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Attitudes towards the Use of Web 2.0 Tools for Learning ESL: A Case Study Conducted at the Advanced Technological Institute, Gampaha

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With the advancement of the web technologies, almost all the fields get more benefits than previously and education is one of most benefited sectors. There is a growing interest in online classroom settings in learning second languages. There are a number of research studies that have used empirical and exploratory methods to assess and evaluate the actual impact of using Web 2.0 tools in learning English as second language, because Web 2.0 tools have shifted language learners from passive recipients into active contributors. Based on this rationale, the present study aims at exploring attitudes toward the use of Web 2.0 tools for leaning English as a second language. However, the question arises as to whether alternative higher education sector students have similar Web 2.0 experiences in ESL as their higher education sector peers. In this study, the core objective is to evaluate attitudes towards using Web 2.0 tools in Leaning English as a Second Language in the higher Education sector of Sri Lanka. Accordingly, 260 students from Advanced Technological Institute (ATI), Gampaha were selected as the sample. Framework of this study is based on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The study made use of a mixed method approach and the participants' attitudes were elicited through the use of a questionnaire which included open-ended questions to collect qualitative data and structured questions which ensured the collection of quantitative data. Responses given to open-ended questions were analyzed through coding the statements while the responses to structured questions were analyzed by calculating the frequencies. The results showed that all the respondents rated the items positively within all six dimensions of TAM. Web 2.0 tools had significant correlations to TAM dimensions and the majority of students have positive attitudes regarding the use of an interactive web environment and the learning benefits that ensued.

Key words: Alternative Higher Education Sector, Attitudes, ESL, TAM, Web 2.0 Tools