EFFECT OF DISTANCE LEARNING ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE WESTERN PROVINCE IN SRI LANKA

by

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ABSTRACT

In light of recent global events like the COVID-19 pandemic, distance learning has become increasingly common in education. The term "distance learning," which can also be referred to as "remote learning" or "online education," refers to a method of education in which instruction is delivered via digital platforms like video conferencing, online learning management systems, and virtual classrooms instead of in person between students and instructors. The purpose of this research is to investigate how secondary-level school students in Sri Lanka's Western Province are affected by distance learning. The Western Province, the country's most populous and urbanized region, provides a unique setting for investigating the effects of distance learning on students. The main objective of this research is to investigate the particular implications and difficulties that school students in the Western Province face during their transition to distance learning by focusing on this region. A conceptual framework was designed to find out how the Academic performance of the students in the Western Province has been affected by the transition to distance learning by the influence of critical success factors (CFS) such as Resource availability, Socio-Economic Status, Mental Health and Enhance Effectiveness. A conceptual framework for distance learning implementation that integrates the CFS and the Demographic variables of the personnel involved in the teaching and learning process. The Methodology used for this research is the mixed method which is a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis and this was illustrated by the research Onion model. Thematic analysis is adapted for comprehensive interpretation for the qualitative analysis whilst quantitative data analysis is done via Correlation, Multiple Regression, ANOVA testing, and analysis of Coefficients. Data were collected using a questionnaire from the students. From this research, it was evident that initially, students were having problems with distance learning but with time they have adjusted to this and are happy with blended learning, which combines traditional and online teaching approaches for improving student performance.

Keywords: *Distance Learning, Academic Performance, Secondary School Students, Online Learning, E-learning*