

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Digital Skills and Research Methods

BMSW4001

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Rationale

The major reason behind the conduction of this research is to find out hypotheses about the impact students have been facing as a result of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for which the tool Moodle is used by the students of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, London campus. For this purpose, the primary and secondary data collection methods will be used to collect the needs data to extract the results according to the research title. The need behind conducting this research was to find out whether the online learning system i.e. Moodle, has been helpful for students or not. And whether they encountered any problem during the period of virtual learning and how did they cope with these issues. The study is significant and has a novelty among itself as this research report will be including the results based on solid survey conduction which is a primary data collection method. This study is going to be accurate as secondary data collection is also going to be used along with the primary data collection method i.e. survey in the form of a questionnaire. After appropriate analysis of both primary and secondary data, the results will be deducted based on which the conclusion will be declared and recommendations will be given.

Research objectives

This research report aims to find out the impact of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is Moodle on the student of the university in London. The objectives of this research report are mentioned below:

1. To communicate to the students of the university to find out what are their opinions about the online studying system.
2. To conduct a survey in which such questions are asked through which it can find out about how the students have been suffering due to some problems occurred.
3. How the Moodle is helpful to the students.
4. To recognize the overall impacts of the VLE over the students of the university and whether they have found it useful or not.
5. Another objective of this research is to identify such issues being faced by the students while getting education through Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) on Moodle.
6. To identify if the VLE was useful in the entire journey of learning or not.

Literature review

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is not a new phenomenon to be used in online learning and education. A lot of universities, schools, and colleges are there in the world which have implemented different platforms of VLE in their education system. This is also being used by small or large enterprises to connect to various actors including the customers, workforces, and other stakeholders, etc. (Wolff et al.2013). The open university of the UK has been using their computers for online learning since the 1970s but in the 2000s the commercial computer was launched in the university with the label of "VLE blackboard" (Kurt et al.2017). There is another most popular VLE named Moodle was also discovered in 2001 which was developed to help the teachers and other educators to develop the online courses for their students putting their complete focus on collaboration and interactive development of the content (Vaganova et al.2017). Moodle has been used and still being used in more than 212 countries with 49,365 online active websites that are present in almost 75 languages.

According to some reports which were released in 2007, some surveys were conducted between September 2005 and December 2007 in the schools which gave the positive result of the use of Moodle VLE. Also, some other surveys were conducted in the colleges of the UK. Three quarters among all the colleges declared that VLE is a good option for students and is helping them with learning a lot (Eskandari et al.2016). It is said that if VLEs are unable to cater to all the needs of students including audio files, text files, and videos, etc. there is no such benefit of using them and the entire impact of using VLE goes in vain as a result. According to some pieces of evidence, the VLE Moodle should contain such content which is enough for the students and to allow them to reinforce their learning and work with the help of online lectures so that they can gain the broader and deeper understanding of the certain subject (Filva et al. 2014).

As far as the topic of the research report is concerned, the impacts of VLE, Moodle are so much extensive which has effected both educators and students in many ways. Some studies show that the use of VLEs has increased the level of student reflection and have encouraged the positive thought among them. Students are more able to think independently as the result of gaining education from VLEs (Oproiu 2015). As the students and teachers get the chance to communicate with each other online which helps them to develop their understanding and analytical skills. Another report says that students who get to learn through Moodle VLE depict more chances of

performing better in the standardized tests related to reading, writing, language, and vocabulary. Such students have more ability to think about one thing from different perspectives as compared to the students who do not make the use of such software (Tiantong et al.2013). Another research was conducted in the past, which took place based on undergraduate business learning materials of students which could only be accessible through VLE. It was found through this research that the students who had to use VLE needs to be more active learners. They had more enthusiasm and motivation to learn and had more capacity to learn with so much confidence among them (Ifinedo et al. 2018). Through collaborative experiences with other peers which was a great option through VLEs, the students were able to develop such skills among them which will go to help them with employability and competency. Simple management is another advantage of using Moodle in which teachers are easily able to manage the lectures and tasks, track the students, and their performances, along with their level of engagement and activity (Jain 2015). VLEs do not impact positively on both sides always. Sometimes the motivation lacks which leads to a lack of self-discipline. The VLEs put a hindrance in face-to-face communication which discourages the relationship between teachers and students but also prevents them to develop the communicative and problem-solving skills on first hand.

Methodology

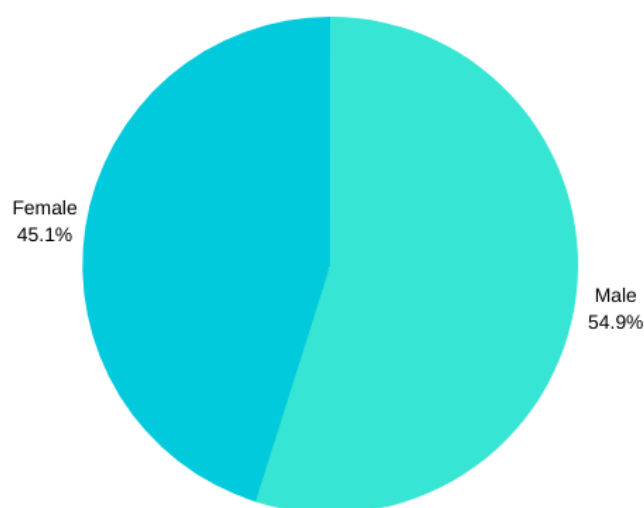
This includes the declaration of the research methods which are asked and going to be used to gather the data to complete this study. According to the requirement, data will be collected through both sources which are primary and secondary data collection methods. The conducted research is going to help to find out the impact of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is Moodle in this case on the student of a university in London

First of the secondary research will be conducted which is referred to as the data collected by the researcher using the information which is already published and can be used by everyone for research purposes. This data collection technique is used particularly to answer the research question which is mentioned above in this case what are the impacts of Moodle on the students of the university. The secondary data will be collected from different sources journal articles, different books from famous authors, some e-books, and also the websites containing valuable data about the importance and impact of VLE on the learning of students.

In any research study, it is significant to find out and decide the method of data collection which has to be more appropriate to the research and will answer the research question more appropriately. Another technique that is to be used to collect data is the primary data collection which will be collected from the direct sources. Unlike the secondary data which is already been collected from primary sources, for this research topic, the new research will be conducted to generate new and fresh results. For the collection of primary data, the quantitative research technique will be used which is an empirical research tool used to explore the research and deduce the results through experience which gives a more realistic touch to the research. For this, the survey will be conducted through a questionnaire. The online survey will be done and the questionnaire will be filled by various students of the university. The survey is preferred to be conducted online because of the current pandemic situation and it will be easier for all the students to fill out the questionnaire online.

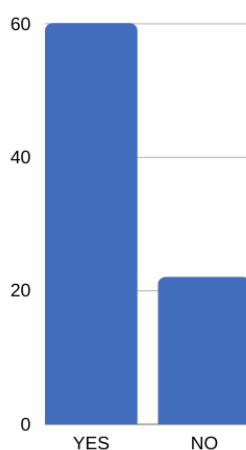
Primary data analysis

Almost 18 students were sent the questionnaires so that the survey could be conducted and all of them cooperated well on the way to this research conduction. It can be said that the results generated were not opposite to expectations. Moreover, in the period of one week, it has been seen that the topic of this research report is justified with the help of this survey conduction. Among 18 students, 10 were male while 8 were females.

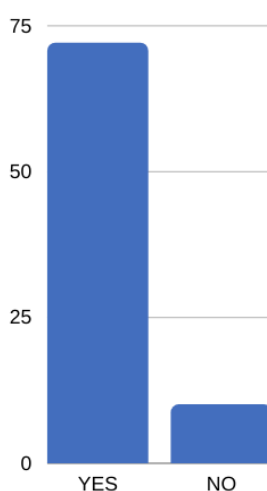


After the proper analysis of the responses to the questionnaire, it is clear that Moodle has been putting a positive impact on most of the students while some of them seem to be unsatisfied.

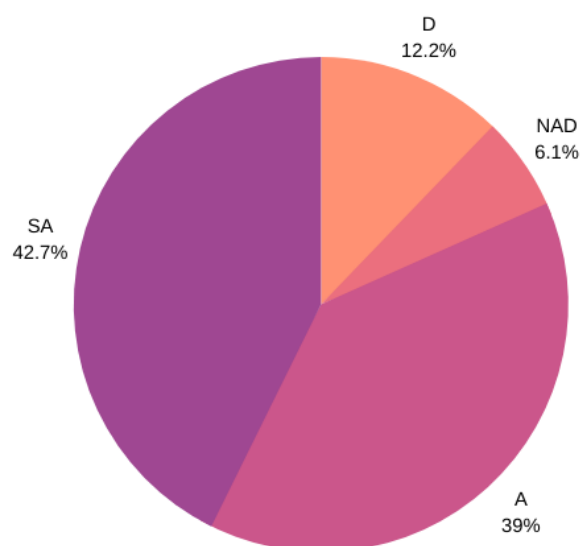
In the question which asked, "do you find moodle usefully?" 73% responses were yes which compromises of 13 students while 5 students said no which makes 26%.



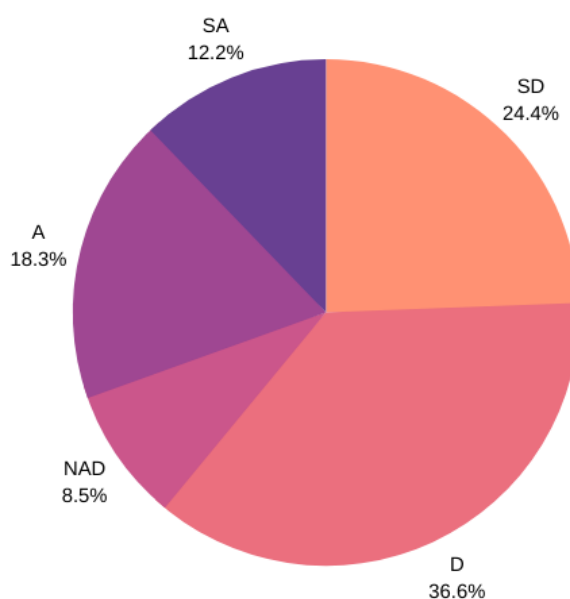
Due to this pandemic, the students had to access the learning through Moodle VLE which was surely a problem for some students. Thus, the question which asked whether the students faced any issues in using Moodle from home or not. For these questions, almost 10 students reported with no while rest clicked on yes.



For question number 10, in which students were asked to provide with the level to which they are satisfied with any statement or not have given many satisfactory and accurate answers. The statement “ The subject or a course makes me motivated to learn more” was answered with the most positively shown impact which shows that the VLE which is Moodle has positively effected the students of the university and they are feeling more confident after using it.



Additionally, the statement “Due to it, my communication to my teachers have got better” gave the results in which more students disagreed. The possible reason could be that teachers are not able to respond with queries of students timely.



Secondary data analysis

As far as the analysis of secondary data is concerned it has been clear from the above literature review about how the Moodle VLE is proving to be beneficial for both teachers and the students. There is a clear layout of Moodle which is not a big deal for teachers and students to use the tool. Moreover, one can revise and change the things which were previously updated on the platform. This show that Moodle VLE is much beneficial option to obtain the online education. Although there are some cons of Moodle VLE too including its inability to deal with larger projects and the shutting down or blocking state of the website even at the time of its most need.

Conclusions and recommendations

After conduction of the proper research, it is concluded that data that is collected through the quantitative data collection technique is more accurate and is providing a more specific piece of information about the research topic. The research question was about what impact does the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is Moodle has been putting on the students of the university in London and the research was conducted targeting 100 students of this university. All the results which are deducted are giving the evidence that Moodle has been proved to be an effective tool for learning with a lot of benefits. The students are more confident now and are motivated to learn more through it.

It is recommended that teachers should work to foster a more communicative environment with their students through VLE. This will be a good act for the betterment of students and their learning. Moreover, the issues faced by students should be fixed as soon as possible to make the VLE work more effectively and efficiently.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

1. Name _____
2. Age _____
3. Sex? Male/female
4. Have you ever worked with Moodle? Yes / No
5. Did you find Moodle useful? Yes/ No
6. Are you able to find information on Moodle easily? Yes/ No
7. Did you find Moodle useful in this first year of university? Yes/ No
8. Have you faced any issue in accessing Moodle from home? Yes/ No
9. How often do you visit Moodle to support your learning without the requirement from your teacher?
Often / every time / never / once a week / once a month
10. To what level do you agree or disagree to the below statements about e-learning from Moodle VLE.

SD = Strongly Disagree

D = Disagree

NAD = neither agree nor disagree

A = agree

SA = strongly agree

	SD	D	NAD	A	SA
a. Moodle provided me an opportunity to learn independently.					
b. The subject or a course make me motivated to learn more.					
c. Moodle has made me to think more broadly and improved my thinking ability.					

d. Due to it, my communication to my peers has got better.					
e. Due to it, my communication to my teachers has got better.					
f. The variety of tools like, videos, quizzes, links, newsfeeds has increased my motivation towards learning.					
g. The teachers give timely feedback on assessments and quizzes.					
h. Moodle has a positive impact on my effectiveness being a student.					
i. I can learn more by using Moodle than without using it.					
j. The quality of my learning has been improved due to it.					
k. Moodle has made learning more valuable to me.					
l. I can learn more effectively without any disturbance of traveling or others.					