

THE USE OF LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC: PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a significant toll on the traditional campus-based teaching methods of higher education institutions around the globe, relentlessly putting academic standards and decades-old procedures to the test while revealing an unprecedented level of technological vulnerability within higher education institutions. This paper aims to assess whether students within an international program in Thailand are satisfied with the way their university has mastered the transition from on-campus teaching to online learning through the use of Canvas, a learning management system, in recent months. This study centers on (1) what features students use in a learning management system to engage with their peers and instructors, (2) the efficiency of the distribution of course content and submission of assignments in a virtual format, and (3) student perceptions of quality of teaching through the use of Canvas. Data were collected through (1) surveys, where standard tools available in the learning management systems were evaluated, (2) semi-structured interviews, giving students the opportunity to share their experiences and needs, and (3) Canvas statistics recording the amount of time spent on assignments, scores achieved, and the overall amount of time students spent actively utilizing their learning management system. The findings from the study suggest that the implementation of Canvas was a great idea, but it was poorly executed by the university. The absence of a streamlined approach among the instructors led to confusion among students and thus discouragement from using Canvas to its fullest potential. Another interesting finding among Southeast Asian students who are not native English speakers is their fear of actively participating during online sessions, as they do not feel comfortable being recorded due to their perceived lower English proficiency. Finally, the study suggests that internet connectivity within lecture halls, dormitories, and other public spaces on the campus is completely inadequate for ensuring a seamless learning experience.

Keywords: Learning management system, higher educational institutions, Thailand, International students, quality of teaching