient and flexible access to training, flexibility in the budget, increased adherence to COVID-19 protocols, and personal health and safety. The effectiveness of e-learning is also identified by perceived satisfaction and perceived learning/skills development. However, two key challenges to the delivery of the training, which are poor information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and increased distractions were also identified.

Keywords: E-learning, ICT, Training and development, Sri Lanka Administrative service, COVID-19

