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## ACCEPTABILITY AND CHALLENGES OF ONLINE ASSESSMENT AT ZCAS UNIVERSITY DURING THE COVID-19 ERA

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### ABSTRACT

*The aim of this study was to evaluate the acceptability of online examinations to students at ZCAS University. The emergence of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) forced the education system world-wide to adopt online education immediately. An online survey was conducted amongst the students at ZCAS University in Lusaka, Zambia after the June 2020 online examination session. A random sample of 218 students participated in the online survey. Firstly, a descriptive statistical analysis of the responses was conducted in which frequencies were tabulated to give details of age, sex, programme level and mode of study of the respondents. Thereafter, cross tabulations which produced chi-square value testing for significance were run. The main findings of the study were that mode of study and programme level had significant influence on acceptability of online assessments. Students who were on the distance study mode and those that were doing postgraduate programmes had better experience of online assessment than the others. Gender and age had no significant influence on acceptability of online assessment. With respect to the challenges associated with online assessment, the study found that candidates' typing speed, electricity load shedding, internet speed and the cost of data bundles had adverse impact on acceptability of online assessment. The respondents also indicated that unavailability of the platform and internet access rarely affected their experience of online assessment, while bad electronic gadget was never a factor. The majority of the respondents were however satisfied with their experience of online assessment.*

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**KEYWORDS:** COVID-19, Higher education, Lockdown, Online assessment, ZCAS University.

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