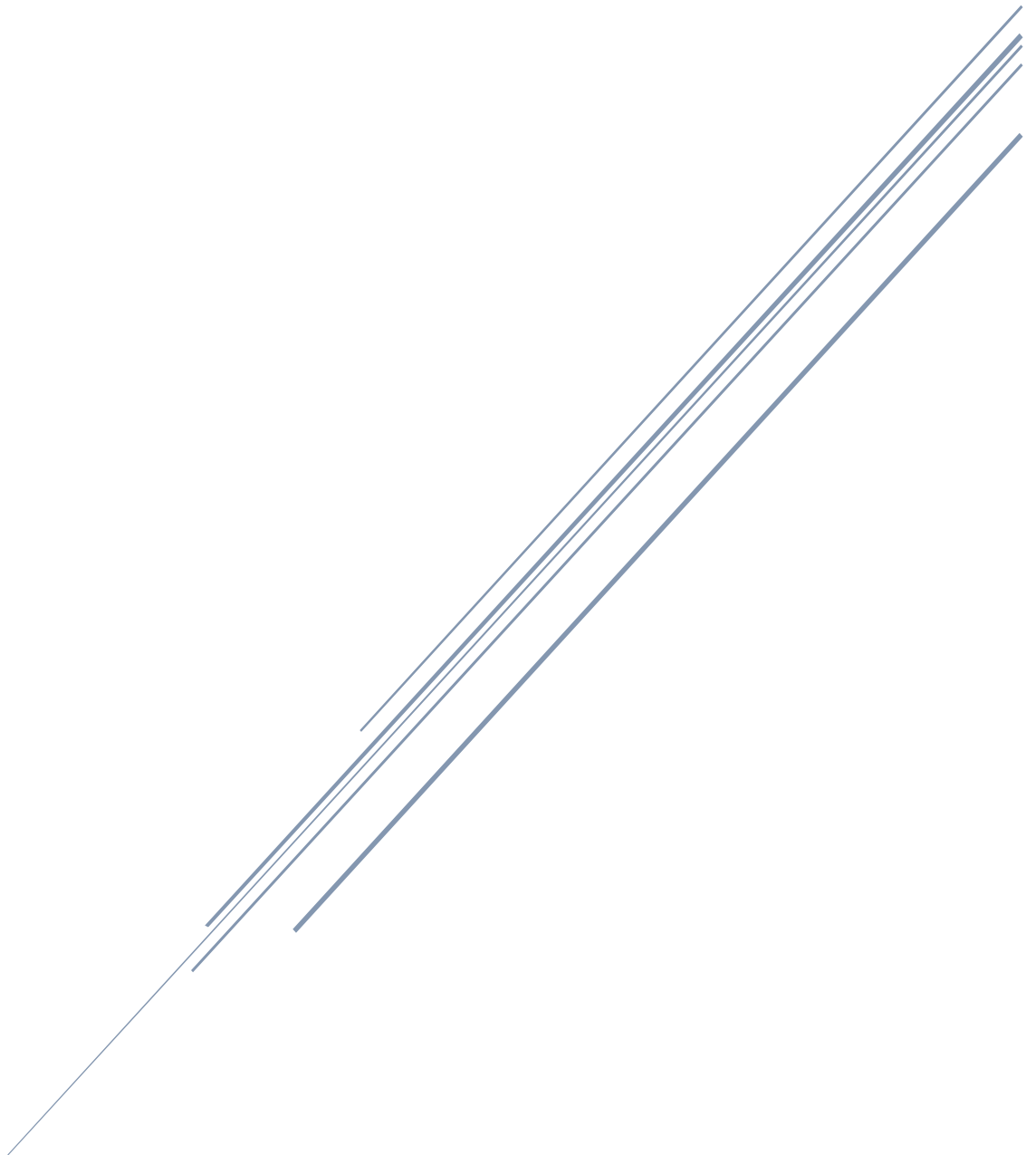


IMPACT OF THE VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

DIGITAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODS (BMSW4003_LON)



UWTSD

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Introduction

The report consists in give us an idea of how the Virtual Learning Environment is enough to have a good experience of learning compared with the face-to-face classes. In addition, we will analyse the impact that has in the students when they are attending at the online classes.

We will create primary information with the students of UWTSD and at the same time contrast it with secondary information that is in reports from another university to make a conclusion and to know whether is useful for acquire the knowledge of the course.

With the help of a survey I will extract the information that will be created in base of the answers of the students, after that, the information will be transformed in graphics for analyse them to give a better understanding of the primary information reached.

For other hand there more information about the impact of VLE in internet, I will extract some information about report already created to compared it and finally make a conclusion.

Virtual Learning Environment

It is a space where the students and lecturer create interactions to receive knowledge by part of the students and give knowledge by part of the lecturers. They have a multiple resources and different platforms which are at them disposal at all time. There is a schedule for assist to the classes, but the students can access at the resources whenever they want.

Specifically, in our University, we use the Teams platform for the online classes and the Moodle platform to get all the resources for our learning. The Teams platform belongs to the group of programs of Office 365. In addition, the group of programs that we have at our disposal is conformed of Microsoft word, Power Point, Excel, Microsoft Form, Outlook and some programs more that are not too relevant than that I just mentioned.

Survey

In the survey made, I want extract information focusing in how suitable is the VLE for the students and doing a comparison with the face to face classes.

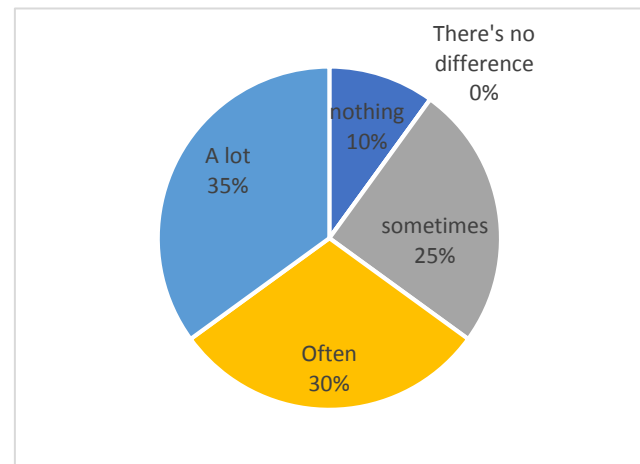
I had a collaboration of 20 students of the UWTSD who answered my survey which is composed of eleven questions. There is multiple choice or to answer with one choice. It depends of the response; it will extract interesting information which will give a point of view of the impact of VLE.

Primary Data

1.How much do you think you are distracted in the online class compared to a face-to-face class?

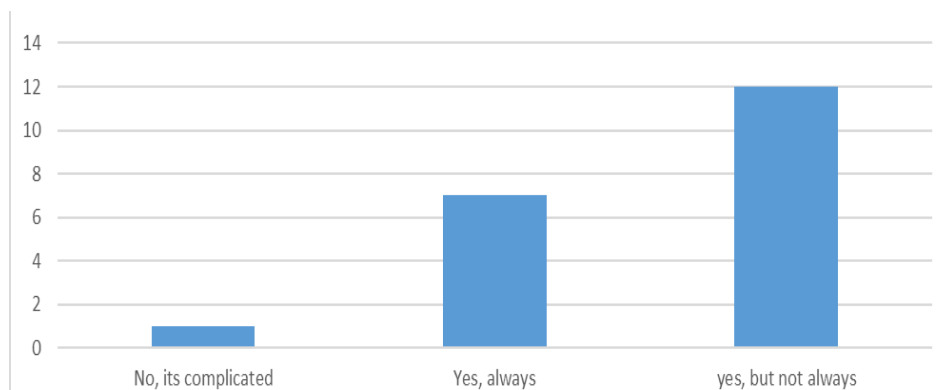
For the first question I want to know if the online classes cause more or less distraction than face-to-face classes. It is important highlight that the students have more chance to distracted them than the face-to-face classes. Around the 60% of the answers were between often and a lot, considering that a 25% more answered that sometimes.

This reflects that there are factors that generate this distraction, either because the space where they are positioned to attend the class is not adequate or that the online experience is not fluid enough, also that the student feels that absence of the teacher's presence and the environment created for the face-to-face class.



In the next three questions I looking to know if the experience with the learning platforms and online classes are adequate and easily accessible.

2.Have you easily access to the virtual learning resources?



In reference to the resources that the UWTSD has, there are many options to take resources to develop an assessment. The Moodle platform has a distribution of links where we can open the modules of each class, having access to the study syllabus that are in PDF format. The question is about how easy is to reach those resources, the responses were that the students find easy how to do it but not always is clear to get them. In my point of view, I agree with the answers because the links seem that are mixed with other resources that are not for our course. Yes, they are separated with different titles, but they are in the same space. With this, I want to say that the resources that are not for our course maybe would be better that they could be in another link for the specific course that is proposed.

3.Do you find easy to access to the Teams platform to assist to the classes?

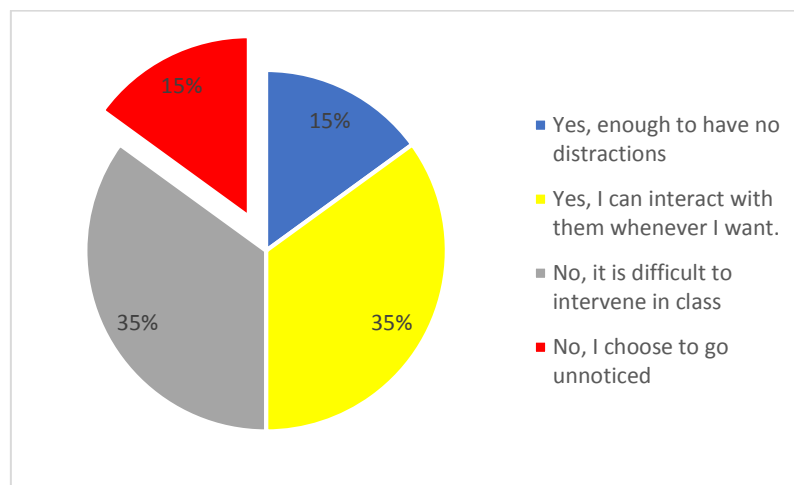
For the question that If is easy to access at the Teams platform, there is a wide percentage of positive answers of yes, it is easy or normal. Both answers are similar but

the choice of “normal” it is for people who are used to accessing this platform instead of the one who are not and would mainly answer that if it is easy or not. Although it would be necessary to consider the people who answer the choice “difficult” to be able to give them a guide and in the future, they will not have access problems.

5.The way how you upload your tasks, it is the most adequate?

The same happened with the question focused in how easy is to upload the tasks and assessments. Mostly there is no problem, but it would be advisable to give some review of how to do it.

6.Do you think that the interaction between students and teachers are adequate in the VLE?

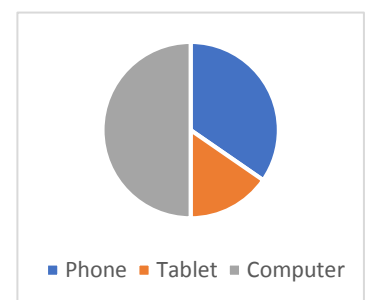


The importance of this question reveals to us the predisposition of the students to intervene in the class and be an active part of the learning process. The answers are focused on the participation of the student but there is one that some of the students choose and is that a minority prefer to go unnoticed. This means that there are some students that in my opinion doesn't matter if is online or not, they choose to go unnoticed. Would be interesting work in the confidence of the students because this can affect when they do presentations or in the future job.

For the next three questions we will linking some reasons about why the students could be distracted in the online classes creating a negative impact in the VLE.

7.Which device are you using for VLE?

About the devices that students are using, the suitable device is the computer to give a smooth experience, but there are many students that are using phones and tablets, these devices can give a not good experience when they are transmitting an online class or have easy access to find resources. It is for that, that the students are distracted in sometimes because, the signal of the phone is not good, or they could distract with other apps it the phone or tablet, maybe a phone call, etcetera.



8. Do your devices give a smooth experience to attend VLE?

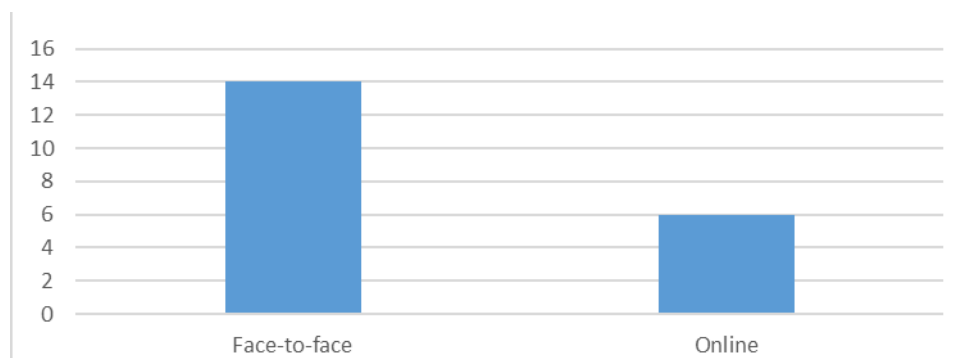
Continuing with questions about the electronic devices, this results express to us that not always there is a smooth experience and this is could be about which device are them using, also about the internet signal or if the device is not proper modern to support the VLE platforms.

9. Is the place where you position yourself to attend the online class appropriate?

Returning about which kind of distractions could affect the students, this question reveals another reason. The place that students chose if is not adequate, they can get distracted easily, analysing the answers they don't give a good result because a bit more of the half of the students are placed in adequate place to assist at the online classes. The reasons of distraction could be multiple. For example, if the student has children, or if the place is noisy, also could be a not comfortable place with not enough light or without desk and chair.

To finish, I asked two questions that are decisive in the point of view of each student.

10. Do you prefer face-to-face classes or online classes?



Almost all of them prefer assist to face-to-face classes. The reason can be extracted in part in relation to the previous questions since the whole process that involves attending online classes can be cumbersome for students. Apart from whether they like them or not, the fact that they do not have a suitable device, that the interaction is more positive in a face-to-face class, that the face-to-face environment is better and that it is a place specifically set up for the class. All this leads to the majority choice by the students to do the classes in person. For my part, I prefer online classes, but this is a personal choice.

11. As a general vision, do you believe that your experience and learning is positive, taking into account that the current Pandemic situation?

However, most agree that due to the current circumstances of the pandemic, we should do online classes instead of face-to-face. Take into account that there are some students who find it difficult to be in online classes and that they would give their one hundred per cent in a face-to-face class. It would be interesting to detect them and monitor their progress and thus not let them get discouraged or end up leaving the course.

Secondary Data

For give a definition of VLE found in the report, they explain that it is a group of services and products that the students can have access to learn, even to have interaction in a community of learners that are the students or with teachers.

Is possible identify that are similar feedbacks between the students of UWTSD and the research made in the external report, because the students of different universities are agree with the VLE it is a good way to learn, in addition to interact with other students but they sometime found issues with the access at some resources.

A comment about the VLE by an educational entity is *“A key success factor is the flexibility – teachers were also impressed by the quality of the materials.*

Disadvantages? ...none, it's a plus.” (Gracemount High School)

The report highlight that the good point are more than disadvantages. The possibility of the students to access at the platforms whenever they want, the quantity of resources that the students have with free access give them many options to learn.

For other hand, the report reflects that in occasions the signal of internet is not good and can be negative for the moment of the class but is not usual.

((DERA), 2003)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the information generated is very useful to draw a vision of how the VLE are reflected in the students. They are comfortable working and assisting at online classes. The learning experience it is positive considering that they didn't planned that whole course going to be online.

The world is continuing changing and the technologies are in the same situation. We must keep actualised with all the technologies that are developing in the present, this means that we should be able to face the online classes without problems, trying to have the proper devices to have a good experience in the VLE. The jobs that we have in the short-middle term will required from us an adequate preparation for the use of modern technologies and doing this course it is the key to be better professionals.

References

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