

The factors that affect the adoption of online learning in South Africa

Covid-19 highlighted the necessity for online learning to save the 2020 academic year. Universities responded to the call by the Department of Higher Education and Trade and Council of Higher Education (CHE) to implement online learning based on the strategies these institutions developed to accommodate each institution's unique challenges. Although South African universities rose to the challenge and reported a positive pass rate at the end of the 2020 academic year. There are challenges that Higher Education Institutions should understand to successfully implement online learning in the future. The objectives of the study are as follows; to understand the challenges to the adoption of online learning in South Africa, the impact of online learning, and the effectiveness of online learning in South Africa. This work in progress study will be conducted using a systematic literature review, whereby literature search was completed using backward- and forward snowballing. The classification and categorisation will be conducted to categorise technology adoption factors. An inclusion/exclusion criterion will be used to critically choose studies relevant to the study, focusing on journal papers, conference proceedings published between 2016 and 2020, and publicly available information such as reports and policies. Preliminary results indicate developing countries, such as South Africa, experience challenges in the adoption of online learning due to existing social inequalities, a lack of conducive spaces to study and technology resources. Challenges are compounded by the lack of skills by students and staff and the cost of data. Retaining students in online learning has been proven to be challenging for various reasons such as financial constraints, social constraints, and lack of motivation. This research may aid institutions in better preparing staff and students for online learning in the future.

Keywords: online learning adoption, exclusion, digital divide, online learning effectiveness