

Module: Digital Skills and Research Methods

Module code: BMSW4003

Assignment Title: DSR Assessment 2

Individual Report

STUDENT NAME: ZELDA PEREIRA

STUDENT ID: 2132007

LECTURER: EJIRO ALBERT ESOWOD

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
Virtual Learning Environment: At a Glance	3
2.0 Background	4
Literature Review (Secondary Research)	4
3.0 Research	6
3.1 Research Aims	6
3.2 Research Objectives	6
4.0 Research Methodology	7
5.0 Primary Research Results	8
6.0 Discussion	11
7.0 Conclusion	12
References	13
Appendix (Questionnaire)	14

List of Tables

Table 1: Question 01,02, 05 and 06 Responses (Self-Made)	8
Table 2: Question 03, 04 and 08 Responses (Self-Made)	9
Table 3: Responses for Question 07 (Self-Made)	10

List of Figures

Figure 1: Responses for Q1, Q2, Q5 and Q6 (Self-Made)	8
Figure 2: Responses for Q3, Q4 and Q8 (Self-Made)	9
Figure 3: Response to Question 07 (Self-Made)	10

1.0 Introduction

Virtual Learning Environment: At a Glance

VLE or virtual learning environment can be defined as a learning platform that is based on an online medium and offers professors and learners a digital solution for the learning purpose which enhances their experience in learning (Doig and Hogg, 2012). The virtual learning environment was conceptualized by Michalis Xenos in 1986 and was finally implemented in 2004 backed by the required technological and technical support. This environment of learning is often used as a part of the larger learning management system in higher educational institutes. As the students at higher educational institutes are more concerned about the technological tools, the virtual learning environment is more effective to implement for this level of students rather than for the junior level students (Polisca, 2013). As the technological aspects are being advanced day by day the need for these types of changes in the education system is getting higher. Also, the recent pandemic period has shown the importance of VLE to be implemented in all sectors of educational aspects to make the learning process easier and more effective (Nowfeek and Rupasinghe, 2022). Thus the research on this topic is important.

2.0 Background

Literature Review (Secondary Research)

According to Hayati and Hashemy (2013), a virtual learning environment can be demonstrated as a system that provides the teacher and the learner with digital tools-based solutions which may create interactive and effective learning environments. This can help the teachers in creating, storing, and communicating their course plan, course content and lessons that promote effective communication of the learners to their teachers by using the digital tools of communication (Thannimalai, 2021).

According to Doig and Hogg (2012), a virtual learning environment can not be as same as the virtual classroom as it can be intended as a replacement or replicate version of the physical classroom for the learners who want to learn remotely where a VLE or a virtual learning environment facilitates the uses of technology that provides the real experience of the class such as the uses of interaction, quizzes, digital communication or polls to conducting the learning activities. There are many benefits provided by the virtual learning environment. According to Reed and Watmough (2015), this service provides access to the learners to their coursework at any time s/he wants from anywhere s/he is staying. Also, it facilitates remote learning that helps the learners to manage their time effectively by combining freedom and program structure. It also helps to have an expanded view of the learning objectives by collaborating with classmates from all over the world (Gan, Menkhoff and Smith, 2015). This learning process has some shortcomings as well.

According to Risquez and McAvinia (2018), a virtual learning environment does not provide clear instruction on the task and does not reflect the expectations of the both learner and the teacher. Also, timely feedback can be prevented by instant communication lacking is another barrier to this learning process (Gan, Menkhoff and Smith, 2015). There are different technological tools that are needed for the virtual learning environment such as assistive technologies, social media tools, multimedia tools and presentation technologies. These facilitate the virtual learning process to be implemented effectively. LearnCube, Adobe Connect, and Electa Live are some examples of virtual learning environment software.

According to Pelet and Lecat (2012), this learning process associates with different risks such as social isolation, poor development in communication skills and limited feedback options. If the learner does not have sufficient self-motivation for learning and time management skill, learning in this method becomes ineffective. Also if any of the participants in this learning

system do not contain sound technological knowledge, the learning becomes less effective. The virtual learning environment is backed by different acts such as the FERP Act 1974, COPP Act of 2000 and TEACH Act of 2002 that provide legal safety to make the learning process more protective and preferred to the users. According to Polisca (2013), a virtual learning environment provides different opportunities to the learners such as flexibility, and access to worldwide expertise where the learner can get knowledge from instructors from around the world. It also facilitates the documentation and storage of the study materials and provides comparatively lower costly education.

3.0 Research Aims and Objectives

3.1 Research Aims

The research aims are:

This study has the aim to understand how the virtual learning environment affects (whether it is positive or negative) the educational institutes in the UK.

This study is also aiming to understand the improved ways of VLE.

This study aims to attain knowledge about this learning process as well.

3.2 Research Objectives

The research objectives are:

Conducting both primary and secondary research by gathering qualitative and quantitative data.

Analysing the outcome of the research.

4.0 Research Methodology

The author, in conducting research, has to maintain some planning and procedures in each of the steps of that research like when s/he collects data, analyses and interprets these data s/he has collected so that s/he can get the findings of the study from assuming problems of that research topic (Goddard and Melville, 2011). This is called the research methodology. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches will be used in conducting this research as both mathematical and non-mathematical data will be used to attain the research aim. Non-mathematical data such as observations from the different authors on this topic will be used in the secondary research which is the use of a qualitative research approach in the study. On the other hand, the primary data will be collected in a questionnaire format which will be transmitted to the quantitative format by converting the answers into chart observation. There have been 10 questions where 2 of them are open-end questions and 8 of them were multiple choice which was asked to 20 participants from a huge population by ensuring fair representation of each sample group. In the primary research, a comprehensive case study will be used as the collection from primary sources will have been used in this study. In the secondary research, a systematic review will be used to find out the research aim as data have been collected from secondary sources such as books, journals, magazines etc. and will be used to conduct the study.

5.0 Primary Research Results

The result of the primary survey from the responses of the participants about VLE is given below:

Table 1: Question 01,02, 05 and 06 Responses (Self-Made)

Questions	Responses (Yes)	Responses(No)	Not Sure
Question 01	17	1	2
Question 02	14	4	4
Question 05	12	6	2
Question 06	5	9	6

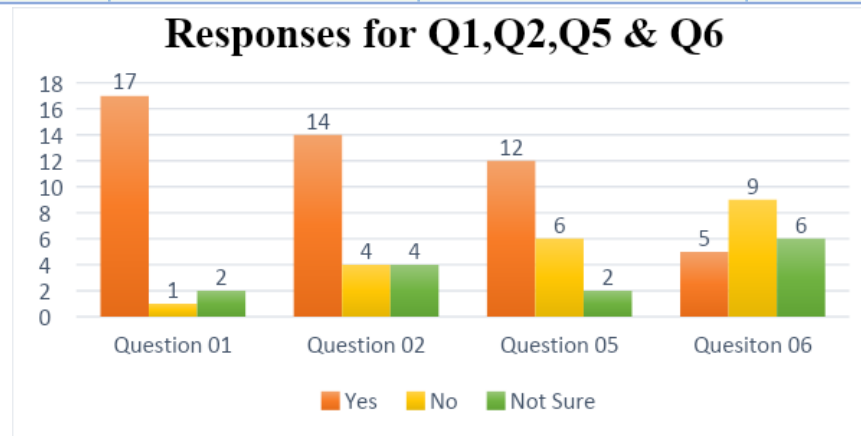


Figure 1: Responses for Q1, Q2, Q5 and Q6 (Self-Made)

The responses from question 1 (Do VLE seems time effective to you?) were being responded to by the sample of 20 people where 17 of them responded Yes, 1 of them respond No and 2 of them were not sure about this. The responses from question 2 (Do you believe that VLE costs less?) were being responded to by the same sample size where 14 of them responded Yes, 4 of them respond No and 4 of them were not sure. In responses to question 5 (Does VLE facilitate the students to get a better knowledge of learnings?), 12 of the total sample size responded Yes, 6 of them respond No and 2 of them were not sure. And for responding to question 6 (Does VLE provide better feedback and communication facilities than the physical classes?), 5 of them responded Yes, 9 of them respond No and 6 of them were not sure.

Table 2: Question 03, 04 and 08 Responses (Self-Made)

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Question 03	1	3	4	7	5
Question 04	3	5	5	2	5
Question 08	2	1	4	6	7

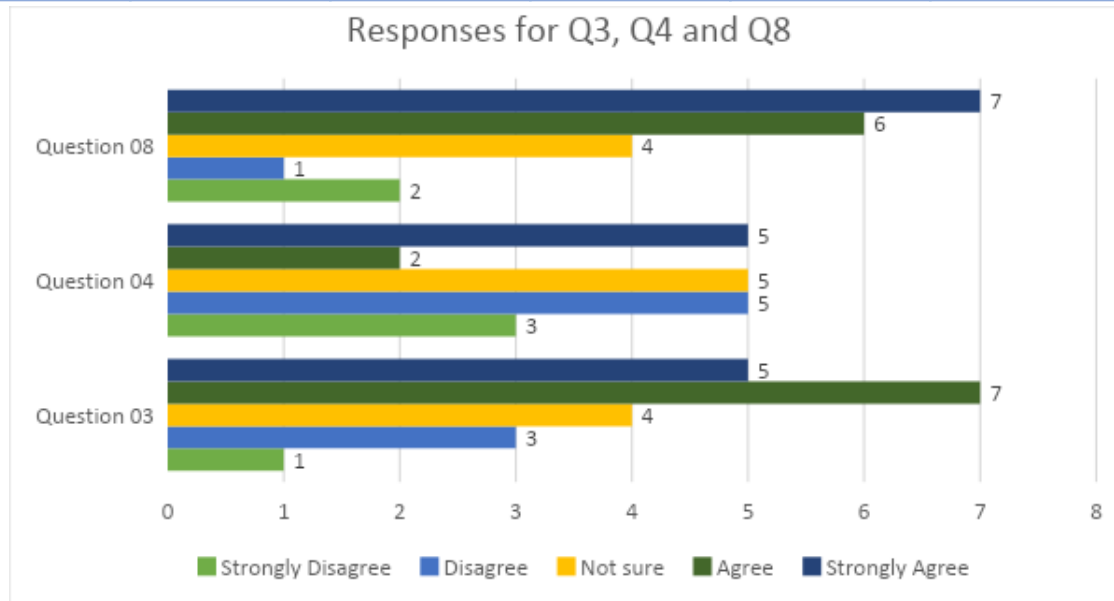


Figure 2: Responses for Q3, Q4 and Q8 (Self-Made)

Responses to the Question 3 (VLE creates social issues such as addiction to technological tools, social isolation etc.) shows that 5 of the 20 people's sample size respond Strongly Agree, 7 of them respond Agree, 4 of them respond Not Sure, 3 of them respond Disagree and 2 of them respond Strongly Disagree. In responses to Question 4 (VLE learning activities appeal more than physical classes to the learners.), 5 of the total sample size respond Strongly Agree, 2 of them respond Agree, 5 of them respond Not Sure, 5 of them respond Disagree and 3 of them respond Strongly Disagree. Responding to Question 8 (VLE has provided the best alternative way of learning to the students during the Covid-19 pandemic.), 7 of them respond Strongly Agree, 6 people respond Agree, 4 people respond Not Sure, 1 of them respond Disagree and 2 people respond Strongly Disagree.

Table 3: Responses for Question 07 (Self-Made)

Question	Positive feedback	Negative feedback
Question 07	12	8

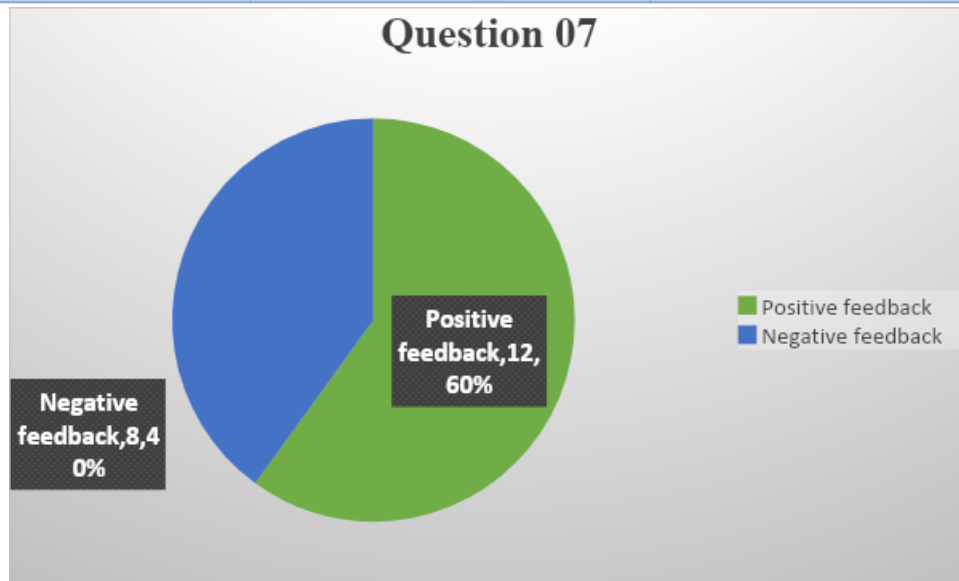


Figure 3: Response to Question 07 (Self-Made)

In the responses to question 7 about the feedback on the tools they are using in VLE, 14 participants responded with positive feedback which is 60% participants of the total 20 sample size respondents on the other hand 8 participants responded with negative feedback which is 40% participants of the total sample size.

6.0 Discussion

There are some particular results that can be drawn from the collected primary data from the responses that have been provided above. The questionnaires were set by the mindset to collect different perceptions of people about the effectiveness of VLE considering its cost and other aspects, comparison between VLE and physical class and the probable negative aspects of VLE.

In questions 1, 2 5 and 9 there were asked about the effectiveness of the VLE in the learning process considering different aspects of learning where most of the participants provided positive responses to these questions which reflects that most of the respondents believe that VLE is an effective learning process.

In question 3, the respondents were asked about its negative impact on the social accumulative behavioural aspects which has been responded positively which means the participants have the belief that VLE has some negative aspects as well on the mental aspect of the learners such as social isolation and much addiction in technological tools.

In questions 4, 6 and 10, the comparison between the VLE and physical class was asked to the participants of the primary research where most of the participants in both questions responded that they think that the virtual learning environment is much more effective than the physical classes in terms of appealing to the learners but it provides less effectiveness in the feedback process. So in this aspect, the participants have a mixed reaction when considering different factors of the comparison. This reflects that, though it is not that effective in some terms to the participants because of some of the shortcomings of this learning process, it is getting more appealing to the people by enhancing its effectiveness to the learners and the teachers in the changing social aspects day by day.

In question 7 the participants responded with their feedback regarding the tools of VLE that they are using whereas most of them provided positive feedback on the tools of VLE that they are using. This means these VLE tools are providing better services to the users and most people are getting satisfaction by using these VLE tools although having some issues.

Question 8 was included to have opinions about the effectiveness of VLE in the pandemic period where most of the participants provided positive responses and shared their opinion that the VLE was the best alternative that has been used as an educational tool.

7.0 Conclusion

From the above primary and secondary research analysis, it can be concluded that the virtual learning environment is getting more popular over the period as people's needs and responses naturally to technological tools are changing. Also, the recent pandemic period has shown how much important the use of technological tools in the educational sector is. Thus the secondary research provides a summary of the effectiveness of VLE in the learning procedures and how this is more effective for the learners from the physical classes. On the other hand, the primary research of this study can be summarized as, still, there are some shortcomings of the VLE that should have been eradicated by taking proper steps but it has many positive aspects that provide more effective learning compared to the physical classes.

References

- Doig, A. and Hogg, S., 2012. Engaging Blended Learning Students: An evolving approach to engaging students through the VLE. *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*, (4).
- Gan, B., Menkhoff, T. and Smith, R., 2015. Enhancing Students' learning process through interactive digital media: *New opportunities for collaborative learning*.
- Goddard, W. and Melville, S., 2011. *Research methodology*. Kenwyn, South Africa: Juta and Co.
- Hayati, D. and Hashemy, S., 2013. Communication Technologies and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in Teaching Literature. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*.
- Nowfeek, M. and Rupasinghe, D., 2022. Development of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) During the COVID -19 Pandemic: A Study with special reference to Advanced Technological Institute. *International Journal of Latest Technology in Engineering, Management and Applied Science*, 11(01).
- Pelet, J. and Lecat, B., 2012. Virtual Worlds as the Next Asset of Virtual Learning Environments for Students in Business?. *International Journal of Virtual and Personal Learning Environments*, 3(2).
- Polisca, E., 2013. Facilitating the Learning Process. *CALICO Journal*, 23(3), pp.499-515.
- Reed, P. and Watmough, S., 2015. Hygiene factors: Using VLE minimum standards to avoid student dissatisfaction. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, 12(1), pp.68-89.
- Risquez, A. and McAvinia, C., 2018. The VLE versus Open Education. *Irish Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning*, 3(2), pp.86-93.
- Thannimalai, T., 2021. Teachers' Intention to Continue Using Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(2).

Appendix (Questionnaire)

Questionnaires
Name of the Institute: Educational Level: Age Group a) 10-25 b) 26-40 c) 41-55 d) 55-70 Gender a) Male b) Female c) Others
1. Does VLE seems time effective to you? a) Yes b) No c) Not Sure 2. Do you believe that VLE costs less? a) Yes b) No c) Not Sure 3. VLE creates social issues such as addiction to technological tools, social isolation etc. a) Strongly Agreed b) Agreed c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagreed 4. VLE learning activities appeal more than physical classes to the learners. a) Strongly Agreed b) Agreed c) Neutral d) Disagree e) Strongly Disagreed 5. Does VLE facilitate the students to get a better knowledge of learning?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Not Sure

6. Does VLE provide better feedback and communication facilities than the physical classes?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Not Sure

7. Provide feedback on the tool you are using in the VLE?

- a) Positive Feedback
- b) Negative Feedback

8. VLE has provided the best alternative way of learning to the students during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- c) Strongly Agreed
- d) Agreed
- e) Neutral
- f) Disagree
- g) Strongly Disagreed

9. Provide your opinion on the usefulness of the VLE instrument you are using?

Answer:.....

10. Is VLE more effective than physical classes? How?

Answer:.....

Thank You For Your Support.