

Digital Skills and Research Methods

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

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1. Abstract

Due to its complexity, teaching is a constant challenge for teachers and students, which has promoted the creation of new pedagogical strategies that facilitate their learning. In the present investigation, two data collection methods are selected. Primary Data Collection developing a questionnaire on the topic Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to conduct a survey, which is made of 56 students. Secondary Data Collection research of published material on the topic of the impact of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) on students' learning experience. Finally, a conclusion will be provided from the analysis of both primary and secondary data.

2. Introduction

Not everything important in education happens in the classroom; it is also counted with laboratories, libraries, and other spaces for interpersonal relationship. As for activities, not all the work in the classroom is expert's class; they also include seminars or small group sessions, work in shape cooperative between students, individual study, and other multiple activities, some informally (Gisbert et. 2000).

Virtual Learning Environment or online education is carried out in virtual spaces, where users apply a set of exchange strategies information, based on computer systems, telematic networks and computer applications. The concept of "virtual classroom" is currently a point obligatory reference in the evolution of the different educational methodologies, which includes applications telematics, as a complement to training in person. The virtual is that which has the same characteristics and effects than real objects or situations they represent. Virtual classrooms are the way to incorporate the didactic results of real classrooms to contexts where it is not possible to bring together physically to the participants, in a teaching learning, offering the possibilities of teaching in line, with the same quality and impact, as if they were in a classroom.

The COVID-19 situation has been the reason to shut schools around the world. While countries are at different points in their COVID-19 infection rates, worldwide there are currently more than 1.2 million children in 186 countries

affected by school closures due to the pandemic. Research suggests that online learning has been shown to increase information retention and take less time, meaning that the changes caused by the coronavirus could be here to stay.

3. Secondary Data Collection

3.1 Advantage and Disadvantage

Online training should be understood as a cooperative learning environment, in which the acquisition and development of competencies, in general, and technology-related skills is enhanced. Research carried out by Koory in 2003 highlights that many students improve their results of learning through online training, that is why some authors consider that distance education is born to overcome different gaps, whether they are social, economic, geographical, etc. (Pino, 2008)

But every resource or methodology has negative aspects or disadvantages as well as positive aspects or advantages. Through the review of the literature carried out (Muñoz, 2004; Cebrián, 2004; Cabero, 2005, 2006; Pryer and Bitter, 2008; Revuelta and Pérez, 2009) we can find the following points of interest in both aspects.

The benefits that this training modality entails are widely significant. In recent years has placed special emphasis on facilitating learning scenarios that favour, on the one hand, the simultaneity of activities bearing in mind the possibility of making them compatible with the work environment, and secondly, providing access to a wide range of training offers, regardless of the place of residence. On the other hand, in the teaching-learning process, it is unavoidable to monitor the work of students and online training facilitates their tutelage in a group and individual way, giving rise to feedback through the various tools that promote interaction between teachers and students, as well as between the latter. under the teacher's supervision. On the other hand, one of the keys to effective operation is supported by content updating and the need for continuous maintenance of the system with the well-known insecurity that the network entails, which leads to the effort and work overload of the teaching staff. Undoubtedly, e - learning will provide training opportunities, but we must be aware that, for the development of a network-based learning system, other drawbacks have to be overcome, in addition to those previously mentioned, such as the cost, which is initially high; increased use of tutoring, communication becomes impersonal leaving non-verbal communication to the imagination; the lack of habit to network, as well as the ignorance of technological resources and their use, the low quality of some training offers

based on this system, as well as the scarce training of teachers in this work system (Hernández et al, 2003; Cebrián , 2004; Cabero, 2006; Gallego and Alonso, 2007) From all the aforementioned aspects, flexibility is the initial characteristic of this type of training. They point out this flexibility in time, content, requirements of admission, institutions, resources, delivery, and organization, which we specify in the table. The development of online training involves teamwork, where information will be shared and elaborated, in addition to making relevant decisions for correct learning, with the aim. The main thing is to solve the disadvantages that the system generates and that previously been pointed out.

3.2 The challenges of online learning

There are challenges to overcome, some students without reliable internet access or technology struggle to participate in digital learning; this gap is seen across the students. ("IESCO & IICO established an applied... - International ...") 96% of students in OECD countries reported having a computer at home, but only 72% reported using one at school. Overall, students who use computers moderately at school tend to have better learning outcomes than students who use computers rarely. But students who use computers very frequently at school do much worse, even after accounting for social background and student demographics. ("High tech school investment no performance panacea")

"Some schools and governments have been providing digital equipment to students in need, such as in New South Wales, Australia, many are still concerned that the pandemic will widen the digital divide." ("Online Classes in Covid-19 Pandemic")

4. Primary Data Collection

4.1 Materials and methods

The study was selected, and it was determined that the participants were people who experience or have experienced distance studies. All participants have experienced the challenge of studying online and the first-hand and have their own opinion about advantages and disadvantages of it. It has not been taken into consideration if the participants have started studying in school and have been forced to switch online due to the current COVID 19 situations.

For this I had to develop a questionnaire on the topic Virtual Learning Environment, which used as a primary data collection tool. Use that questionnaire I conduct a survey. Due to the current pandemic situation, I conduct the survey online only instead of face-to-face, this is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all participants.

To protect the privacy of research participants the standards of confidentiality and anonymity have been applied. Participants that wanted to stay anonymous been respected, the question about the name of the participant not been mandatory for the same reason I have not asked in the questionnaire for surname.

4.1 Results and Discussion

We can see from the first graphic most of the 56 people that filled up the questionnaire are female. In this case is because I tried to get more people to filled up in one of the Facebook group where most of the members are women different ages what decide to go back to study in some point of their life. I want to mention that I have post it on Instagram and other Facebook group such us Help with Studies or Help Assignments where not a lot people been interested to dedicate time to fill up Virtual Learning Environment questionnaire.

Gender
56 respuestas

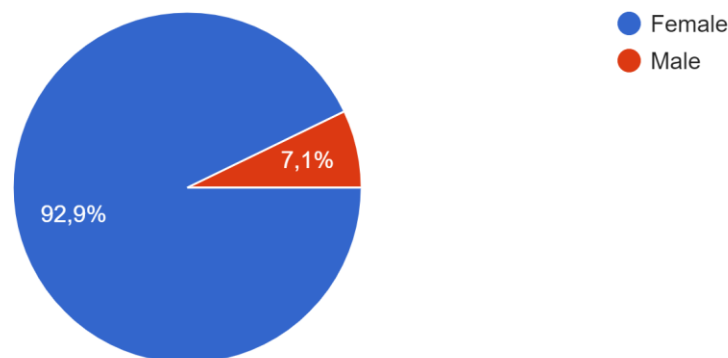


Diagram 1: Distribution of students by gender.

The following questions from the study are created to found out how satisfied the participants are with the internet connection what they had before using that for studying. How annoying are the problems and is they been sold out quick and how often people connect to Moodle per week to follow the study plan? From 56 persons an extremely low percentage must change the internet provider that they had before experimenting online studies. This demonstrate that today in day internet connection is stong and is not an excuse to cannot use that via for the purpose of study. Surprising lot people use occasionally

Moodle during the week to keep refresh their studies. This is evidence that people still need self-control and discipline to help this new learning environment work better.

Are you happy with your current internet at home?

56 respuestas

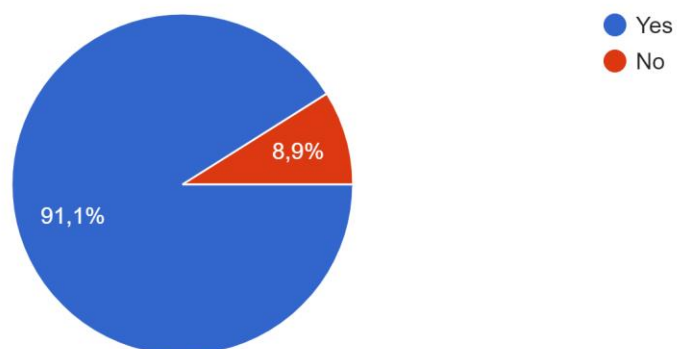


Diagram 2: Comparison of the effective internet connection.

How often do you access Moodle to study ?

56 respuestas

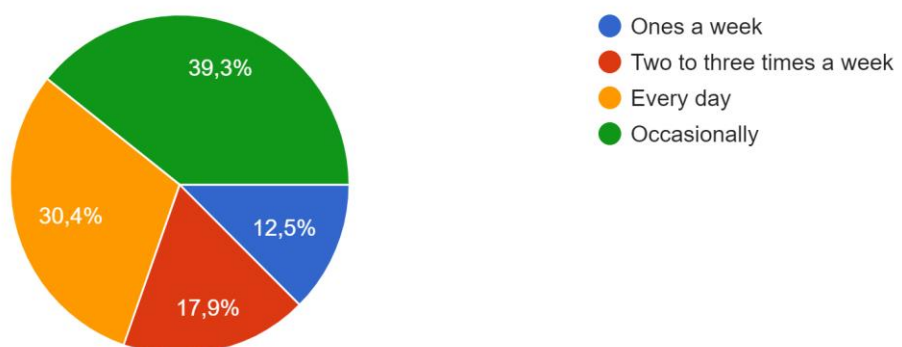


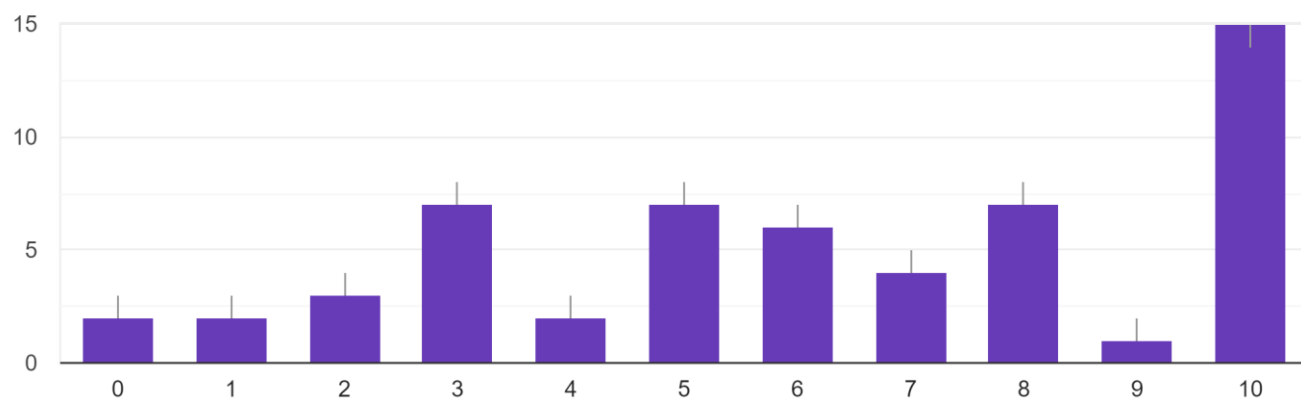
Diagram 2: Comparison of the Moodle use weekly.

Advantages and disadvantage are the main purpose of this study. There is no doubt people save time money while study online as the following graphic confirm.

- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I enjoy more learning online than attend to the campus because I save time.

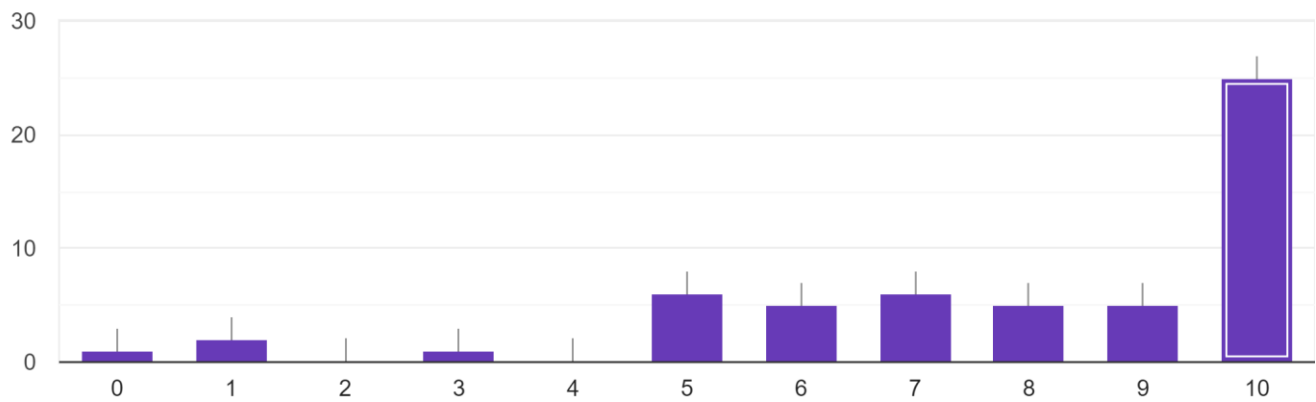
56 respuestas



- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing I save money while I study from home.

56 respuestas

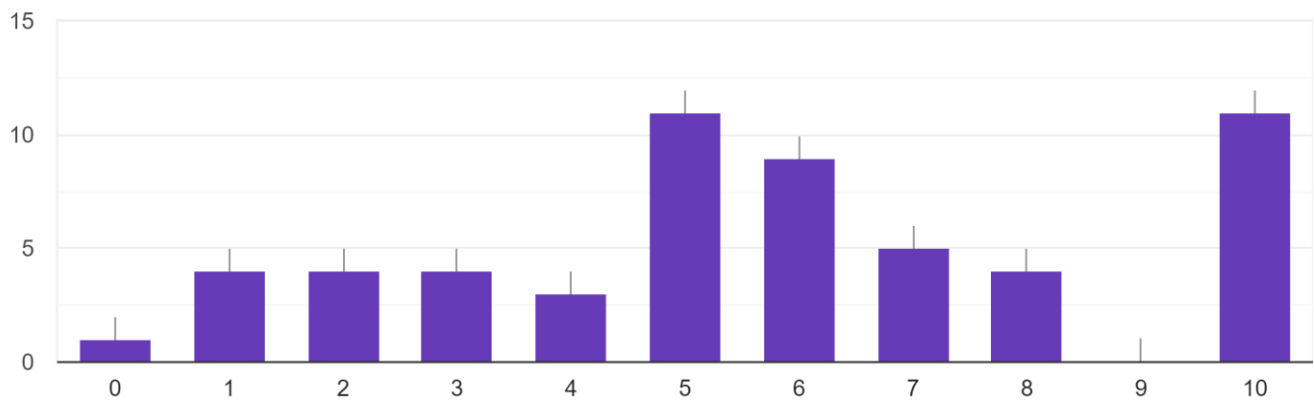


There is confusion between 56 participants that this experience teaches us vital time managements skills or helps to digest the information we learned because we have saved time and we have all the time on the world to do it.

- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing studying online teaches vital time - management skills.

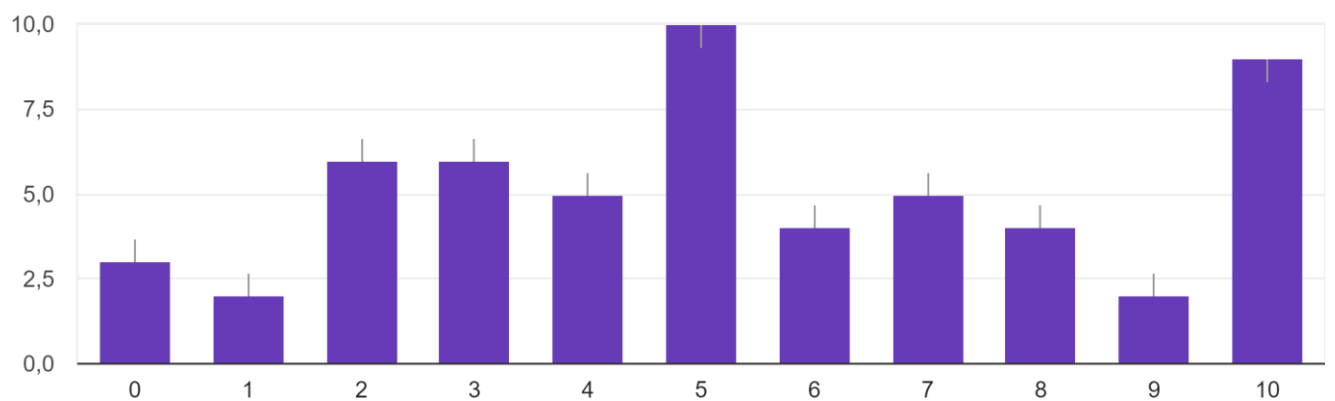
56 respuestas



- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing Virtual classes give the students plenty of time to digest the information learned.

56 respuestas



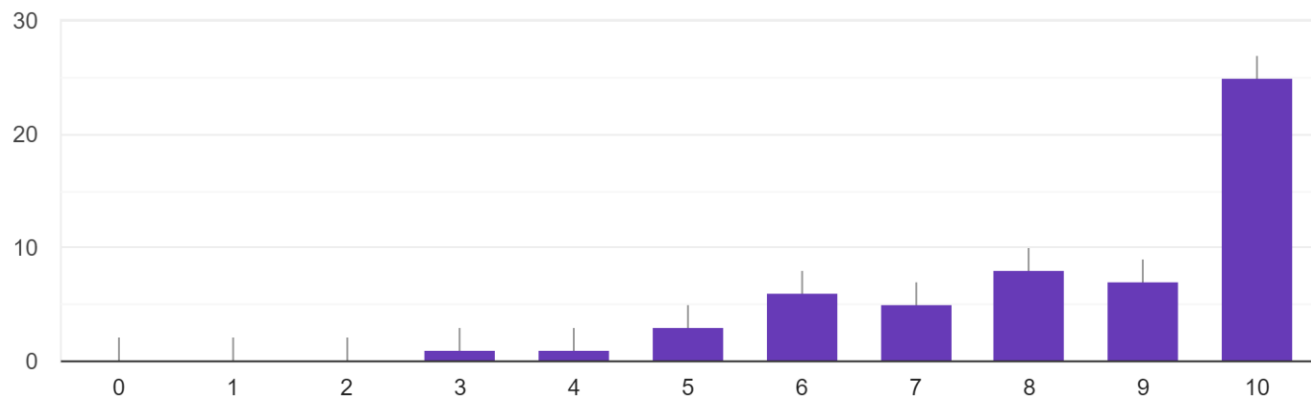
The main problem from Virtual Learning what I could found is that cause social – isolation and most of the participants in my questionnaire are agree with this confirmation. There are other disadvantages such as lack in face-to-face communication, requires strong self-discipline and time - management that is

something what people are getting better in it. The graphics are representing the affirmation before.

- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing online studying can cause social -isolation.

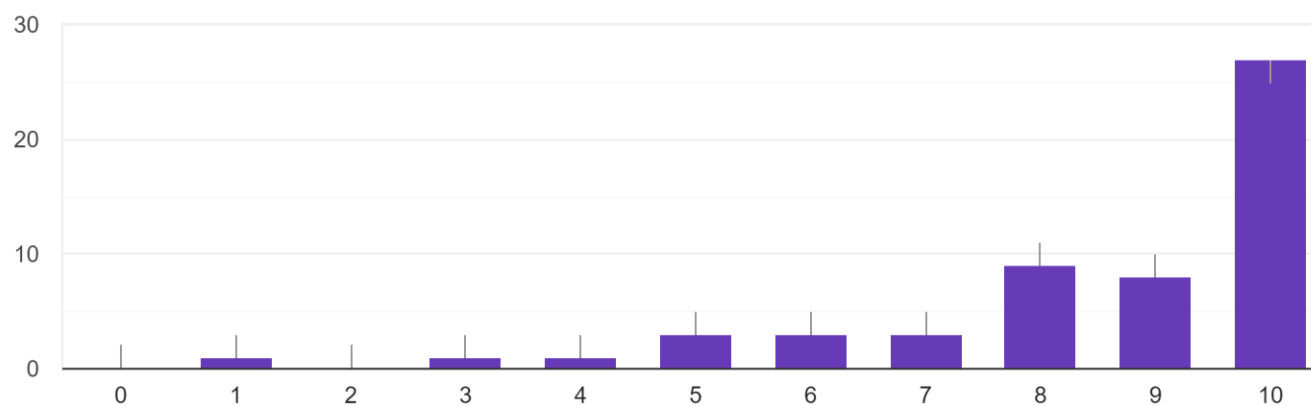
56 respuestas



- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing online learning requires strong self -discipline and time - management.

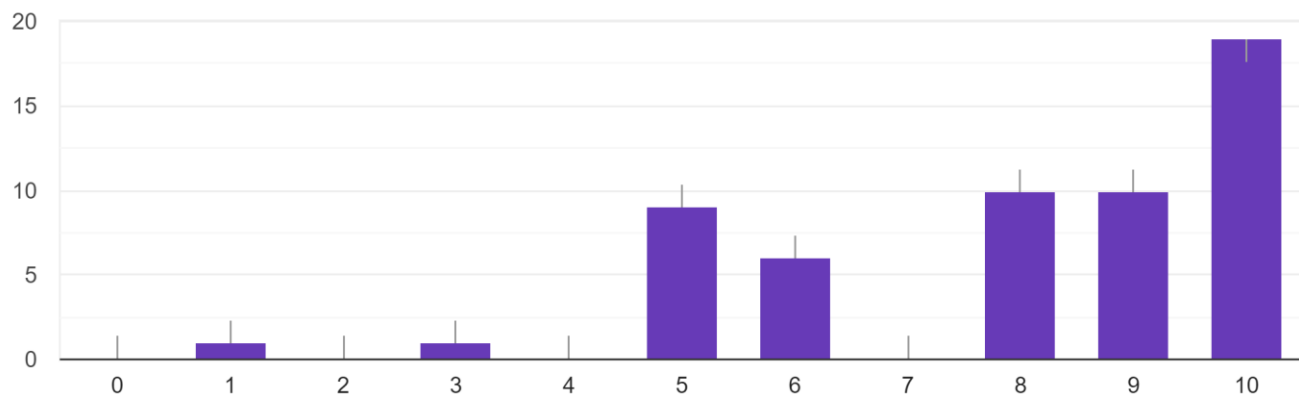
56 respuestas



- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing online learning lacks face-to-face communication.

56 respuestas

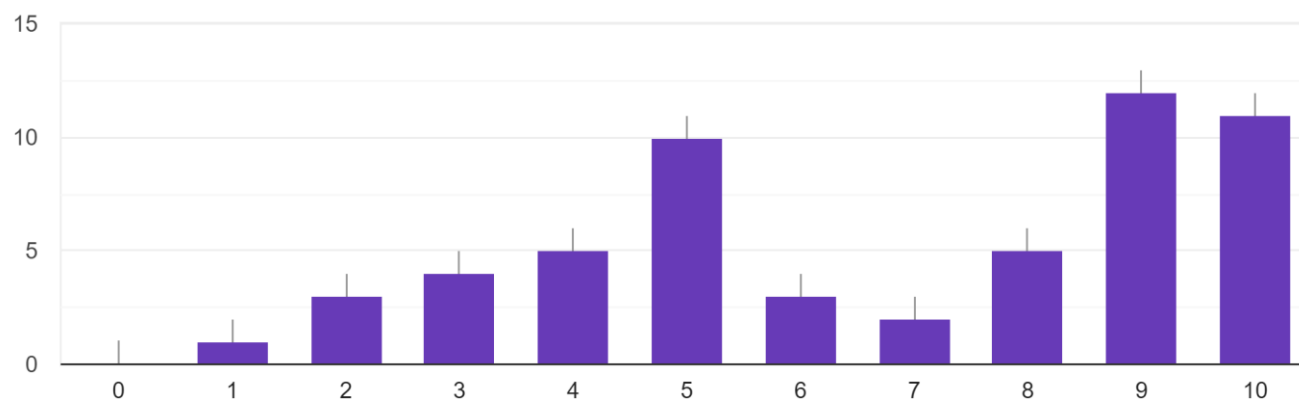


The following questions demonstrate that common affirmations such as difficulties on concentrating, distraction which hardly are controlled while student is trying to do important activity such as education still affecting most of the participants and they are more agree with the affirmations. Low percentage are not convinced or probably do not share the same experience.

- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing students can't concentrate on their studies at home while learning online.

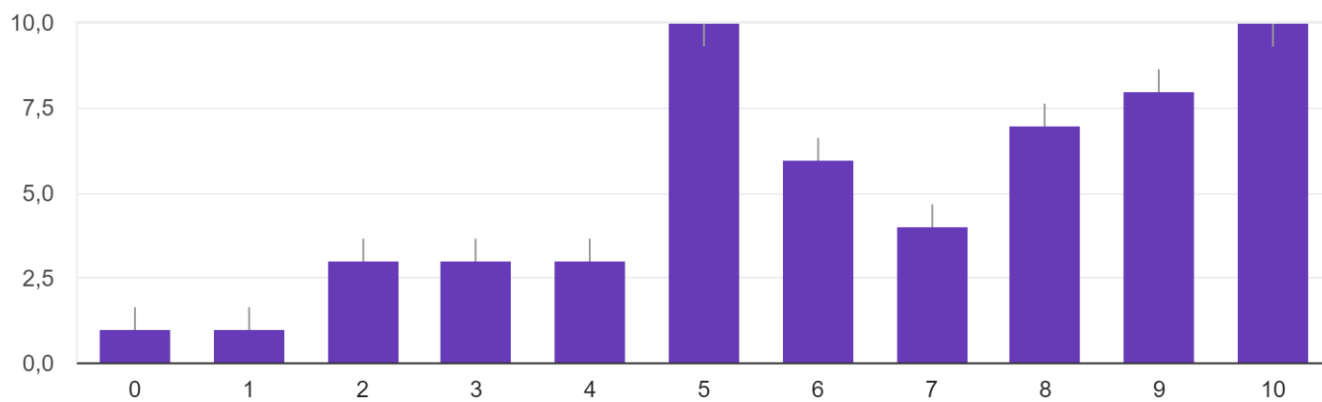
56 respuestas



- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing students have to much distractions which they hardly control at home while learning online.

56 respuestas

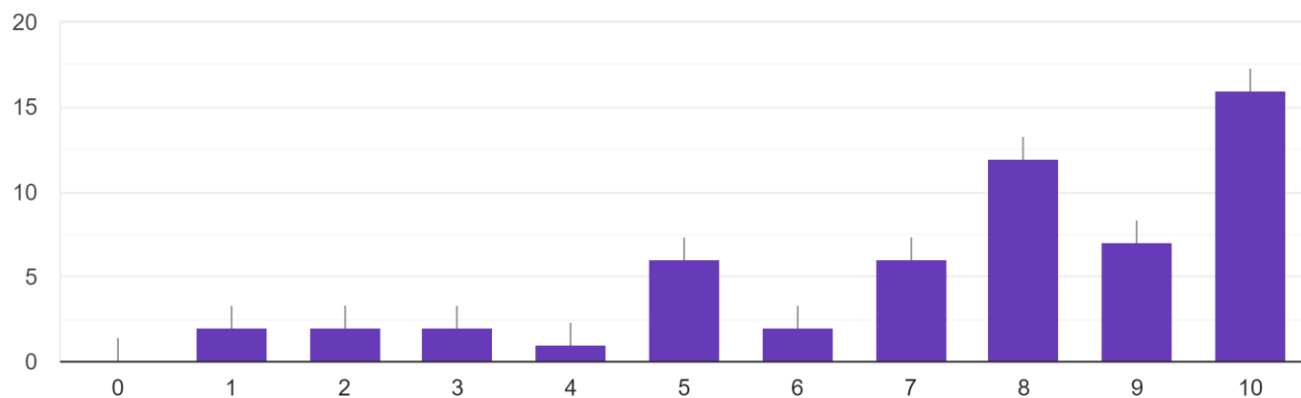


Participants did confirm that studying online is clear enough in term of understanding the material presented during online class.

- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

I thing some students don't understand things well enough while studying online.

56 respuestas

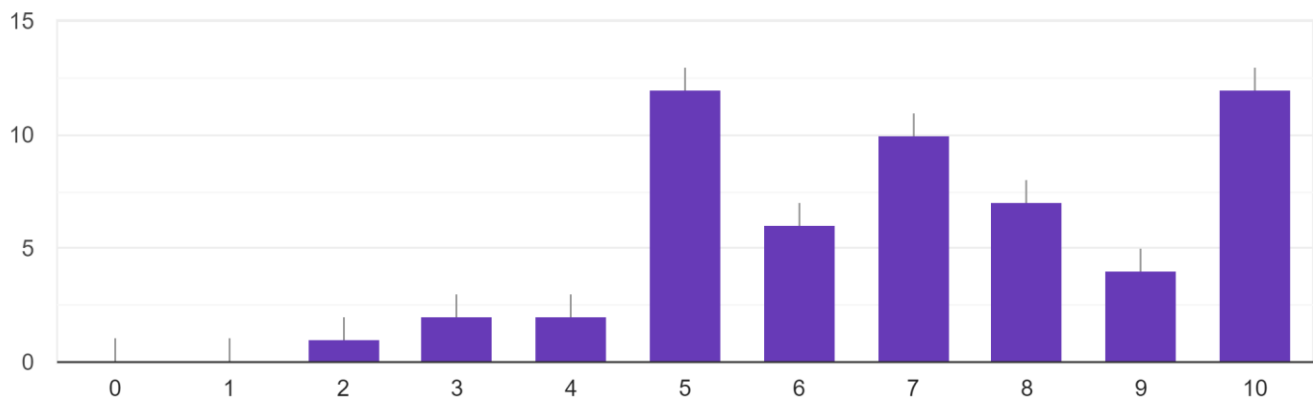


How well participants are doing their online studies due to COVID-19 is question that participants mostly answers are doing well to excellent. What is satisfactory for current pandemic situation where Virtual Learning Environment is present and necessary.

- Result of the survey applied to the participants of the intervention.

How well you think you are doing your online studies due to COVID 19?

56 respuestas



5. Conclusion

The collection of Primary and Secondary data collection of the topic Virtual Learning Environment

When it comes to students understanding of the use of a VLE in their language learning process, it can be concluded that the number of students who regarded the use of the Internet as useless, confusing, and overwhelming. Most students prefer using online studying however, there is still a portion of the student population that is not convinced of this choice.

Educational software is a necessary tool in education today and in the future. The utilities, advantages and added value of educational software can be seen both in virtual distance education and in face-to-face learning.

Group work within education makes knowledge more enjoyable, interesting, and complementary, allowing us to work as an organized society in a merely virtual community.

The different programs allow us to build mental structure to the student, explore new ways of educating and generate knowledge in a more dynamic, fun but above all productive way in terms of the acquisition of new knowledge in students of all ages and levels of education.

Technology has brought a change in the mentality of the educational field; students are preparing for the digital age. The great advances in information technology will provide the skills required for children and youth to become

successful adults, putting pressure on education, transforming what and how we will learn and how educational institutions will work.

It is important to thank all the teachers and students who are showing their strength and resilience these days. It is challenging times that show character and what we are made of. I have witnessed that we have researchers and teachers with a clear vocation, who have not skimped on stealing hours a day to train and provide the best education to their students.

Also, I have observed first-class students, who have not only taken an active role to inform and transmit a message of civility and solidarity in these times but have also understood that the value of any educational institution resides in its members and in their commitment. With being better people, each time better trained and prepared to face the challenges of the future.

6. Questionary

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

University of Wales Trinity Saint David London Campus

I will ask you to complete this questionnaire what will help me to produce a research report on the impact of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Data Protection

This information is collected by an individual research. I assure you that all the information I collect will be used only for the purpose of primary data collection and kept confidential to the research. According to the data protection act I have to ask you sign the following declaration.

I agree that this information and the data collected from me, may be held, and processed by the research and for the purpose of research Virtual Learning Environment. *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Name

Answer not mandatory

Gender *

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

Age *

- ☐ under 18
- ☐ 18 - 29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-50
- ☐ over 50

Please answer the follow questions by checking the box that apply to you.

Are you happy with your current internet at home? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Did you have to change your internet at home in order to have faster connection because you are studying online? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you have to use a computer for your studies? *

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Yes, but without internet.

How often do you access Moodle to study? *

- ☐ One's a week
- ☐ Two to three times a week
- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Occasionally

Did you ever had technical problems while studying online? *

- ☐ I did not have any technical problems.
- ☐ I had some technical problems, but these were resolved quickly.
- ☐ I had some technical problems and I had to miss several classes.

Please give your reaction to every comment listed below, indicating how have been your experience with learning online. On scale from 1 to 10, with 1 been not at all agree and 10 being strongly agree with the comment.

I enjoy more learning online than attend to the campus because I save time. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing I save money while I study from home. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing studying online teaches vital time - management skills. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing Virtual classes give the students plenty of time to digest the information learned. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing online studying can cause social isolation. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing online learning requires strong self -discipline and time - management. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing online learning lacks face-to-face communication. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing students cannot concentrate on their studies at home while learning online. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing students have to many distractions which they hardly control at home while learning online. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I thing some students do not understand things well enough while studying online. *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How well you think you are doing your online studies due to COVID 19? *

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Thank you very much for spending time completing this questionnaire! It is much appreciated.

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