

DIGITAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODS

THE IMPACT OF VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

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OVERVIEW OF VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Virtual education is a learning environment in which the teacher and student are separated by time or location, or both, and the teacher distributes course content via course management tools, interactive media resources, Internet, video meetings and other means. Virtual learning is a new educational example that is aiming students to achieve and improve the educational access. The necessity for students and teachers to share a classroom is reduced or eliminated. A lot of communication platforms like: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Skype, etc, have made it possible for people all over the world to communicate with each other and share their intentions in a matter of seconds. The concept of the Virtual Learning was introduced in the mid-1990s and since that time many definitions were found in the literature. This technology is being used especially from lecturers and students. By researching for virtual learning, you can gain useful information, communicate knowledge and instruction. Also, you are self-contained and capable of visualising, communicating, and interacting with society. (Kanimozhi, 2018)

LITERATURE REVIEW – VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

SERVICES

- **Cellular phone services:** A mobile-advanced virtual classroom would not have been prerequisite even the past few years. However, the time have changed and if the students and lecturers cannot have access on their cellular devices, they are both losing out. Cellular phone's convenience gives to the students more freedom how and in where they learn, which helps both lecturers and students because it provides more opportunity to the students to interact with the lecturer's content.
- **Cooperate services:** More than ever before, virtual students are cooperating with each other. Students are conversing in forums, cooperating on team activities, and competing for the top spot on the lecturer's scoreboard. In some circumstances, these encounters are the new determining element of online class. Students have grown to see them as locations where they may form a contact with other students based on shared concerns, rather than as digital relocations of physical classrooms.

- **Exploratory services:** For both students and educators, virtual education is characterised by novelty. Online classrooms offer new possibilities for instructors to give in exciting, compelling, and successful educational substance. As a result, students engage with classes in novel ways, demonstrating what does work and what does not in the field for virtual learning. (Ferriman, 2019)

BENEFITS

Virtual learning has more than just the common and classic system of educating people. The major advantage of virtual learning is the pliability and effacement of needless and expensive travel on the campus. There are also some other benefits like:

- We can reduce the value of the education curriculum from the usage of virtual learning process since we can try out to create a virtual learning course using the suitable software and processions.
- The students will be able to change their educational mode. Most virtual learning packages can be used at any time.
- The administration of virtual learning projects for bigger groups of undergraduates will be simple. (Behrouzian Nejad and Azad, 2012)

CHALLENGES

- **Versability:** The transition from attending in person to online education can be very challenging and some students need time to adjust the new format. Furthermore, learners who are accustomed to learn in a conventional in class setting may struggle to study on virtual platforms. The students understanding value will vary, while the same topic will be presented in both physical and virtual sessions.
- **Disturbance:** When you are in virtual class, there are several opportunities to engage in other actions such as social networking or listening to the music. Disturbance can waste time, cause focus problems, and impair the efficacy of distant education. To stay focused and avert disturbances, you must first determine your learning aims and objectives, then you create a study strategy to attain them.
- **Technical problems:** A slow network, damaged hardware and flawed software are all examples of technical concerns. A lack of grasp of technology and PC operations causes a slew of technical issues. Furthermore, internet rapidity has a

huge impact on how fast you can get to class. As a result, a very fast internet connection is required for a successful, effective, and error-free virtual education experience. (www.viewsonic.com, n.d.)

TECHNOLOGIES

- **High-definition audio-visual technologies:** Having audio-video capability is a vital when interacting with pupils online. You need to assure that the camera you are using to show yourself to the class produces clear and smooth image. Poor webcam disfigures the image can be quite discomposing and can make it difficult to learn.
- **Efficiency to record meetings:** The ability to record online meetings is one of the advantages of the online learning. Pupils can replay the videos of their teachers and keep notes later, allowing them to be more completely involved during live conversations. To record also can help to recall what you have learned during the meeting.
- **Trustworthy computer:** Using an online classroom, your device becomes the centre of your learning environment. Although the opportunity to carry your own computer is a significant advantage for digital education because pupils can choose to erect what apply best to them. (Robert, n.d.)

RISKS

- **Lecturer's risk:** Lecturers are accountable for helping the pupils in academic matters. Lecturers can either watch or purchase class substance and presentment from others, depending on the course's requirements. All online leaning hazards should not be confined to the technologist system. It is vital to include all teaching, exams, estimation, and grading techniques. All lecturers need to be informed of the risk that pupils will assume an unchanged questionnaire prior to the start of the tests, and all the replies will be saved in the same manner.
- **Student's risk:** Students make up most users in a virtual educational system, as they are learning as well as dispense their education with others. They can be divided into many parts, including degree, diploma, junior, doctoral, and postgraduate. However, every individual which is using these should be careful of

any materials acquired from the school, lecturers, or other colleges. Very important, also, if infiltrators will alter the documents and questionnaires, learners then will experience difficulties through the test.

- **Other risks of virtual learning:** Aside from the hazards listed above, it contains several other risks such as:
 - **Physical:** Physical calamities such as fire, storms, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and floods can all pose a risk. These dangers can have a significant impact on a virtual education regime.
 - **Deliberative deed:** Blackmail, theft and fraud are all possible risks. (ResearchGate, n.d.)

LEGISLATION

We should be aware of many legal difficulties surrounding the usage of virtual environment in education. However, many of the disposable updating is more of a guide to nice practice than a declaration of legal requirement. In general, even if there is not applicable legislation, adhering to a proper practice policy should be the primary goal. Where legislation exists, a nice practice policy should encourage people to know it and follow it. Literary property, data defence, and licencing are the most complicated legal concerns. (Coursehero.com, 2022)

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Self-sufficiency and time management:** Learners that are doing online classes typically improve their abilities to operate independently and get expertise managing their time effectively. Online students gain these abilities more quickly than those who learn purely in a common teaching method because they have no one to supervise them and do their tasks.
- **Advanced teaching:** Agricultural schools and small schools, in many situations are unable to provide advanced teaching. Online learning allows learners to obtain adeptness in branches that would else be unavailable to them.

- **Importance of written work:** To succeed on your studies as well as to your profession you need to require strong writing abilities. Online teaching encourages pupils to get on with more successfully through writing. Online education obviously allows learners to improve their writing abilities. (Kanimozhi, 2018)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH

Some of the advantages and disadvantages of virtual education:

Advantages:

- Lecturers can provide lessons to the learners more efficiently through virtual education. Lecturers can employ a variety of virtual education tools like PDFs, videos, and digital audio files as one part of their class preparations. Lecturers, by expanding their lesson's plan, they can be more profitable tutor beyond the standard textbooks.
- There are lower risks of pupils missing lectures because virtual classes can be attended from your home or any other spot.
- Another advantage of virtual education is the cost savings. When compared to traditional schooling, virtual education is significantly cheaper. It reduces the cost of transport and lunches.

Disadvantages:

- One of the most difficult aspects of virtual education for a lot of students is the inability to focus on the screen for long time. Students are more likely to be quickly extorted by social media and websites while they learn online.
- Another major issue with virtual education is the lack of internet access.
- As there are little physical encounters between lecturers and pupils in a virtual class, pupils can often feel alone. In this case the school must allow for some alternative channels that students, classmates, and lecturers to interact together. (Gautam, 2020)

SECONDARY AND PRIMARY RESEARCH

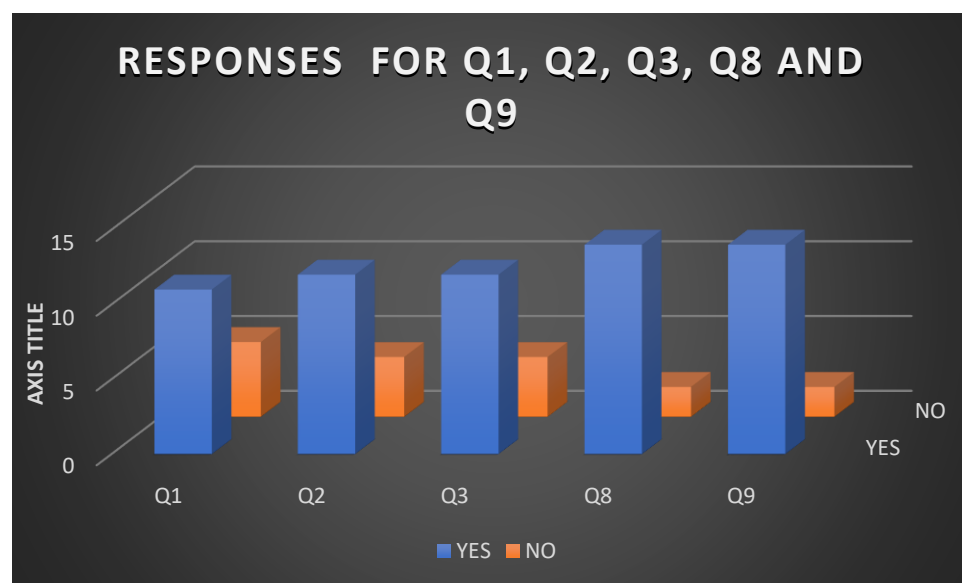
SECONDARY RESEARCH:

In my secondary study I used a lot of important research tools for gathering significant information about Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The outcome was that students, lecturers and IT services have a lot of advantages and disadvantages in using VLE. To gather all these information, I went through a lot of E-books, virtual magazines and other sources that were relevant in this research.

PRIMARY RESEARCH:

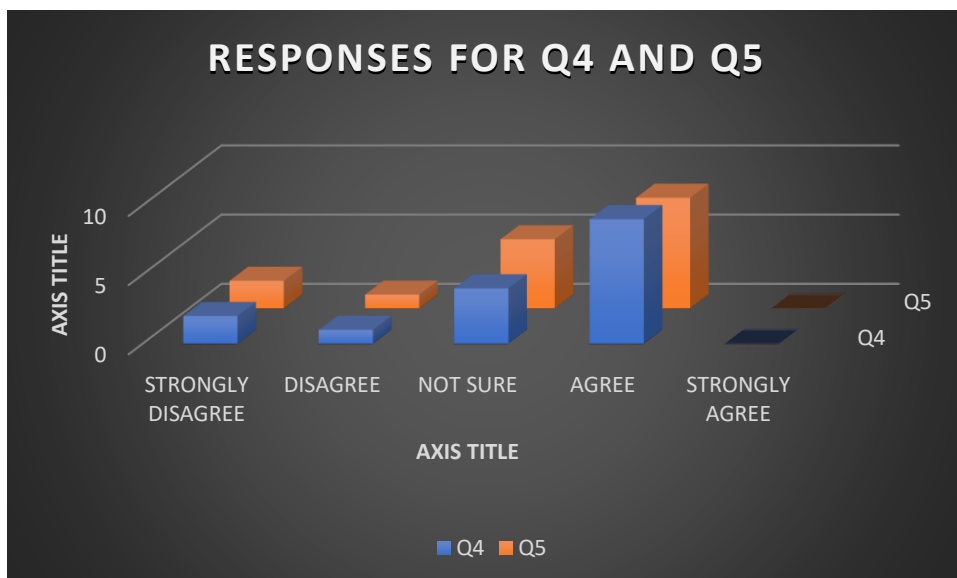
Then, in my primary research about Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), I use the online Google Forms and I create a questionnaire consisting of ten questions. These questions are made to provide feedback for Moodle. I send the questionnaire to my classmates and lecturer, and I received their feedback. Furthermore, I breakdown the results on Microsoft Excel which I provide my feedback as well.

RESULTS



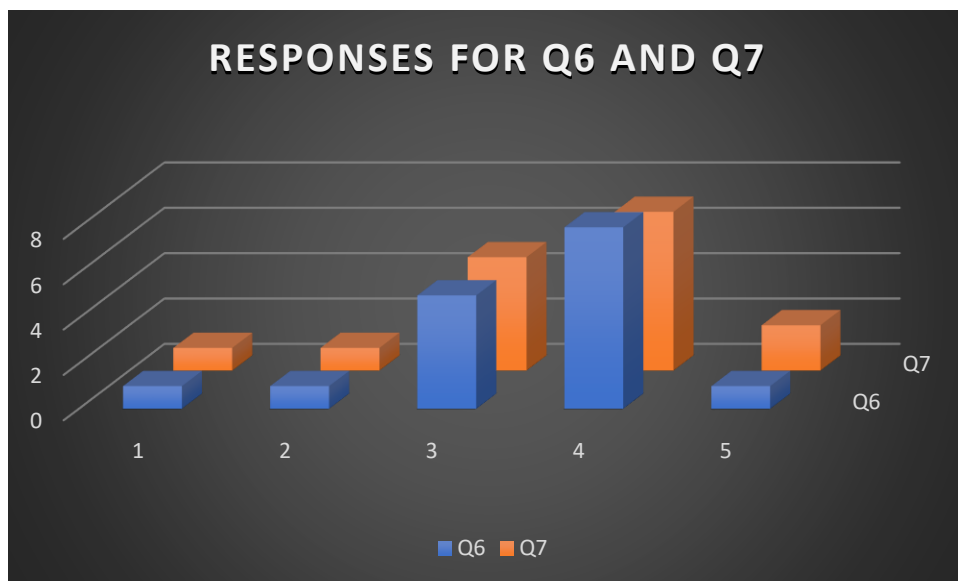
QUESTIONS	YES	NO
Q1	11	5
Q2	12	4
Q3	12	4
Q8	14	2
Q9	14	2

In Q1 most of the students have the experience in relation to the usage of VLE, in Q2 most of them prefer their studies online, in Q3 a lot of them have proper training in using VLE, in Q8 most of the students are declaring that University provides the appropriate support for completing their assignments and in Q9 most of them are finding appropriate resources on VLE for their modules.



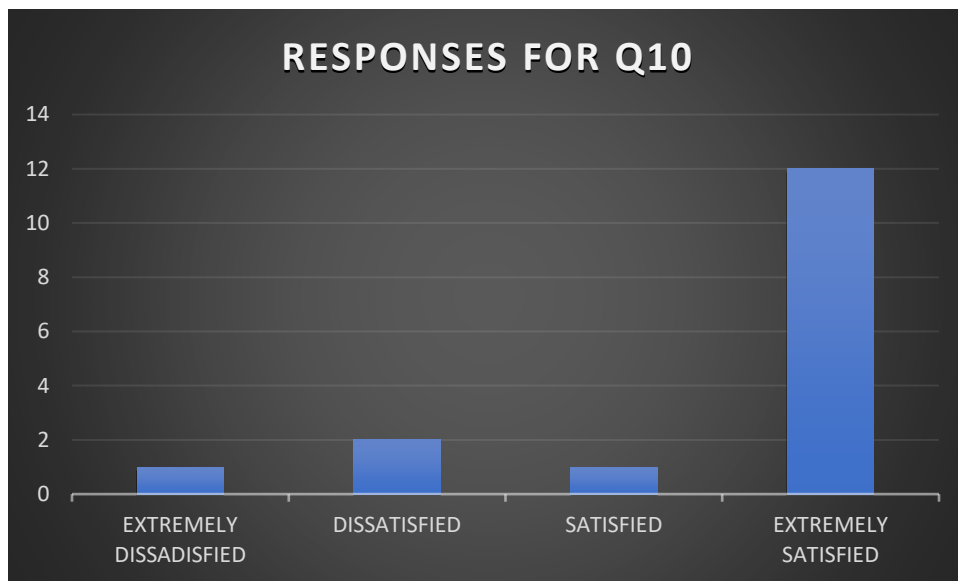
QUESTIONS	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NOT SURE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Q4	2	1	4	9	0
Q5	2	1	5	8	0

In Q4 most of the students are happy for university to carry on online learning, 4 of them they are not sure, and a very little percent is not happy for online learning. In Q5 half of them agreed to communicate with their lecturers online and the other half consists of not sure and disagree and strongly disagree.



QUESTIONS	1	2	3	4	5
Q6	1	1	5	8	1
Q7	1	1	5	7	2

In Q6 students record a high percent of the impact that VLE had because of pandemic and a small percent they said so and so. In Q7 a big portion of the students choose that they prefer VLE, and a low percentage were either yes or no.



QUESTION	EXTREMELY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	SATISFIED	EXTREMELY SATISFIED
Q10	1	2	1	12

And the last Q10 12/16 students were extremely satisfied from their lecturer support and university admin towards their studies.

DISCUSSION

According to the results that I get for the Virtual Learning Environment, more than half of the number of students are satisfied using online learning in their higher studies and communicating in online mode with their classmates and lecturers. There is also a percentage of students that they are not satisfied about VLE because they don't have the appropriate training and they feel more unsure about this platform. Personally, I extremely disagree on Virtual Learning, I think is not the same and I am not learning effectively. When I attend on campus, I have all the opportunities to solve my inquiries as is easier also for my lecturer to help me on that. In the other hand if I attend online, I will not be able to learn and gain the 100% of the important knowledge and the lecturer will not be able to help me that much. In this module I have learned a lot of useful things and, I improve my research skills. Now I can do any kind of surveys on Google Forms, and I am confident on creating charts and graphs on Microsoft Excel.

CONCLUSION

After gathering all these information about the Virtual Learning Environment from different sources, doing the survey on the Google Forms and making charts and graphs on Microsoft Excel i feel more confident doing that in the future for another module as well. This module helps me improve my research and paraphrasing skills.

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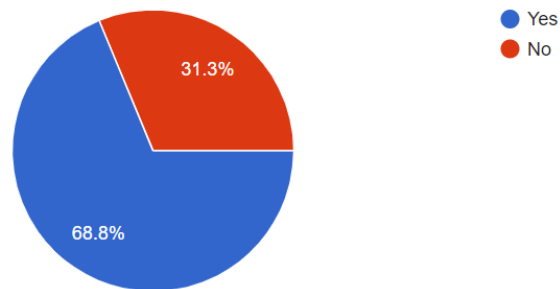
APPENDIX

SCREENSHOTS OF MY SURVEY

Q1. Do you have an experience in relation to the usage of Virtual Learning Environment?

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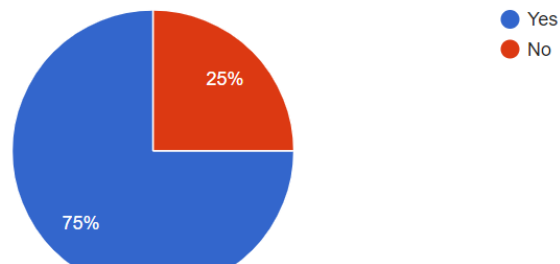
16 responses



Q2. Do you prefer to use VLE for your higher studies?

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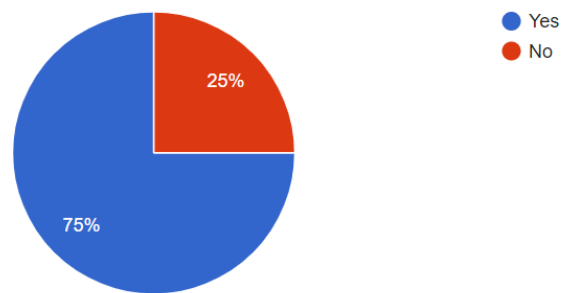
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Q3. Did you have proper training to use VLE for your studies?

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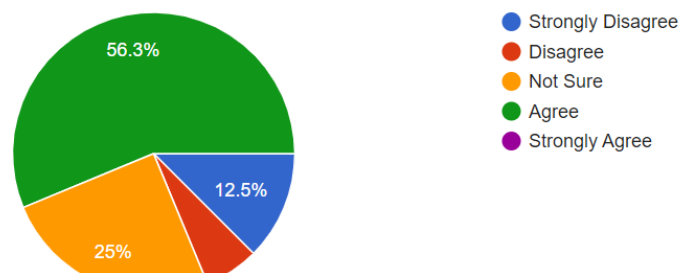
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Q4. Would you like that the University continue to use VLE Platform after pandemic as well?

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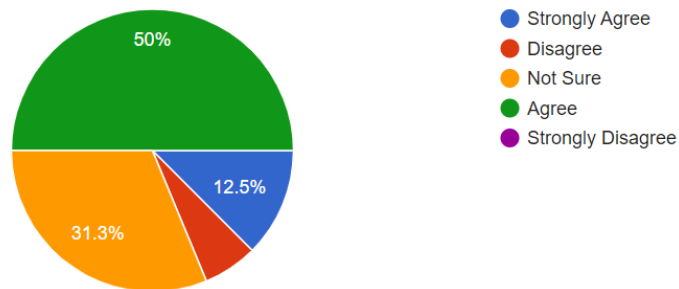
16 responses



Q5. Do you prefer to communicate with your lecturers and your friends via VLE?

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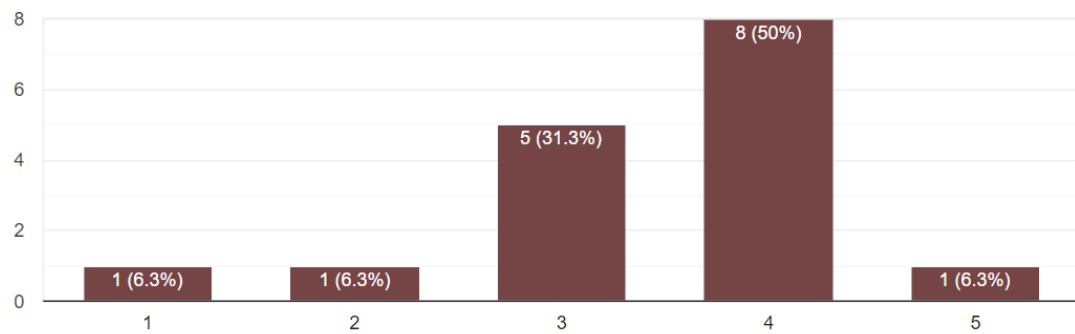
16 responses



Q6. Please rate the impact of the online learning platform on your academic studies during pandemic.

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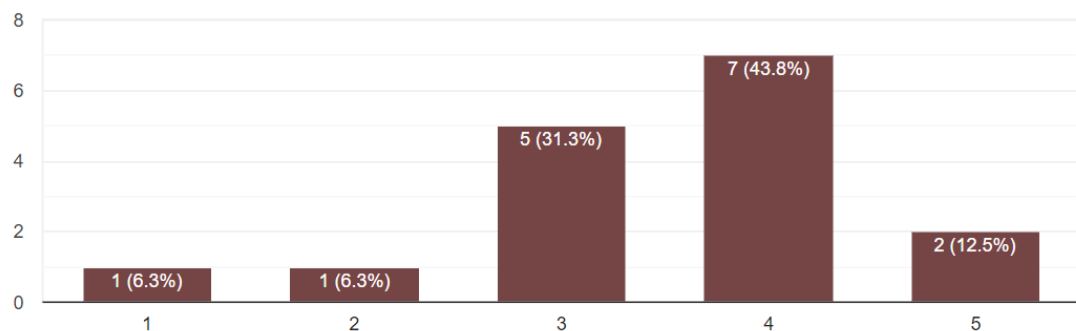
16 responses



Q7. Please rate your preference to do your studies in VLE.

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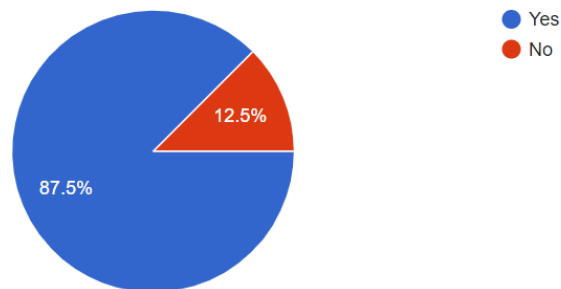
16 responses



Q8. Does University e-learning platform provide appropriate support to complete your assignment?

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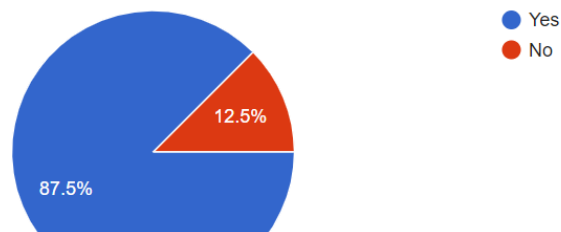
16 responses



Q9. Do you find required and appropriate resources in VLE for each module which you study?

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16 responses



Q10. Since lockdown , how satisfied are you in relation to the support which you receive from lecturers , university admin and management through VLE towards your studies?

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16 responses

