

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The English Unit of Dehiovita Education Zone has been striving hard to improve English language skills of its students. The Zone is situated in Sabaragamuwa Province and has the biggest number of schools in the country. The LMS: enenapiyasa introduced by Sabaragamuwa Provincial Department of Education indeed facilitated students and teachers to face the educational issues especially created by globally affected COVID 19 pandemic in 2020. In this context, all English Units of the seven Education Zones in the Province guided by the Provincial English Unit introduced Online |General English Course based on General English syllabus to the LMS providing different interactive and time saving learning opportunities to A/L students. Although, 50% student participation out of the total number of registered students in schools in Dehiovita Zone was expected, only 20% student continuous participation had been recorded during first eight months after launching this Course. Thus, increasing student participation rate of the Online General English Course from 20% to 50% was focused on this study.

SWOT analysis based on the English Unit of Dehiovita Education Zone indeed contributed a lot to recognize its strengths, weaknesses, threats and also plenty of opportunities to improve certain avenues in relation to the Online GE Course. Quite low student participation: 20% in the Online GE Course was identified as the key problem while issues regarding the support provided by the school management teams and IT Units, issues on the awareness of teachers and students and also the monitoring and supervision regarding the Course were recognized. The root causes for those issues could be identified through the cause and effect analysis. Inadequate awareness, instructions and guidelines on the Course towards the management teams and IT Units of schools, unavailability of proper monitoring and supervision system were recognized as the root causes. Identifying and implementing appropriate measures would be definitely essential to improve the student continuous participation of the Online GE Course to gain its maximum benefit.

The reviewed literature disclosed many insights to the areas related to the key problem: student participation and to the sub components: implementation process, training and development and monitoring and supervision on the Online GE Course. Student characteristics and external factors in relation towards students' continuous participation in a learning context could be studied through the relevant articles. The factors affect the quality implementation process of a project such as fostering supportive organization culture, improving apt managerial skills, enhancing technical assistance etc. were identified. A variety of training and development

modes has been suggested in improving student involvement in learning in the scholarly articles reviewed. The need of a comprehensive, well managed monitoring and supervision mechanism has been suggested for a successful continuation especially on an online programme through the articles referred. Techniques that could be utilized for building up solutions for the identified root causes based on the reviewed literature were studied as well.

The overall project objective: increasing the continuous student participation rate of the Online GE Course and the objectives of the project sub components: decreasing the number of schools that do not get the expected support from the school management teams and IT Units, increasing the number of teachers who facilitate the student participation, creating a system to monitor and supervise student participation in the Online GE Course were stated. The current situation of each sub component of the project was elaborated as well. The solutions to address the identified root causes and to achieve the set objectives based on different techniques were built up. The roles required and their responsibilities to carry out the proposed solutions effectively were explained and benefit cost analysis was done to evaluate feasibility of the proposed solutions. The outputs and outcomes expected by the solutions of the overall project and the sub components of the project were disclosed as well.

A comprehensive analysis of this study was done towards the end of the report of this project. The effort of linking the reviewed literature and the proposed solutions could be evidenced and this was indeed the link between the theoretical references done in Chapter 3.2 and the suggested solutions in Chapter 4.3. Thus, how the theory matched with the solutions in the real learning context was comprehensively paid attention. Short term and mid-term recommendations were done highlighting timelines for the proposed solutions and respective responsibilities and roles required to perform those responsibilities effectively to achieve the objectives of each component and the overall project.