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THE INFLUENCE OF VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE)
ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

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Everything was working nice and smooth in the academic world, until the classic education system was 'swallowed' by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Then, in order to stop the spread of the virus, the authorities were forced to give more importance to online learning, which was already in practice but never was a favourite of the educational system and are some good reasons for that. But there is no doubt that there are some obvious benefits, as well.

Pros:

The ability to communicate via internet opens opportunities for both sides, student and teacher, but I will talk about the student side for now. You are saving a lot of money, because not every student has the possibility to travel, pay rent or find at least a part-time job in the city where the University is located.

But virtual learning is helping in a huge way in getting a diploma without leaving the comfort of your home. You are saving a lot of time by focusing only on certain topics, you can review a difficult lesson as many times as you want, and you can archive everything and use it some other time. It is very helpful that the topics are set ahead, and some materials are posted before class, so you can get an idea what to expect. Thanks to this opportunity people with disabilities, seen or unseen, can study from home where there is no pressure. A shy student has also an advantage because he can read a difficult subject several times, without facing the 'terror' of asking the teacher to explain one more time, or fear that classmates will make fun of him. No more fashion, hair or makeup problems, but this applies more for ladies.

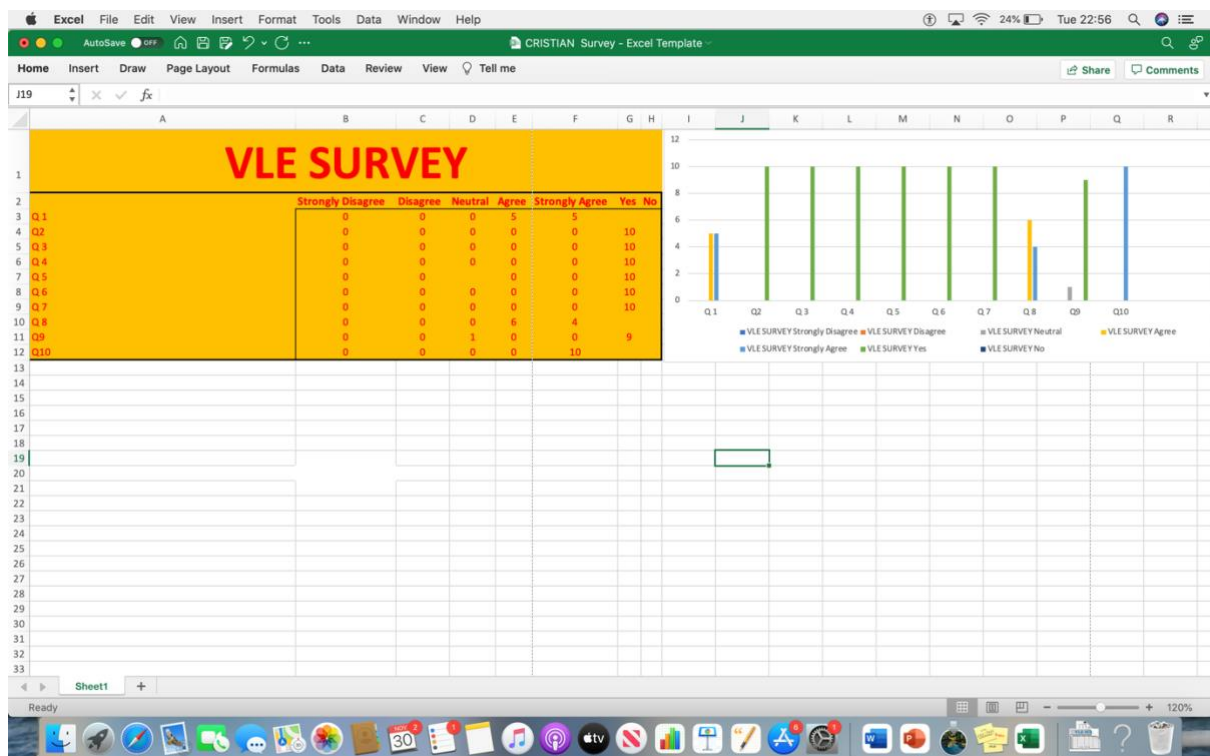
Cons:

For some people, especially the older generation who is used to the classic way, and not very friendly with computers and graphics, this can be a challenge (my case as well). Some people feel more comfortable and assimilate information much faster and better when they are surrounded by colleagues and take part in the exchange of ideas.

When you are an online student, you must think for yourself 100%, because there is no one around to guide or correct you.

Virtual learning is excellent to a certain level but, there are specialties that can't be completed without the practical part. At the same time virtual learning can be a big challenge for slower students who can't connect to the fast pace of their colleagues, therefore are losing precious bits of information and make them failing the course. Another cause of frustration is a poor internet connection or power cuts.

Following the survey conducted on my colleagues in the campus found that most of them support this form of learning.



This survey is about the influence of VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (VLE) on students academic experience

Question 1: Can VLE help you to learn more and faster?

Strongly Disagree:

Disagree:

Neutral:

Agree:

Strongly Agree

Question 2: Can VLE stimulate you to study?

Yes:

No:

Question 3: Is your learning ability improved by VLE?

Yes:

No:

Question 4: Is VLE cost effective? Will help you to study with reduce costs?

Yes:

No:

Question 5: Please, can you give an example about how the VLE can help you to go on low budget for study?

Question 6: Which platform are you using in your institution?

Zoom

Teams

Skype

Moodle

Blackboard Basic

Share Point

WebCT

Desire2Learn

Canvas

Question 7: Will VLE will help you to study on your convenience?

Yes:

No:

Question 8: How do you rate the VLE in use in your university on a scale of 1-5?

1-Unsatisfactory

2-Satisfactory

3- Good

4-Very Good

5-Excellent

Question 9: Do you think that the VLE option available in your university is the right one?

Yes:

No:

No answer:

Question 10: Which of the following tools can be a key component of a VLE?

Library access

Internal email

Video streaming

On-line course enrolment

Peer group support

Workshops

As a closing argument I can say that the two education systems, even if they are different, work well together, help a wide range of students and I believe that the virtual learning must be preserved and sustained, even if the pandemic is gone and the world returns to the classical educational system.

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