

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

**Certificate of Higher Education in Skills for the
Workplace**

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Introduction

This assignment will be based on how does virtual learning impact students and how to properly research in order to achieve this information. Everything around us contains data and there are various ways of researching and collecting it. Mainly because without information ideas can not materialise into the real life. All businesses are depending on the way they collect information from the target audience and understand how to use it in order to satisfy everyone's needs.

What is the difference between data and information?

To understand the difference between data and information we will firstly have to understand the meaning of both of them. Data is available in various forms that can represent different meanings. This comes in letters, symbols and numbers. However, data has to be processed in such ways that will be understandable for the receiver, in order to do this data will be used to create a meaningful information.

To help understand this process I will show an example. Let's say we have the data 07032001, when looking at this without context is just numbers. For context we will have it as a British date. And to give it a meaning this date can be someone's birthday. This is the process of creating meaning to data.

The last step is giving certainty to specific information, in this process you need to collect as much information as possible in order to calculate the probabilities for certain scenarios to happen. This is the phase you will be taking decisions using knowledge.

How data is organized

There are two main different kinds of data, qualitative and quantitative.

The collection of words and images used to create information is qualitative data while the use of numbers to create information is quantitative data.

In order to gather data communication and sharing of information between people in different ways will be mainly needed. Individuals ask questions from each other in order to understand different perspectives or to learn new information's and facts.

The use of tables will help organize the potential answers from other people when using a questionnaire to collect data. The columns will represent the variable answers and rows representing the questions. The variables can be either categorical (ex YES/NO) or numerical (ex 7,8,9 people).

Research

At this stage I will have to gather as much information as possible from different individuals in order to see what people think about online learning. Both primary and secondary data have been used to complete this research, my source for primary data is the questionnaire that I've made for the students at the university and secondary data has been collected from different sources specific on the subject.

The results for my questionnaire have been quite different as the individuals I picked were from different age groups. For older individuals online learning sometimes seems quite confusing and stressful as technology can turn quite complicated if not used to it. However, by doing this people actually feel they learn and feel more integrated into the modern world. Also, there's lots of advantages as learning on your computer or phone can be done anywhere. Even if it seems stressful or confusing after overgrowing the problem everyone gets to enjoy virtual learning.

The main procedure I have used for this assignment is called by the term methodology, which basically defines the process of searching, identifying and processing information. In order to get more information about how virtual learning impacts students I've conducted a questionnaire on the campus making it my primary research and collected information from different sources.

Primary Data Analysis (Questionnaire Answers)

In this survey the questions have been specifically formed to understand how virtual learning impacts students. I made short and understandable question specific on the topic of online learning, members for the survey have been randomly chosen around the campus and some have also been teachers.

The answers provided from the questionnaire should give me a good understanding about how people feel towards virtual learning, for each question there would be a few variable answers to pick from.

My first question is about the group age of the individual interviewed, this way I can get a good understanding about how people at different ages think about the use of technology to learn.

Second question is to find out if the individual has ever use online learning. The third question will tell me how the experience was for this individual, complicated to use or easy. Then I would find out if they would recommend virtual learning to others, members who would not recommend this automatically shows me that they had a negative experience and do not agree with the use of technology.

In my last two questions I would find out if the use of technology was worth it in any way and if they will use it again on the future.

After analysing 25 different answers my results were quite clear, every student in the university had a positive experience with the use of technology and would recommend it for others. This shows us that people find it useful and it is more efficient for your own learning. To be more exact upon the fact, 100% of the students agreed with the use of technology and 100% would recommend it for others. Also, towards my surprise only 16% of individuals said that it was complicated to use online learning.

From the answers of my questionnaire, I concluded that people enjoy using online learning and it is really helpful. There are lots of reasons to use technology for learning and it helps build up confidence. Having information available constantly makes it much easier to look for data and analyse, having to search a specific site for information is much easier than going to the library or buying the book to find what you need.

Questionnaire Table

What age group	a. 18-25	b. 26-35	c. +36
Use of virtual learning?	a. Highly	b. Moderate	c. Never
Complicated to use?	a. Very	b. Understandable	c. Easy
Recommend virtual learning?	a. Yes	b. No	
Has it been useful?	a. Yes	b. Helped a bit	c. Not at all
Will use again?	a. Categorically	b. Maybe	c. Never

25 random students have been interviewed around the campus of the university
Simple questions that are easy to understand offering specific answers.

My Secondary Data Analysis

Since the invention of technology people evolved on a much larger scale. Obviously, there are both positive and negative impacts for the use of virtual learning, the main positive impact being the accessibility of information and negative impact is that people forget about the importance of books. In the process of finding accurate information I have chosen a few main impacts that virtual learning has upon students.

Firstly, having data available at the touch of your finger makes it more accessible for a larger group of people. Having a lesson to attend means that you physically have to move to that specific location at a specific time, while when learning online you can do it from any place as long as you have access to technology. This had a very big positive impact upon people as learning became more time effective this way.

Secondly, learning online means that everyone learns at their own speed, some are slower, and some are faster, but it does not matter as you can take all the time you need. Having videos and diagrams explaining certain information turns out to be much more useful and interesting for students rather than using the traditional way and listening to the teacher's lesson.

Materials will be available in a much larger content having hundreds of different sources which you can use to check certain information. The fact that this is a continuous process

is another positive impact, wherever you are at any time you can access anything you need.

Cheaper courses encourage young people towards an education, university will charge quite a lot of money in order to secure you a place while online learning is much cheaper. You can get your degree from online courses without spending money on transport, food or different needs.

For people into younger group ages online learning is much more effective from any perspective, teenagers feel more engaged when working from home on their own computer under their own rules. There is only one negative impact that people complained about, virtual learning takes away a lot of socialising. Without actually going to your class and meeting your colleagues you will not socialise very much with them, just in cases where communication is needed for group tasks, but it is not enough. After doing a degree, students said that besides all the knowledge you need to gather you should make friends and memories with them. Virtual learning takes away this opportunity from you.

Conclusion

After conducting this survey, I have concluded that people have mostly the same feeling about the use of technology for learning, even if they come from a different background or their group age is different.

Everyone agrees upon the fact that with the use of technology you can be much more effective and save a lot of time. There are a lot of young people who enjoy learning how to use technology and by doing online learning they grab a lot of experience and practice skills. Most people said that applications are easy to use and sites for online learning are easy to access if you follow some steps. People who had problems with the use of virtual learning explained that it was either because of the internet connection or the actual site was not working for a while.

Every student I have introduced into my survey said that they would recommend online learning to others as well, it is a fun way to learn and if you really desire to find information you can. Internet is a tool that helps us evolving from being dependent to a piece of paper with a few ideas to being able to have anything needed just by typing and searching a few words.

When using online learning is recommended to save your work constantly, there have been various people that did not save their work and lost it. Also, many individuals lost their work because of equipment getting damaged, when this happens if you did not save your work on an online platform you would lose all your data. In my opinion virtual learning and the traditional learning by books work together perfectly, try to introduce both of these sources of information into your life, this will improve your skills upon information analysis.

References

Primary Data – Original data acquired through the use of a questionnaire

Secondary Data – The use of different online and book written sources

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