

Component 2 - Research Report

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BMSW4003_BIRM

Digital Skills and Research Methods.

1. Abstract:

This research report review and examines the digital tools mostly used to collaborate at UWTSD (University of Wales Trinity Saint David). The purpose of this paper was to contribute to a better understanding of digital collaboration and tools.

The research question was 'Which digital mostly used to collaborate at UWTSD?' The choice of research design was based on quantitative method. The primary reason for this was that the survey tool, a questionnaire which can ask specific questions that are closed and the result can be codified in numerical data. There were twelve participants of the survey, who are staff, members, and students at the University.

Following researchers' information source were included in the report:

- Ankita Kirti, September 17, (2020), (<https://educationblog.microsoft.com>).
- FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHILE CHOOSING THE RIGHT RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (www.phdmonster.com).
- Johnson et al, Resta&Laferriere, (2007).
- P. Bhandari. 'Ethical Considerations in Research, Types & Examples.' Confidentiality, (October 18, 2021).
- Salopek, Jennifer J. "Digital Collaboration." *Training & Development*, vol. 54, (6, June,2000).
- (www.engage.dhsc.gov.uk).
- (www.libguides.newcastle.edu.au).
- (www.researchgate.net).
- (www.ukessay.com).

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2. Introduction:

What are digital tools? Digital tools are programs, websites or online resources that can make tasks easier to complete. (<https://engage.dhsc.gov.uk>).

Digital collaboration is the next big thing in modern times. Digital collaboration defined its "working in virtual teams", but there is a bit more to it. Elliott Masie, of The Masie Centre in Saratoga Springs, New York, defines it as 'the use of technology to enhance and extend the abilities of individuals and organizations to collaborate, independent of their vertical area'.

Salopek (2000). There are lots of collaboration digital tools, such as: MS teams, Zoom, OneDrive, Outlook, MS office, Google, and WhatsApp etc.

With the university sector reliance upon digital technology has become more prevalent due to the Covid pandemic and home working. Most UK universities now operate a hybrid system of delivering teaching and lectures and teaching are offered on online platforms which enable group collaboration and working together and the delivering of lecture materials. Consequently, the aim of this research was to gather information about the most favoured or commonly used digital tool.

Finally, the research's question was 'Which Digital Tool Is Most Commonly Used for Collaboration at UWTSD?'.

3. Research design:

3.1 Research Question: The research questions were phrased as statements or direct questions that participants could answer agree, disagree, strongly disagree, neutral strongly agree.

- Which digital do you most used for collaboration at UWTSD?

The research question was formulated to reflect the aims of the research which was to find out the prevalence of use of the digital tools at UWTSD (University of Wales Trinity Saint David).

Following are the factors was considered to find out the research's result:

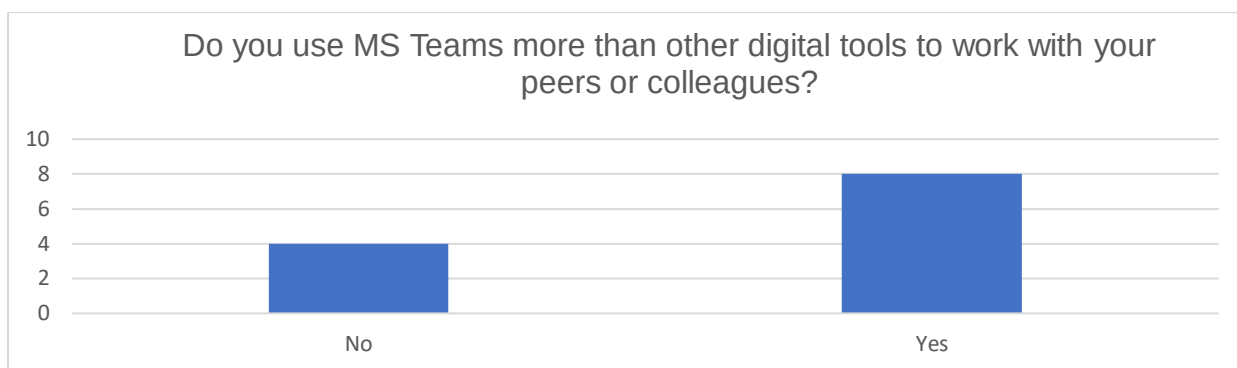
- **Research Goal:** Goals were set to finding out the result of the questionnaire 'which digital mostly used to collaborate at UWTSD?'
- **Statistical significance:** Another essential factor was considered while choosing the research methodology is statistical results.
- **Qualitative data:** Quantitative method was used to collect and analyse numerical data.
- **Sample size:** Sample size was considered to determine answers to research questions and meet research objectives.
- **Timing:** Timeframe was set to find out the research's result within. (www.phdmonster.com).
- **Ethics:** Ethics were considered to protect the dignity, rights, and welfare of research participants.

3.2 Research Methods: The choice of research design was based on quantitative method. The primary reason for this was that the survey tool, a questionnaire is an inexpensive method and it can ask specific questions that are closed and illicit information quickly which can then be codified into numerical data to find results. Using a quantitative research design would have produced more in-depth answers but it would have taken more time and man hours to analyse the data as well as conducting the questionnaires in the first place. The participants were recruited through a process of selection by asking a selection of peers and staff at UWTSD. if they would be willing to participate in our research. The data collection was conducted over a two-week period.

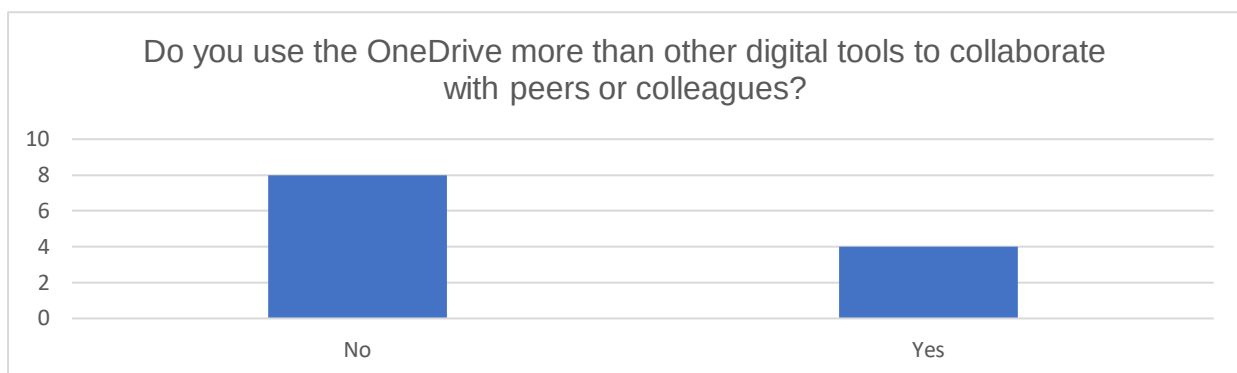
3.3 Ethical Considerations: Ethical considerations in research covers making sure that any participants are safe guarded and not put at risk through their involvement in research and that their human dignity is not compromised. Primarily for the purpose of this research this means that their names and any personal information are not revealed against a participant wishes. This is done so that any research maintains its scientific integrity and validity. Bhandari (2021).

Ethical considerations of confidentiality and anonymity were covered through giving participants the option of revealing their name in the published research or not. Any participants who declined had their names removed.

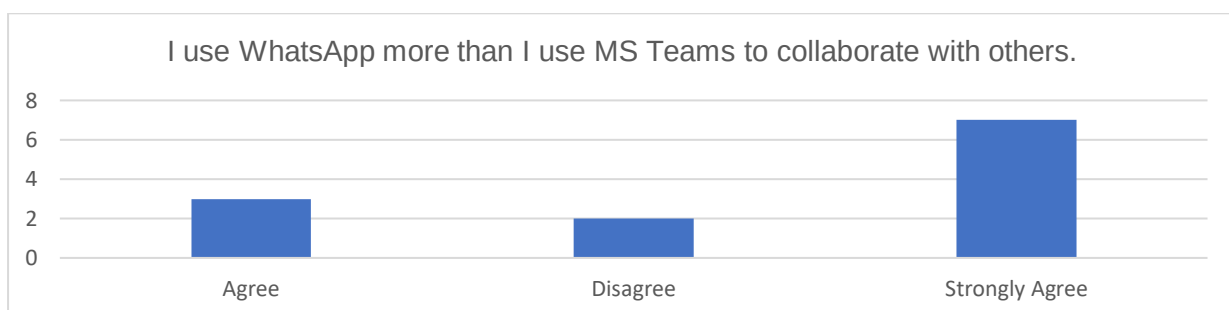
4. Results:



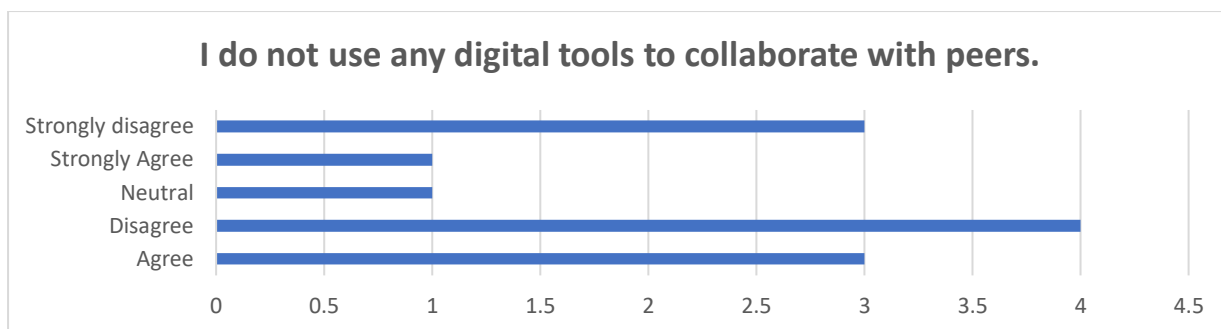
- Question: Do you use Ms Teams more than other digital tools to work your peer and colleagues?
- Eight participants answered, they use MS Teams more than other digital tools to work with their peers and colleagues and four participants answered 'No' to the question.



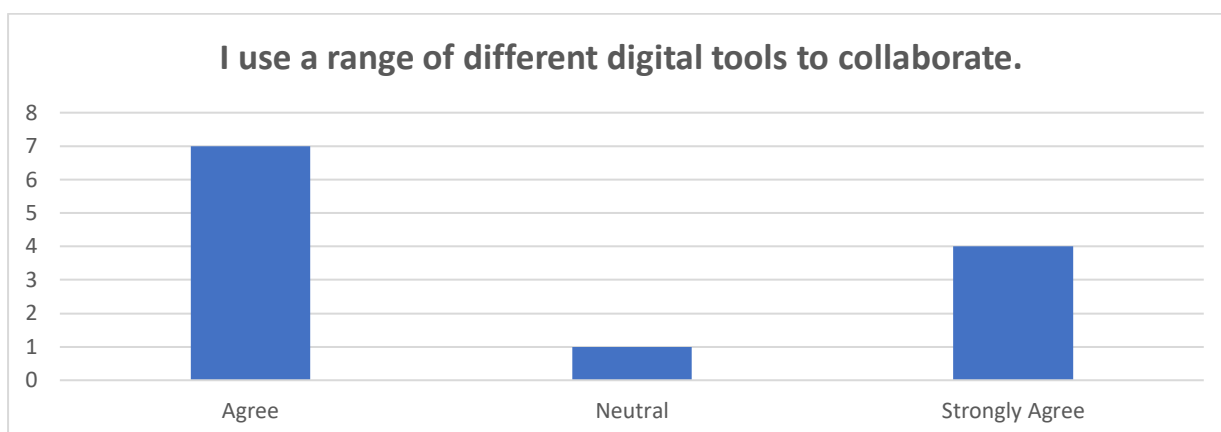
- Question: Do you use the OneDrive more than other digital tools to collaborate with peers or colleagues?
- Eight participants answered, they do not use the OneDrive more than other digital tools to collaborate with their peers and colleagues and four participants answered they use the One drive more than other digital tools for the collaboration.



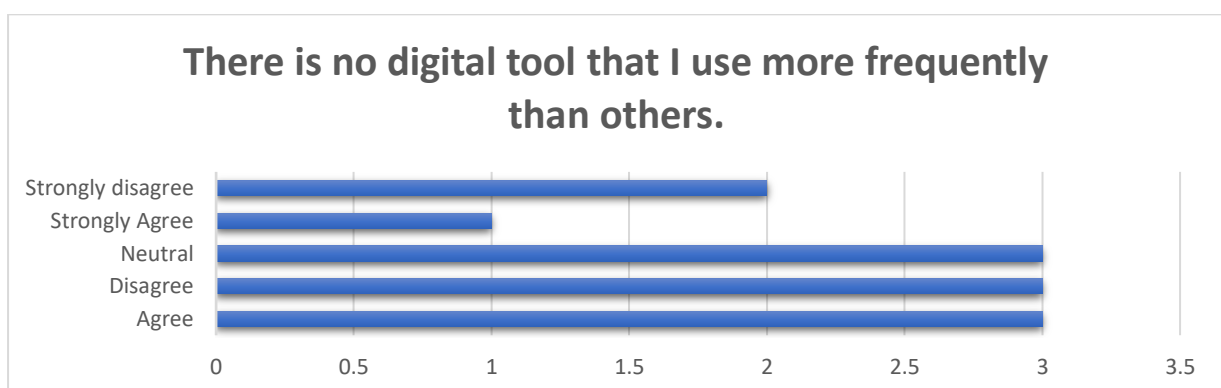
- Question: I use WhatsApp more than I use MS Teams to collaborate with others?
- Three participants agreed that they use WhatsApp more than MS Teams to collaborates. Two participants disagreed to that and seven participants strongly conceded.



- Question: I do not use any digital tools to collaborate with peers?
- Three participants agreed and another one strongly agreed that they do not use any digital tools to collaborate with peers while four participants disagreed and another three strongly disagreed to that. One participant answered Neutral.



- Question: I use a range of different digital tools to collaborate?
- Seven participants agreed and another four participants strongly agreed that they use varieties of digital tools to collaborate. One participant said Neutral.



- Question: There is no digital tool that I use more frequently than others?
- Three participants agreed and one participant strongly agreed that they use the digital tools equivalently while three other participants disagreed to that and one strongly disagreed. Three other participants answered Neutral.

5. Discussion:

The study question was to investigate 'Which digital tool was mostly used to collaborate at UWTSD?'. Given that the most used platform for online teaching across the university was M.S. Teams our hypothesis was that this tool would be the most favoured digital tool used. Secondly it was surmised that WhatsApp would be the second tool used most popularly as this was the app promoted for group discussion within student university group dialogue and communication. Consequently, the results confirmed our hypothesis that MS Teams was the most used digital tool for collaboration in the university. Taking the 12 participants results revealed that 8 out of the 12 participants used M.S. Teams as opposed to only 4 preferring other methods although what they were was not categorised.

In discussing why M.S. Teams was the most used tool it is not difficult to see that it provides an array of collaboration tools that go beyond merely sharing screen and visual/audio. These benefits allow for:

- The Quick Question
- Microsoft Teams Video Calling
- Microsoft Planner App in Teams
- Fewer Email Threads
- Integration with the Microsoft Suite
- Make Calls (and More) From Any Device
- Scheduling Meetings in Teams (with Ease)
- Your Activity Feed
- Spiff up Your WFH Office
- Security

Mercedes et al (2020) considered the age of students and their ability to be technically competent within the digital sphere. This study found that the younger students had a level of technical ease and ability that was greater than older students. This was attributed to their younger introduction to social media and their frequent use at a younger age. These highlights an area that was not investigated namely that of digital competence. It may be all well and good in purporting that MS Teams is a more beneficial tool than others because of its wide array of supporting tools however, this may well be that its non-users fall into the category of having less digital competence. It was outside these studies remit to investigate this, but it might be one of the mitigating factors that cause lack of engagement with some digital tools by some users.

When considering WhatsApp usage amongst students the results showed that universally this was used with 100% of usage by students and staff across the university. Abudul et al (2021), considered the reason for this being the ease of use which supports the idea of digital competence being a reason for non-usage. 'WhatsApp is a tool for communication, collaboration, and learning in education can develop communication skills among students.'

With securely store files and information, renders files available from anywhere for collaboration, Sharable content across teams, large or small, OneDrive is a better way to organize learning material and class work. Using school-issued laptops or home computers, where they could quickly run out of storage space, especially if it's shared a family computer. This year many schools are implementing either online or hybrid models, where students are in physical classes part-time and working remotely the rest of the day. This means important information will continue to be stored across disparate locations, with all parties requiring anywhere access to files and a place with enough storage where they can securely store their work. Kirti, (2020).

6. Conclusion:

Digital collaboration is a wide area of research it covers technology supported collaborative learning environment. Digital collaborative learning environments such as UWTSD (University of Wales and Trinity Siant David), have positive aspects towards the student's learning satisfaction, provision of scaffolding, higher order of thinking skills, and complex problem solving. Collaboration's tools like MS Teams, WhatsApp, and OneDrive supports the UWTSD students to build their knowledge through interaction, learning academic materials, exchanging thoughts freely and come on concrete answer by having the consensus of group. At these platforms they have opportunity to reflect on their own thoughts and regulate their learning by taking on-going assessment of own and other arguments. These collaboration's tools are the most useful tools to foster the university's students' logical and critical thinking, as this paper supports the evidence of research report that, MS Team, WhatsApp, and OneDrive are the most commonly use tools for professional collaboration at UWTSD. Johnson et al, Resta&Laferriere, (2007).

7. Reference List:

- Ankita Kirti, September 17, (2020), (<https://educationblog.microsoft.com>).
- FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHILE CHOOSING THE RIGHT RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (<https://www.phdmonster.com/factors-to-consider-while-choosing-the-right-research-methodology/>).
- (<https://engage.dhsc.gov.uk>).
- <https://libguides.newcastle.edu.au/researchmethods#:~:text=Research%20methods%20are%20the%20strategies,different%20tools%20for%20data%20collection>.
- P. Bhandari. 'Ethical Considerations in Research, Types & Examples.' Confidentiality, October 18, 2021.
- Salopek, Jennifer J. "Digital Collaboration." *Training & Development*, vol. 54, no. 6, June, 2000, p.38. *GaleAcademicOneFile*, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A63795964/AONE?u=anon~ac230365&sid=googleScholar&xid=f5331a4a. Accessed 22 Apr. 2022.
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- (<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/10/3969/htm>).
- https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Abdul-Abdullah-7/publication/356880010_WhatsApp_and_Its_Potential_to_Develop_Communication_Skills_among_University_Students/links/61b146b9bec354609d61466c/WhatsApp-and-Its-Potential-to-Develop-Communication-Skills-among-University-Students.pdf.

8. Appendix – A blank copy questionnaire:

The image shows a Google Forms questionnaire titled "BMSW4003 Digital skills and research methods". The subtitle is "which digital tools is most commonly used for collaboration at UWTSD?". The form is addressed to "Hi, Mohammed. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address." and includes a progress indicator showing three dots.

1. I consent to take part in this questionnaire?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Neutral

2. Do you use MS Teams more than other digital tools to work with your peers or colleagues?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

3. Do you use the OneDrive more than other digital tools to collaborate with peers or colleagues?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

4. Rank these applications in order according to how frequently you use them to collaborate with others. (Most frequent at the top)

- ☐ WhatsApp
- ☐ MS Teams
- ☐ Moodle Discussion Boards
- ☐ OneDrive
- ☐ MS Word