

The impact of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)-Moodle on students' learning experience at University of Wales Trinity Saint David London Campus .

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ABSTRACT

As a result of the global pandemic generated by COVID-19, universities have adopted a digital approach to teaching. Virtual learning environments (VLEs) are now widely used in academic settings to provide learning activities and They are known for their abilities in student tracking and online assessment management. The purpose of this report is to find out how University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) students feel about the pedagogical model used in the virtual learning environment via Moodle. This report details the results of an online survey of 21 students at UWTSD about their use of virtual learning environments (VLEs). The survey looked into the reported impact of using the university's VLE (Moodle) on learning, and it was determined by 10 research questions: whether using a VLE has a positive impact on student achievement; whether using a VLE has a negative impact on student achievement; whether using a VLE helps develop independent learning; and whether using a VLE increases students' interaction with their lecturer and classmates. The use of Moodle classroom activities increased motivation to learn, according to statistically significant findings reported by student participants.

KEYWORD -Virtual learning environments; student perspective , impact ; students interaction; self-directed learning

Introduction to VLE

A Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is a system for delivering learning materials to students via the web. These systems include assessment, student tracking, collaboration and communication tools. (GOODALL and Press, 2021). They are accessible both on and off campus, which means they can help students learn outside of the classroom setting 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This allows institutions to teach not only traditional full-time students, but also those who are unable to visit the campus on a regular basis due to geographic or time constraints, such as those enrolled in distance learning courses, attending evening classes, or working part-time. Moodle is VLE software that supports and facilitates online learning and teaching. Moodle allows students to log in to their own online account to access teaching materials, obtain feedback, contact tutors, upload work, view exam results, and much more . Moodle is the most popular and trusted learning system available today, with over 70 million users worldwide (What is Moodle? - Online Learning College, 2021) It is used by many top UK universities including University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

General positive impacts of VLEs

The first advantage of virtual classroom learning is that shy students often find it easier to participate in virtual classes. It means they aren't nervous about raising their hands in front of other students in a real classroom. Virtual classrooms are available to any student who has access to a computer and a reliable internet connection.

Furthermore, students' course materials can be accessed at any time via the Internet, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. There is no need for costly travel (or even accommodation). Virtual classrooms not only save money on travel, but they also reduce the carbon footprint linked with gas and fuel. Many virtual lessons and classrooms are frequently far less expensive than traditional establishments such as a university. In contrast to traditional face to face classrooms, where lecturers take work home to mark it, most online learning classrooms provide immediate feedback.

General negative impacts of VLEs

Online learning necessitates that students have access to high-speed internet at home, which can be difficult if it is not available. A student's wifi may go down unexpectedly, preventing them from submitting an assignment on time, or it may prevent them from attending class and missing instruction. This has a significant negative impact on the student's education and grades. Furthermore, students have difficulty comprehending concepts taught in online school because they have more distractions that divert their attention away from their education. Due to the obvious lack of social interaction, online school can lead to social isolation among students. Furthermore, online learning can prevent students from developing necessary communication skills.

Methods

This study was performed from July to August 2021. Study participants were students at University of Wales Trinity Saint David. The online questionnaire was given during the first semester. They were strongly encouraged to fill out the questionnaire but their participation remained voluntary. The name and other personal information of the study participants were protected.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed to assess the student's perception of the VLE learning method. The questionnaire is form by ten research questions regarding VLE. The response options of the questionnaire items represent 5 Likert-type scales (0 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree), dichotomous questions that ask for a Yes/No and one ordinal question.

RESULTS

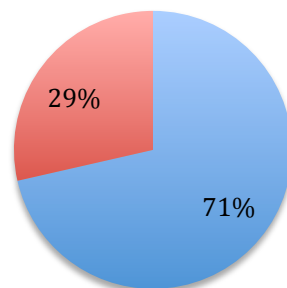
Question number 1: Have you ever used Moodle before attending university?

Table -1

Answered:21	Percentage
Yes-6	28.57%
No-15	71.43%

Results

■ NO ■ YES



As seen in Table 1 in terms of experience, most of the respondents have no previous experience in using Moodle platform-71%.

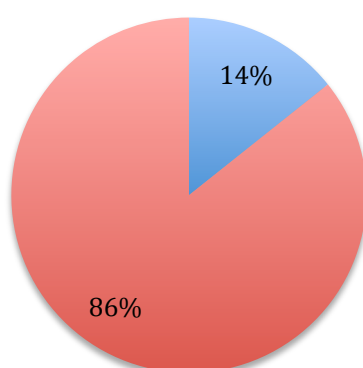
Question number 2:It is difficult for you to use Moodle?

Table number 2

Answered:21	Percentage
Yes -3	14.29%
No-18	85.71%

Results

■ Yes ■ No



The survey showed that students does not find Moodle difficult to use. A user-friendly interface with self-descriptive navigation features is essential for an VLE, and a Moodle-based Platform provides just that.

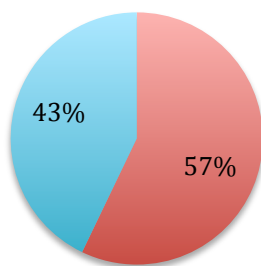
Question number 3:What is your favourite feature on Moodle?

Table number 3

Answerd-21	Percentage
Lecture notes and hand-outs	0%
PowerPoint presentations-12	57.14%
Videos-o	0%
Podcasts-0	0%
Interactive learning materials-9	42.86%
Discussion forums-o	0%

Group choice-0	0%
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Results



Interactive features

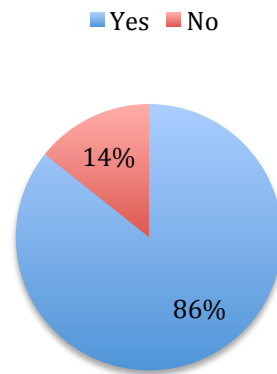
The 'PowerPoint presentation' was selected favourite feature by a high proportion of students (57.14%). According to survey results Interactive learning materials are the favourite feature of 42.86 % of students.

Question number 4: Does Moodle help you revise things you learnt in lessons?

Table number 4

Answered:21	Percentage
Yes-18	85.71%
No-3	14.29%

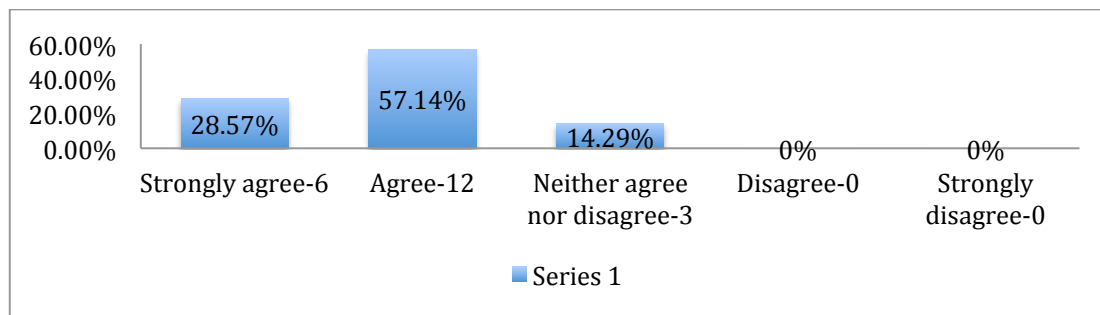
Results



Question number 5: In comparison to traditional face-to-face class meetings, my attention to class tasks was significantly greater during Moodle sessions.

Table number 5

Answered:21	Percentage
Strongly agree-6	28.57%
Agree-12	57.14%
Neither agree nor disagree-3	14.29%
Disagree-0	0%
Strongly disagree-0	0%



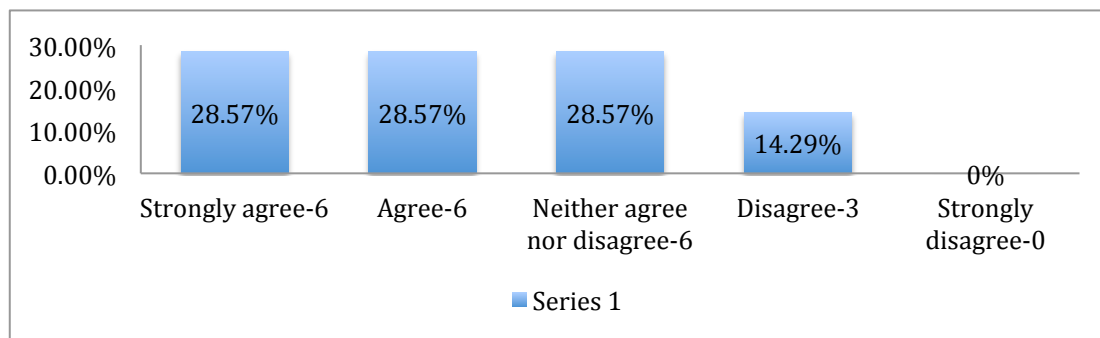
According to the survey responses, studying online with Moodle can lead to better class performance because approximately 86 % of students agreed that they are more concentrated during online classes compared to traditional face-to-face classes. Classroom instruction has traditionally been known to be teacher-centred and requires passive learning on the part of the student, whereas online instruction is commonly student-centred and requires active learning. In student-centred, or active learning, the students usually determine classroom dynamics as they independently analyse the information, construct questions, and ask the instructor for clarification. In this scenario, the teacher, not the student, is listening, formulating, and responding (Salcedo, 2010).

Question number 6: In comparison to traditional face-to-face class meetings, it is easier to participate in group activities during Moodle sessions.

Table number 6

Answered:21	Percentage
Strongly agree-6	28.57%
Agree-6	28.57%

Neither agree nor disagree-6	28.57%
Disagree-3	14.29%
Strongly disagree-0	0%

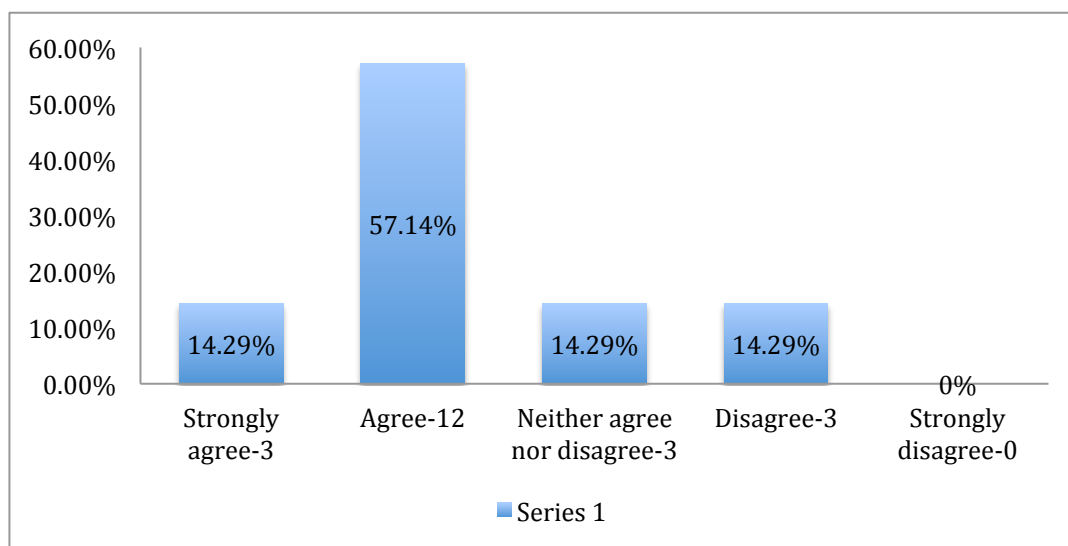


A majority of the students, 57%, agreed that Moodle makes it easier and more enjoyable to participate in group activities. A small percentage of students, 14.29%, do not find it easier to participate in group activities online and prefer traditional face-to-face group activities.

Question number 7-I believe I would perform better in the class if it were taught in the traditional face-to-face format without the use of Moodle.

Table number 7

Answered:21	Percentage
Strongly agree-3	14.29%
Agree-12	57.14%
Neither agree nor disagree-3	14.29%
Disagree-3	14.29%
Strongly disagree-0	0%

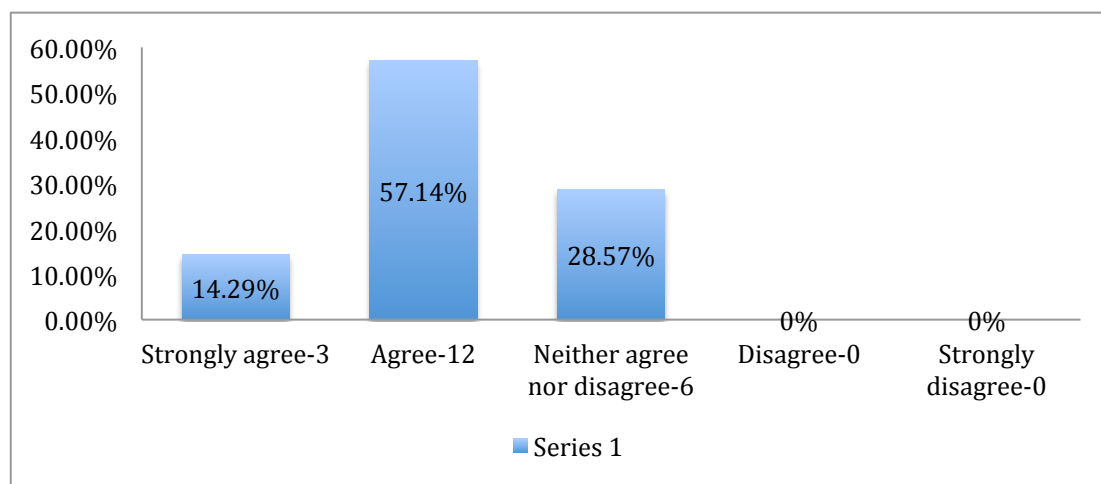


The majority of students 71.43 % believe they would perform better in class if they attended face-to-face classes. Few students 14.29% have neutral opinion, and even fewer 14.29% disagree. Engagement, personalization, and good communication are critical aspects of successful learning. The classroom is considered one of the best as a venue for providing valuable feedback.

Question number 8: The use of Moodle improved my interaction with my lecturer.

Table number 8

Answered:21	Percentage
Strongly agree-3	14.29%
Agree-12	57.14%
Neither agree nor disagree-6	28.57%
Disagree-0	0%
Strongly disagree-0	0%

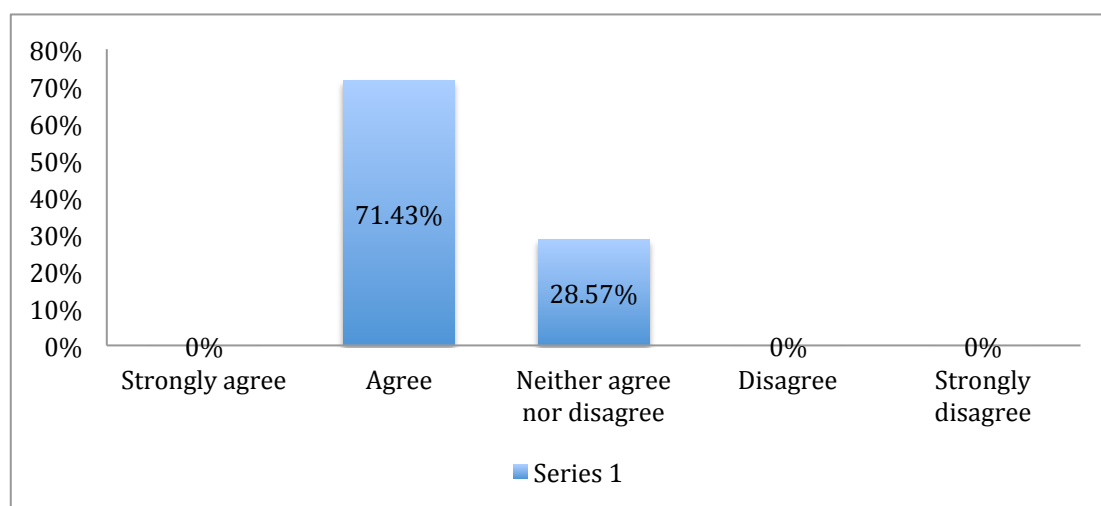


In addition to feeling more confident contributing in class (71.43%), students felt they had better communication with their lecturers during online learning. A improved student-lecturer interaction has a significant impact on student performance.

Question number 9: The use of Moodle improved my interaction with my classmates.

Table number 9

Answered: 21	Percentage
Strongly agree	0%
Agree	71.43%
Neither agree nor disagree	28.57%
Disagree	0%
Strongly disagree	0%

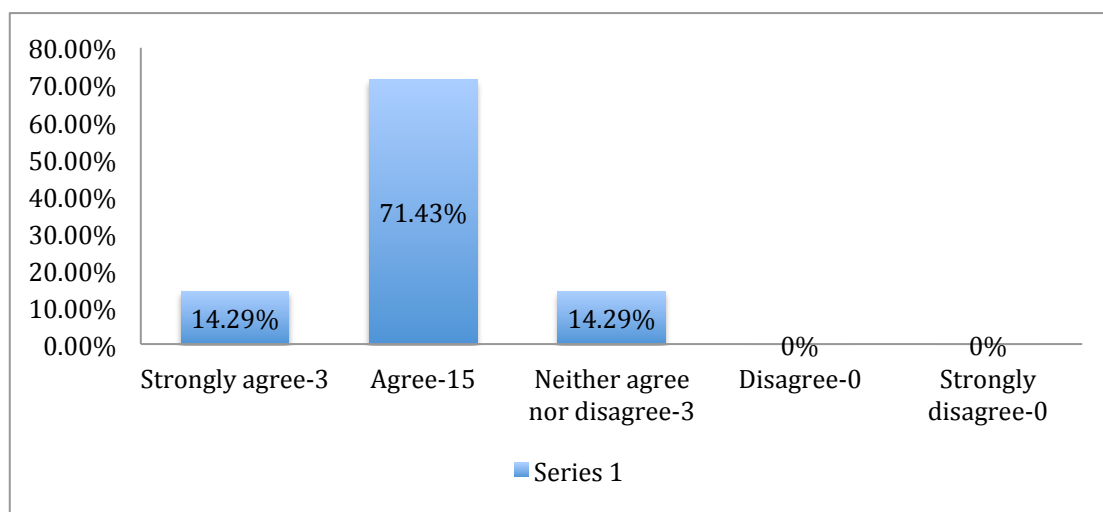


According to survey results, 71.43 % of students said Moodle improved their interaction with their classmates. Moodle encourages student-led activities and collaboration, particularly when used in combination with groups.

Question number 10- The use of Moodle helps with independent learning.

Table number 10

Answered:21	Percentage
Strongly agree-3	14.29%
Agree-15	71.43%
Neither agree nor disagree-3	14.29%
Disagree-0	0%
Strongly disagree-0	0%



Moodle helped independent learning for 85 % of the students who took part in the survey. For many students, asynchronous learning, or learning online on their own, is a better solution to avoid classroom distractions, fully absorb material, and stay on track with academic goals.

Conclusions

The purpose of this survey was to understand about the students' perceptions of the impact of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)-Moodle on their learning at the University of Walsh University Saint David. Despite the fact that the majority of students had never used Moodle before getting admitted to university, the above students see the use of a VLE as helpful, and they find the applications used during the process to be user-friendly and functional. As advantages, was found that using a Virtual learning environment enhanced students' interaction with their lecturers and classmates . Contrary to the belief that online studying from home can be challenging and distracting, students' attention to class tasks was significantly higher during Moodle, according to their points of view. Furthermore, a large percentage of students interviewed stated that Moodle helps them review the things they learn by having access 24 hours a day to the Moodle online platform .As a disadvantage, according to the study, the majority of students who responded to the survey believe they will perform better in a traditional learning environment. Finally, it can be stated that the implementation of a VLE in the University of Wales Trinity Saint David courses was well received by the students interviewed, who reported a significant positive impact from their studies.

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