

# **Perceptions Towards Online Education of Undergraduates who have not Received an Onsite Learning Experience; A Survey Based on The Experience of First Year Undergraduates of Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa**

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The outbreak of COVID-19 which resulted in the temporary closure of educational institutes has abruptly transformed the education landscape in Sri Lanka. The traditional classroom of one-to-one teaching interaction saw a radical shift with the implementation of distance learning through online education. With the continuation of online instruction, it is critical to examine the undergraduates' perception regarding online education adopted at the university level. The study focuses on the perception of those who have not received an onsite learning experience. Semi structured interviews and online questionnaires were used to collect data and the study population consisted of first year undergraduates of Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa in Sri Lanka who are alien to onsite learning as well. It is evident that most of the participants prefer onsite learning, yet they have progressively accepted online education as the only alternative available during this period. Furthermore, the cost effectiveness, incorporation of multimedia, flexibility of lecture hours and other incentives have supported this attitude. The responses shed light to the fact that the respondents are satisfied with the way in which the university as well as they have adopted to this newly introduced system. Moreover, the findings of the survey demonstrates that the students have accepted this as “a crisis management system” followed by the university. The mixed attitude towards continuation of online education would facilitate the authorities in the progress of online learning in an upgraded version.

**Keywords:** Online Education, COVID-19, undergraduate perception, “crisis management system”