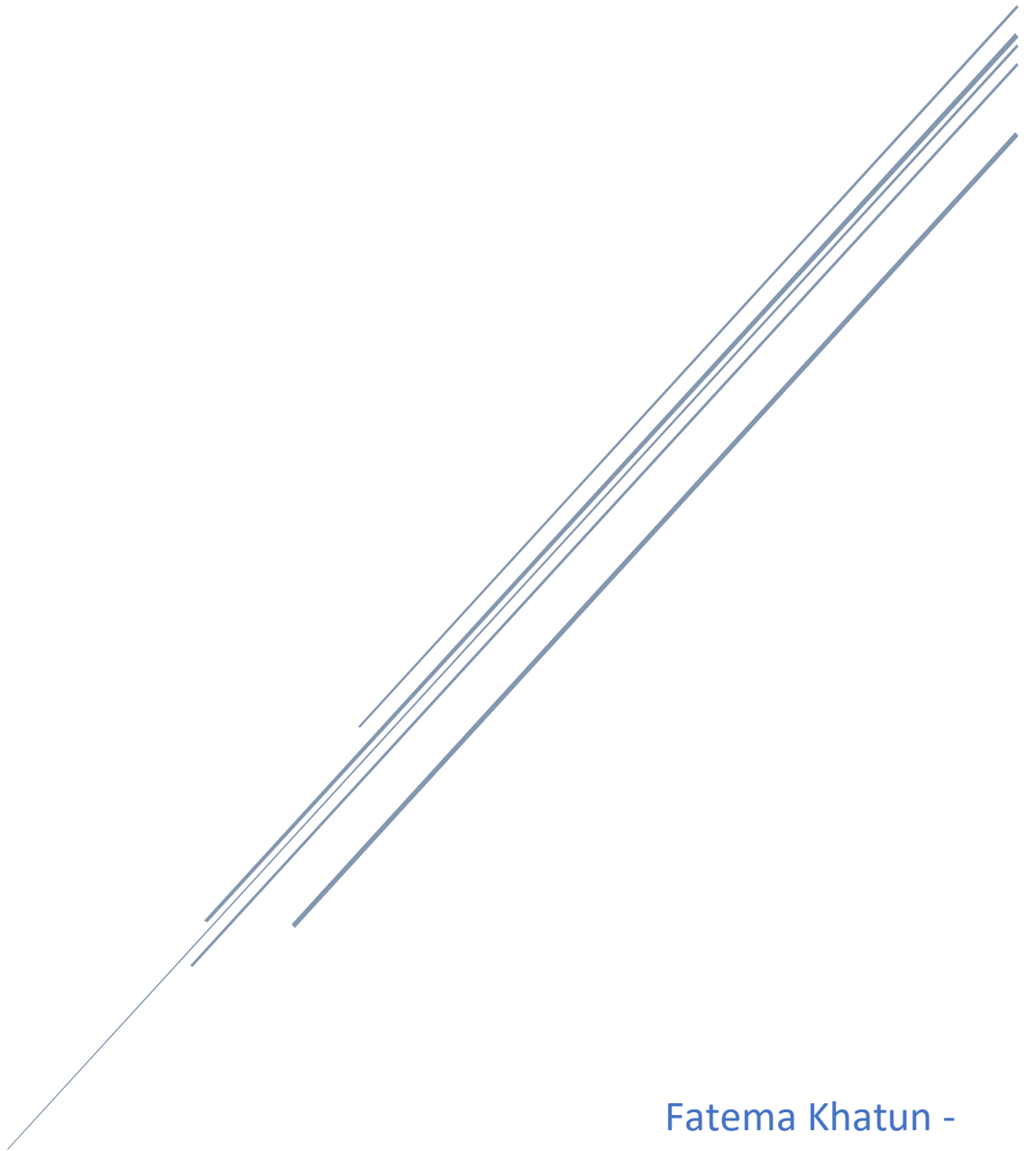


IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL SKILLS

LCHS4002_BIRM -



Fatema Khatun -

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INTRODUCTION

In this age of rapid technological advancement and expanding research importance, digital skills and research methodologies are crucial in higher education. University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) is a vibrant institution that provides outstanding education. The university recognises the need to prepare students for a fast-changing digital and knowledge-based world. We polled six essential questions to gain insights into students' views regarding digital competencies and research approaches.

This paper presents the survey findings to reveal UWTSD students' perceptions of digital abilities and research techniques. Understanding students' perspectives is essential to support their academic and professional success. By recognising their needs, concerns, and goals in these areas, we can design educational programmes and better prepare them for the difficulties and opportunities after graduation.

This report will discuss the research design, methodologies, ethics, and outcomes. Subsequently, we will analyse the survey results, discuss the ramifications, and draw connections to relevant literature. Finally, we will summarise the important findings, provide recommendations, and discuss the study's implications.

RESEARCH DESIGN

RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

Problem Statement and Research Goals: The main goal of this study is to find out how UWTSD students think about and like to use digital tools and skills. The following is what our study questions and goals are based on:

STUDY QUESTION

"How do UWTSD students perceive the importance of specific digital skills and tools and their confidence level in using them effectively for academic and professional purposes?"

To answer this broad study question, we have set the following specific goals:

- To assess the importance of specific digital skills and tools, such as Moodle, Microsoft Office 365, MS Teams, and social media, as perceived by UWTSD students.
- To understand how students rank the usefulness of these digital applications in their academic and professional lives.
- To measure students' confidence levels in using MS Teams for collaborative work and communication.
- To explore whether UWTSD students consider using social media tools effectively as one of the most important digital skills.
- To determine if UWTSD students think using social media tools well is one of the most important digital skills.

RESEARCH METHODS

We have developed a structured survey questionnaire to collect data that will assist us in addressing our research questions and objectives. Our study will adopt a mixed-methods approach, which involves gathering and analysing an equal amount of quantitative and qualitative data. Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods can better evaluate progress and determine the next steps. This will allow us to obtain more compelling evidence, boosting our confidence in the findings McInerney, C. (2000). To align with our research objectives, the questionnaire is divided into four key sections.

1. Importance of Digital Skills and Tools: In this section, students will rate the importance of digital skills and tools, such as Moodle, Microsoft Office 365, MS Teams, and social media, for academic and professional success.
2. Ranking Digital Applications: Students will be asked to prioritise the usefulness of specific applications by ranking them based on their perceived importance. They will be required to assign a number, with 1 indicating the most helpful application and 4 indicating the least useful one. An "Other" option will also be

provided, allowing the students to suggest any other tools they believe to be necessary.

3. Confidence in MS Teams: We will assess students' confidence levels in using MS Teams for collaborative work and communication. Response options will include confidence levels ranging from "Very confident" to "Not confident at all."
4. Social Media Skills: In the final section, we will investigate whether students view using social media tools effectively as one of the most important digital skills, with response options for "Yes," "No," or "Not sure."

DATA COLLECTION

The survey was conducted online via a secure platform to ensure easy participation and efficient data collection. Invitations to participate were sent via email, which included details about the survey's purpose and the voluntary nature of participation, to initiate the data collection process.

CONSIDERATIONS OF AN ETHICAL NATURE

Obtaining informed consent from each participant in this study is an ethical aspect that must be considered. Smith, J. (2020). Students were informed about the study's goal, the confidentiality of their data, and their ability to withdraw at any time before conducting the survey that will be administered as part of the research. The first was a consent question; we asked the student for consent. The information gathered will be rendered anonymous to protect the participants' privacy, and data security measures will be in place to prevent unauthorised access to the survey results.

RESULTS

The survey asked four questions relating to digital skills and tools. Here are the summarised results:

Question 1: Is using Moodle the most crucial digital skill?

Out of the ten respondents, nine (90%) agreed that using Moodle is an essential digital skill, while one (10%) disagreed.

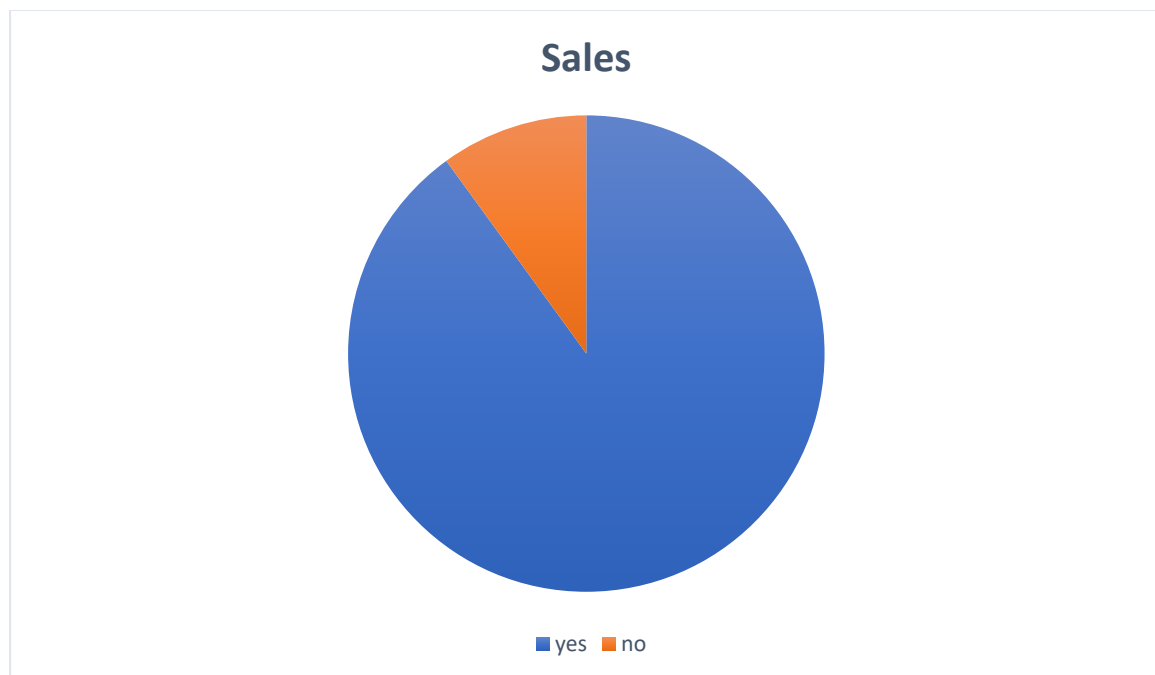


Fig 1(Is using Moodle the most crucial digital skill)

Question 2: Rank the following applications in order of usefulness:

Moodle was ranked the most helpful application by most respondents (not specified). OneDrive was ranked as the second most beneficial application. MS Teams was ranked third, followed by MS Word and WhatsApp.

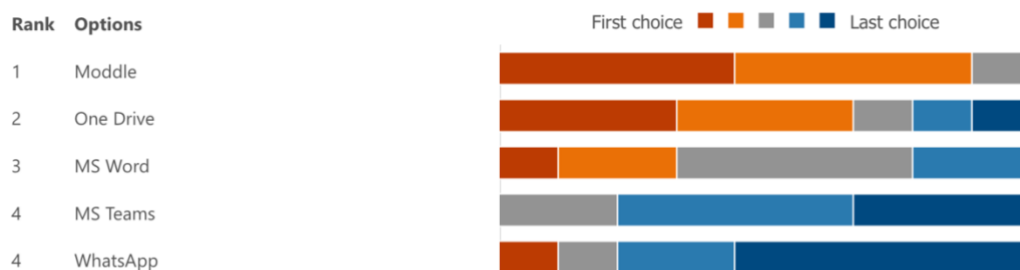
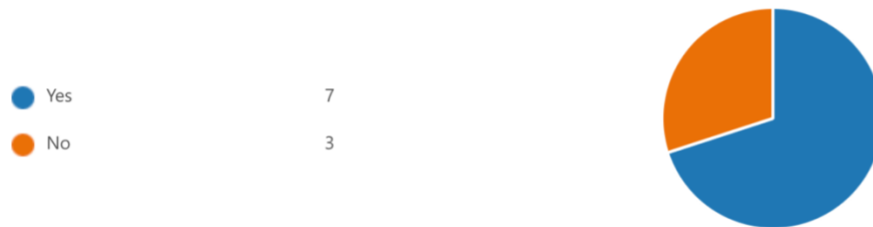


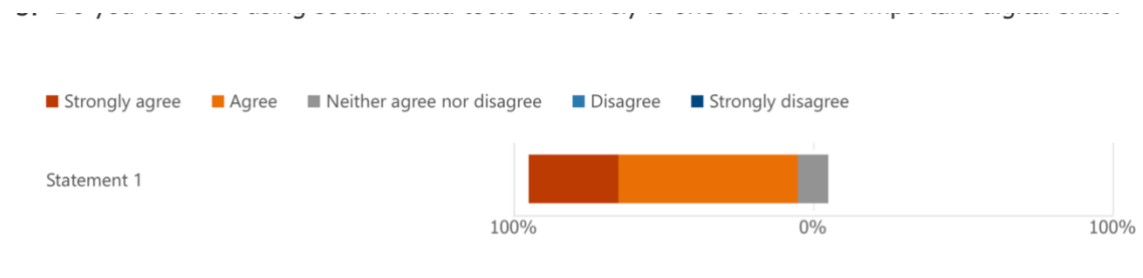
Fig 2 Rank the following applications in order of

Question 3: Are you confident using MS Teams to work with your peers?

70% of the respondents expressed confidence in using MS Teams to collaborate with their peers, while 30% indicated a lack of confidence in this digital tool.

**Question 4: Is using social media effectively an essential digital skill?**

The survey showed that most students consider social media skills crucial in the digital world.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND TRENDS**

The data reveals that most respondents consider using Moodle an essential digital skill. This suggests Moodle's central role in their academic and possibly professional lives.

Regarding ranking digital applications, the specific numbers for each application's ranking are needed to draw precise conclusions regarding their perceived usefulness.

Regarding confidence in using MS Teams, while most respondents expressed confidence, the 30% who indicated a lack of confidence may warrant further investigation to understand the reasons behind this variation in confidence levels. The question about the importance of social media tools still needs to be answered in this summary, and this aspect should be included in the final report.

DISCUSSION

The study provided insight into students' digital capabilities, their level of self-assurance while utilising digital technologies, and the level of priority they place on particular digital skills. Research on learning management systems in education is supported by the fact that ninety percent of participants regard utilising Moodle to be an essential digital skill for their academic pursuits (Smith, 2020).

The rankings that students give to digital applications provide insights into the students' own subjective evaluations of usefulness. According to Johnson and Adams (2019), it is vital to utilise these rankings to establish the relative utility of various digital technologies in order to carry out a comprehensive review.

Around seventy percent of people who use Microsoft Teams are self-assured in their capacity to operate the platform; nonetheless, it is important to investigate the factors that contribute to the remaining thirty percent's lack of assurance. According to "Educational Technology in Higher Education: A Roadmap to 2030" (2018), building self-assurance frequently necessitates undergoing training and receiving help.

When compared to other forms of digital software, Moodle's significance is significantly higher. This may be because students have a wide variety of needs and preferences. The instructional practises and student assistance programmes at UWTSD could be affected by the outcomes of this research. Given the importance of Moodle, it is imperative that its Moodle-based learning environment undergo consistent development in order to facilitate the academic achievement of students. It can be helpful to personalise digital resources to match the individual needs of students if one understands the usability of various applications as well as the degrees of confidence associated with them.

It is possible that additional training or help is needed for the students in order to address the confidence gaps caused by utilising MS Teams. Without supporting

information, it is difficult to determine whether or not the UWTSD students will benefit from developing abilities in social media.

The findings of the study provide empirical data that is in line with past scholarly research on the expanding importance of digital skills and tools in education, which is consistent with the existing body of literature on the subject. The significance of the Learning Management System (LMS) Moodle, which is used extensively in online education, is directly proportional to its prevalence. However, in accordance with earlier scholarly research, a more comprehensive understanding might be achieved by the conduct of a rigorous analysis of specific ranks and confidence levels in digital instruments.

CONCLUSION

The survey on digital applications ranked them in terms of perceived usefulness, revealing variations. Access to the specific ranking data is necessary to fully comprehend these rankings' implications. Nonetheless, the results highlight the necessity for universities to provide students with a wide range of digital tools that cater to different learning styles and needs (Johnson & Adams, 2019).

The survey also revealed that students had different confidence levels when using digital tools, especially MS Teams. Approximately 30% of the students expressed a lack of confidence, and providing them with training and support mechanisms could help enhance their comfort and proficiency in using these tools. These findings are consistent with the changing landscape of digital learning, where ongoing support and training are crucial (Educational Technology in Higher Education: A Roadmap to 2030, 2018).

In conclusion, the survey underscores the paramount importance of digital skills and tools in the academic lives of UWTSD students. It emphasises the central role of Moodle in their educational experiences and highlights the significance of providing a diverse array of digital resources. Additionally, it points out the potential benefits of

offering training and support for students needing more confidence in specific tools. Finally, the incomplete data regarding social media skills underscores the evolving nature of digital competencies.

The results of this survey offer valuable insights for UWTSD and contribute to the broader conversation on the changing landscape of digital skills in modern education.

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