

CERTHE SKILLS FOR THE WORKPLACE
DIGITAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODS
BMSW4003
DSR ASSESTMENT 2 – INDIVIDUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

In this report I will expose some information about “Virtual Learning” based on primary and secondary data, and I will show information about the data collected.
As the Internet has improved in recent years, the number of web-based distance education programmes has exploded. In this case, universities play a crucial role.
Distance education is becoming increasingly popular nowadays.
As a result, colleges and other educational institutions started to use technologies and resources such as electronic books and e-mail to conduct their educational activities.

VIRTUAL LEARNING

Virtual learning is often synonymous with online classes or online settings, but it encompasses far more. Is a form of learning that is facilitated by the use of computers and/or the internet both outside and within the educational institution's facilities.
The most of the time, the training takes place online.
The instructional exercises take place remotely, with the teacher and students being physically apart. The proper use of new technology in compliance with current educational philosophies is critical to the success of online education, and I will expose some of them;

- **Behaviourism**

Behaviourism is the study of how students behave while learning.
It examines how students respond to a variety of stimuli. Specific behaviour of the learner may be detected, controlled, and adjusted while the teacher repeats the stimuli.

Learners must obey instructions and are only allowed to repeat basic knowledge and carry out simple tasks.

- **Social constructivism**

Social constructivism can be used in a variety of settings, including group meetings, brainstorming and small group play. The interactive classroom, which features interactive tools such as shared web-conferencing, an online whiteboard, meeting rooms, screen sharing, and more, is the ideal setting for these events.

- **Cognitivism**

Cognitivism is concerned with the role of the mind and cognitive processes in learning. It demonstrates how the brain functions and the various phases of brain development required for learning. Cognitivism studies helps educators learn more of how people behave and how to further educate them.

THE IMPACT OF VIRTUAL LEARNING

Online learning affects all, from small children to young adults, teachers, and academics. A variety of students' mental health conditions can worsen because of taking online courses. Others can undergo new changes in their mental health and mood as a result of the pandemic and online learning. In the other hand, school holds a significant proportion of adolescents' social lives.

Numerous researches have shown that social isolation will lead to higher rates of negative consequences for people's mental and physical wellbeing. Face-to-face experiences, according to some research, may help alleviate stress and anxiety.

Despite the possibility that virtual classes will have a detrimental effect on a teen's mental wellbeing, there are several advantages. Being at home and with family, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, may provide feelings of protection and reassurance for some students. For these students, their home may serve as a healthy learning space in which they may be more active. Additionally, while school provides an opportunity for adolescents to socialise and develop friendships, not all social experiences are beneficial. At school, students can become targets of bullying. Digital learning is an escape route for these students from depression and anxiety brought on by the fear of being bullied. Other students can benefit from virtual classes to escape the relentless weight of peer pressure.

With disruptions to their daily routine from virtual classes, it's more important than ever to encourage healthy habits. A good night of sleep, a healthful diet, and regular exercise can help boost your teen's mood and have a positive impact on their mental well-being.

In terms of fitness, there are many indoor and outdoor activities to keep yourself healthy.

Walks and bike rides are excellent ways to maintain an active lifestyle while keeping a social distance from others.

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 2)

The aim of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of an individual's, group's, or culture's social reality as closely as possible to how its participants experience or live it. Thus, individuals and communities are seen in their natural habitats.

Quantitative researchers seek to develop general laws of action and phenomena that apply to a variety of settings/contexts. Research is used to put a hypothesis to the test and ultimately confirm or deny it. In comparison to qualitative data, quantitative data is statistical in nature and is usually more formal – that is, more rigid and specified. Due to the fact that this data form is quantified in terms of numbers and values, it is a more fitting candidate for data processing. Though qualitative data is exploratory in nature, quantitative data is far more succinct and closed-ended.

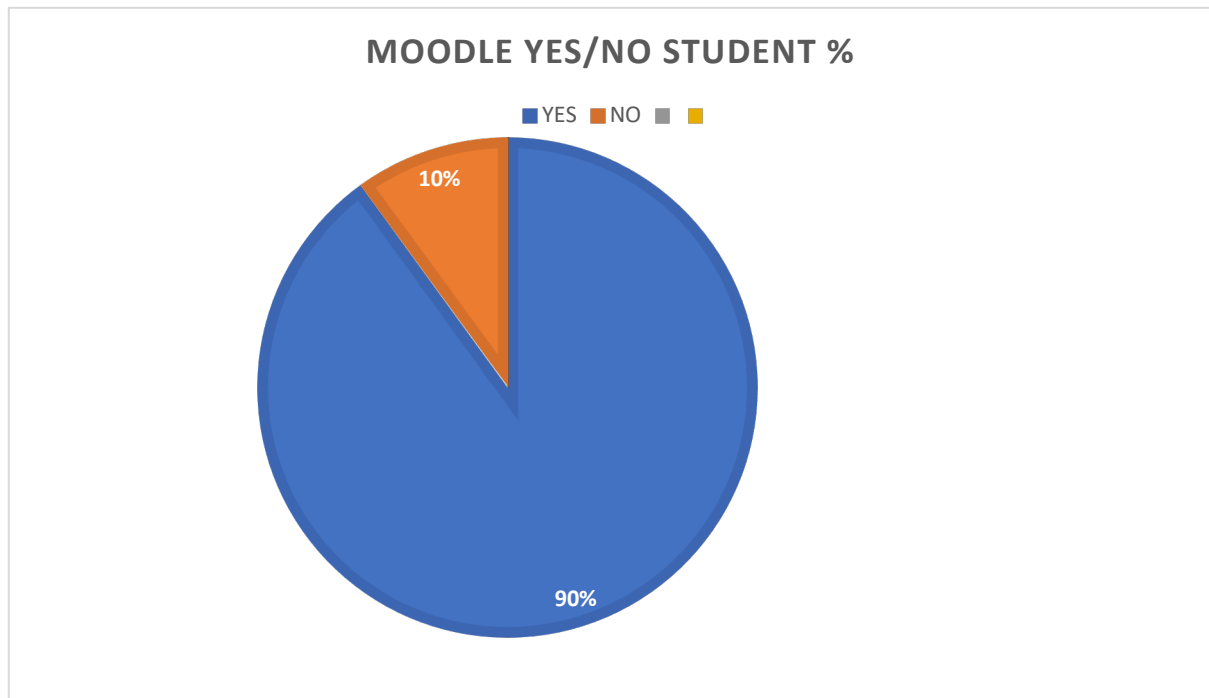
QUESTIONNAIRE

I am going to show you now my personal survey. I've interviewed my school mates about Moodle and Virtual Learning in general using a qualitative method, creating a survey with a list of question. I'm going to show you with tables and charts what's the result.

Q1 - DOES MOODLE HELP YOU WITH YOUR STUDIES? AND HOW?	ANSWER
PERSON N1	YES, because I have all the information that I need in one place, and when I want so I don't need to go crazy to find them.
PERSON N2	YES, because I have all the information together in one place and I can access to them whenever I want.
PERSON N3	YES, is a fine website. Because I can have a look back to the lessons that I had.
PERSON N4	YES, because is everything in one place, and If I didn't get something from the lesson, I can have a look back, many times as I need, and everywhere I am, and especially all the sources are reliable.
PERSON N 5	YES, because the teacher is going fast with the slides, but I can check on Moodle by myself and go back to the previous slide if I need
PERSON N6	YES, because is a space saver for my small bedroom, I don't need to stock any books physically.

PERSON N7

NO, I don't like Moodle at all, the system is too slow and many things are not linked to my course.

***THEME***

We can affirm that Moodle likes at most of the people that I had interviewed. The most of them mentioned the benefits to have your entire student material, just a click away from you, every time you want, everywhere you want. Only one person exposed a dislike to Moodle due to the slow system and a lot of contents that could have been removed because not related to the course that is doing.

Q2 – HOW OFTEN YOU USED IT?	ANSWER
PERSON N1	3/4 times a week.
PERSON N2	4/5 times a week.
PERSON N3	2 times a week.
PERSON N4	2 times a week, because I download all that I need and then I study from my computer, I don't like to go back and forward to the website.
PERSON N 5	4 times a week.
PERSON N6	3 times a week.
PERSON N7	2 times a week.

THEME

In terms of Moodle usage, the students responded at least twice per week, with someone even 5 times per week. Person n°4 explained why she just use it twice per week. She explained that she doesn't like to login many times, so she goes online, she download all that she needs and she study offline.

Moodle is a wonderful platform for sure, is giving you a full library to use for your research and the chance to have a look at the lectures whenever you want to make sure you understand everything from the class.

Q3 – WHAT’S THE BEST THING ABOUT IT?	ANSWER
PERSON N1	If you don’t understand something, you can easily check back the lesson on Moodle
PERSON N2	The library is included, and I don’t have to search in other platforms.
PERSON N3	The possibility to review all the live lesson in case I forget something on my notes, and the Library definitely.
PERSON N4	I like that I can find everything I need, the answer is there, and I don’t need books or space in my room.
PERSON N 5	I can see all my assignment guidelines or other information there on my profile.
PERSON N6	I like the pdf files regarding the lectures, the chance to see again, you can download them and re-read all that you need and all that you want.
PERSON N7	I really like the videos that are linked on the lessons. Is something that remember me when I was at school and we use to watch educational videos. Is good that you can read your lesson topic, but videos are more affecting your mind in terms of learning.

THEME

When I asked what they liked about Moodle, the most frequently given response is "checking back" on the lesson. Online courses may be troubling; sometimes, students may not respond quickly to the register, and sometimes, someone leaves the microphone on, and you spend time informing this person to ask that he turn off the microphone. Numerous factors can distract the audience from the lesson. What is the solution for this? Return to Moodle and re-read what you skipped. It's a really clever step, and I, for one, adored it.

Q4 – DID IT GIVE YOU SOMETHING MORE COMPARED TO A TEXTBOOK?	ANSWER
PERSON N1	Yes, because I don't like paper.
PERSON N2	I prefer paper, but it gave me more because you can find everything you need quicker and handy.
PERSON N3	Yes maybe, because you have literally all that you need there, you don't have to look for it too much, and for sure all the lessons are literally better following the slide for you, you don't need to move the page forward, the teacher is doing it for you.
PERSON N4	No, and it's weird to read on a laptop screen rather than a paper book but is quicker to look for whatever you need because of the keywords, and you don't waste a lot of time turning the pages.
PERSON N 5	I prefer a textbook, but it gave me more than that.
PERSON N6	I prefer a textbook; my eyes start to burn after 20 minutes in front of a laptop.
PERSON N7	I think that a textbook is boring, for example I use kindle to read my own things and it is amazing, I like whatever is handy and doesn't need a lot of space.

THEME

What I found interesting regarding this subject matter is that various respondents have varying opinions on online learning versus taking a class in person. It mostly relies on the individual's own personal background. If you're just beginning, then this could be good because it is only a little room away from your place of research, and it's easy to use, and much more useful because it doesn't change anything in terms of space in your room. It doesn't change so much in your lifestyle and you get use to read from a screen anyway. But in the role of a experienced student, which they are used to read from paper, it is almost an entirely different approach to the methods of learning. When you read your electronic books,

it's common for the tension levels to increase due to having the computer nearby and for long periods of time and trying to read the small text.

CONCLUSION

To summarise my research, I would say that returning to school after 11 years has been a positive experience thanks to online learning. I'm not familiar to attending live lessons, and it might influence my life if I were to do it all at once with live classes running.

It's been a nice start just studying from my place, on my desk, in my chair, in complete comfort. There was no reason to get up early; just give yourself an hour before the web class to take a short shower and get ready.

The most difficult challenge has been restarting studies after a long absence. I needed to plan my days hour by hour in order to complete all of my activities, job, and studies.

But, in the end, it's been so fun to meet new people, even if just through a monitor, and I often felt the same thing when I went to college in my country. Share my homework and my thoughts on a lecture. It was a nice leap in the past, and I realised that it is never too late to study, even though you are too busy with your everyday tasks, online learning is a good experience to combine them with exciting courses that might better your life in terms of work career.

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