FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF ONLINE LEARNING AT UTMSPACE

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a massive disruption in the way traditional higher education institutions deliver their courses. Unlike transitions from face-to-face teaching to online, changes in emergency remote teaching –a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate remote delivery mode due to crisis circumstances– happen suddenly and in an unplanned way. Considering this, higher education institution, as an organisation, must be able to sustain its operations by employing good operational practises in order to survive the uncertainties thrown out by this pandemic. Due to the online learning implementation, many students during the COVID-19 period had no choice but to deal with advanced online information and communication technologies (ICTs) to complete their learning activities and follow up with their instructors in a safe manner in order to maintain social distance. Higher education institutions must also ensure that any impact on the customers must mitigated, one of the main outcome would be ensure the academic performance of the students is consistence regardless operational circumstances. Regardless of the current challenges, it is critical to reflect on the impacts of COVID-19 on students' learning performance using the framework of contributing factors. This study uses the SWOT approach to analyze the issues at UTMSPACE and several situations were found that related to its current conditions. The objectives of the study were to elaborate further on the impacts of contributing factors towards student's academic performance in online learning at UTMSPACE. The identified factors for this study based on provided data by UTMSPACE are Age, Gender, Nationality, Location, Internet Access and Internet Quality Bandwidth. This study analyzes using quantitative data from student survey conducted by UTMSPACE including academic records across all programmes and showing the trends of academic results of students during online learning. The results of this case study show that student's age tend to be significantly related to the student's academic performance during online learning while other factors such as student's gender, nationality, location, internet access and internet quality bandwidth does not show any effect instead. The study further explores possible explanations for the results of the analysis, considering organizational, its implementation in online learning and student academic performance related aspects.

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