



**The Impacts of Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) in
Students of University of Wales Trinity Saint David, London.**

MODULE	Digital Skills and Research Methods, BMSW4003.
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Statement of Confirmation of Authenticity

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Literature Review.....	3
Rationale.....	4
Objectives.....	4
Research Methods.....	4
Findings and Analysis.....	6
Conclusion.....	11
References.....	12
Appendix.....	13

INTRODUCTION

This report is based on the impact of 'Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)- Moodle' (a virtual platform to connect students around the world with learning material or institutions information), which has in students at University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Its main purpose is to demonstrate my research results based on a questionnaire made to students, and analyse previous articles and data related with the results obtained using pie and column charts to demonstrate its positive or negative impact.

LITERATURE REVIEW

“‘News’ and ‘Assignments’ are the most used Moodle sections and also those that students consider the most important (according to research made). As ranked from most to least used section we have News and Assignments, Quiz or Surveys, Questionnaires, Forums and the last and less used, Chats.” “*(Costa C., et al, 2012)*

Moodle has got many different sections which allows students from taking surveys, to know institutions background, finance information or learning material. However, as although all Moodle platforms got big similarities (in terms of content), we do not use or visit each of them at all with the same frequency as others. Many students do not even pay attention to other sections than for learning material, such as coursework updates, learning or lectures materials (such as Power Points or Word documents). In this case and accordingly to a research report carried at one of the universities in Portugal (University of Aveiro), student average response of what was the most useful to less useful section in Moodle was, indeed, ‘Assignments’ and ‘News’.

However, this platform has got its difficulties in how to access it. Many people around the world does not have the same technological or internet access facilities as others. What is more, in the case of comparison of people who usually use internet (technologies) to people who does not (due to lack of knowledge or as mentioned before, poor technological systems and accessibility) got bigger and better chances to understand how Moodle platform works. For instance, researches report that “in past findings, students go through different attitudes depending of their internet influence, meaning that high internet self-efficacy students will feel more comfortable than those with lower self-efficacy” (Peng, et al., 2006).

The difference of efficacy between students it also affects to understand how Moodle works. What is more, Moodle, can be somehow difficult to understand if not used before; “it looks like a normal blog”(Guler. D,2018) and “not enough iconography to identify its sections” (Guler, D, 2018) but also “lots of different icons on the platform difficulties students to understand” (Sinteza,2014) , was some of the agreeing citations which shows how Moodle looks somehow very simple (layout wise) but complex to use at the same time.

Although Moodle has been a difficult platform to familiarise with as “it is harder for students to organise themselves with virtual learning platforms than attending to classes” (Sinteza,2014), and its requirements of organisation, due that so many find easier to just listen to class and take notes rather than dealing and struggling with new technologies, Moodle has also been an useful tool for afterwards or skipped classes to recap or research for new and old information which can be used for learning purposes.

RATIONALE

The purpose of this report is to show my own research on topic given by my University, Moodle’s impact on student experience. Although Virtual Learning Environments can be difficult to use, it is a very important tool in nowadays learning and academic life for many students worldwide.

OBJECTIVES

In Literature Review, many disagreeing and negative citations were covered as Moodle has got different impacts around the world. Therefore, this reports objective is to demonstrate the opposite, Moodle’s positive impact in students of UWTSD.

RESEARCH METHODS

Classification.

Qualitative Research Method; “data which we can describe. Numbers are not involved. For example, descriptions made by sources.” (McLeod. S, 2019)

Quantitative Research Method; “data which we can measure with numbers. For example, comparing charts.” (McLeod. S, 2019)

In this report I will be using both research methods due to the tools which I have used to carry this report such as a questionnaire, graphics and a table of results (for the questionnaire made).

Ethics in Data collection.

‘The collection of data and the research plan should hold the maximum ethical standards in order to protect individual’s privacy involved.’ (Danvers. E et al, 2009)

Students and institution gave me their consent in order to carry this report’s research. The reason why it is important to consider is due to the fact that I will be using information and data collected based on their opinion and answers from the questionnaire which I carried.

Data Collection Process.

Primary Data; information which we collect ourselves, for example via questionnaires, surveys or interviews.

Secondary Data; information which do not collect, but extract from other sources such as books, internet or newspapers.

In this report I will be using both type of data collection, Primary Data due to questionnaire made, and Secondary Data due to the previous and further literature research information analysed.

Population.

“Population includes the research of people who was involved in this report with the same or similar characteristics between each other .” (Explorable,2009)

As I conducted a questionnaire about a topic referred to academic purposes, my questionnaire had to be made to a specific type of people; students, as they were the most common individuals using or being familiarised with this platform. For instance, this survey was conducted just to students of UWTSD, but also, to other few more students from different universities each, familiarised with Moodle as well.

Sample and Sample size.

“As a definition for sample, I find the amount of specific people selected for the topic chosen or given, while the sample size is, out of those specific people which we are dealing with, the exactly amount which we have chosen to conduct the questionnaire made.” (Beneham. G, 2009)

Therefore, for the questionnaire formulated, there are a lot of students from different colleges and universities around the world, but this report was addressed to students based in UWTSD at the London campus. In a total, 18 students answered the questionnaire proposed.

However, as I found my sample a little bit short of numbers, I succeed asking to 4 other students from different universities around London if they could answer the questionnaire.

In a total, there were 19 students from UWTSD and 3 more other students from other universities (which will remain unknown) who answered the questionnaire.

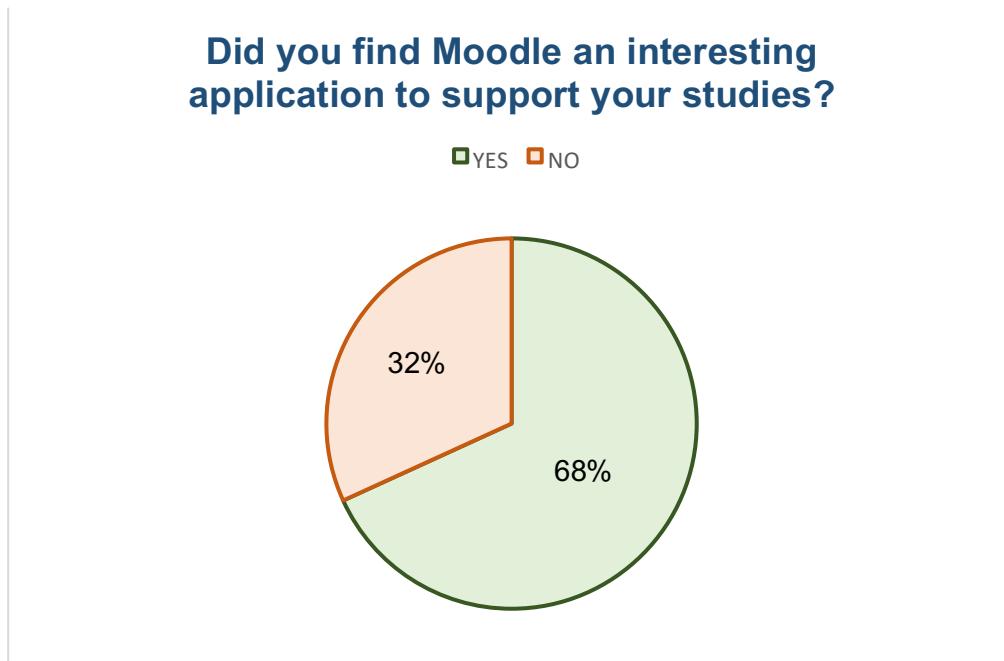
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Findings.

My findings include the analysis of 5 different graphics extracted from 5 different questions about the questionnaire proposed **‘The Impact of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) -Moodle-on the Students of UWTSD’**.

The graphics results are the following;

- Question 1.



Number of Students	YES	NO
22	15	7

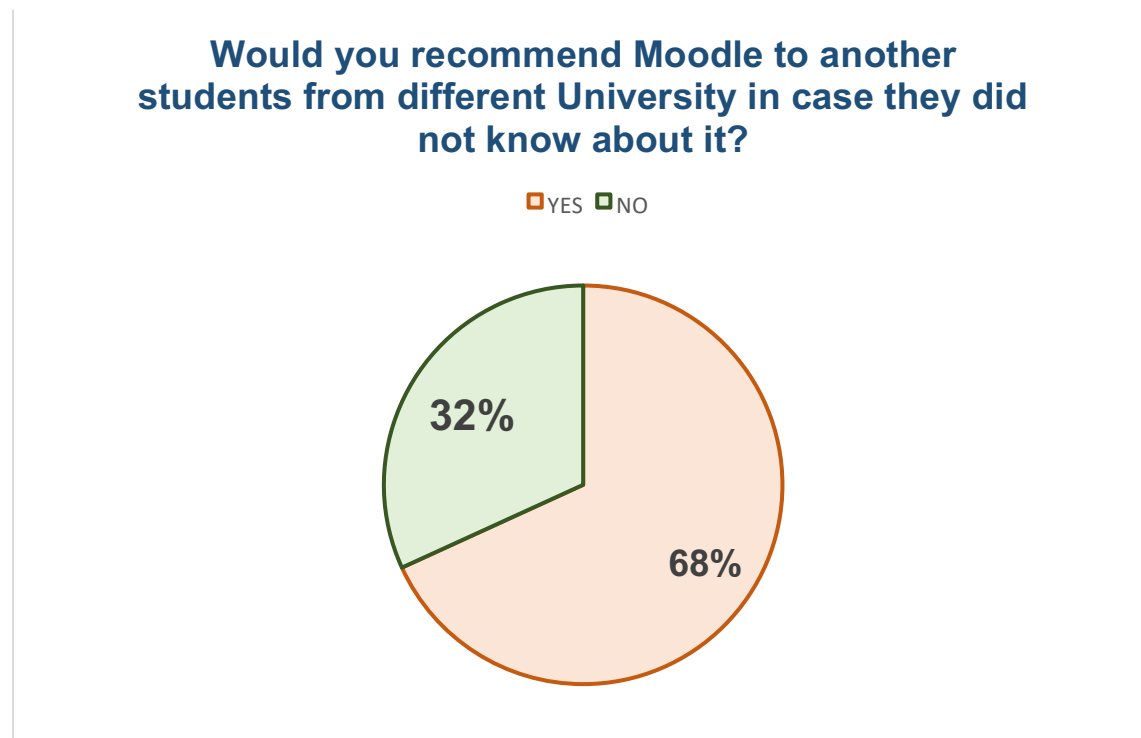
- Question 1 Analysis.

A total of 68% (15 students in total) answered “Yes”, while a 32% (7 students in total) answered “No”.

This pie chart shows that a bigger per centage of students who took this survey believes Moodle is a useful platform where they can get support for their studies. Although Moodle is a virtual based platform, the little extra support which students get after class thanks to Moodle to check previous Power Points for their own study and knowledge, it becomes helpful as if students would need to wait for next lectures to go over previous topics they might forget about them.

However, Moodle is not just a platform to support your studies, but also a quicker way for students to contact their institutions if needed so that can be as well one of the reasons why students find Moodle an interesting platform.

- **Question 2.**



Number of Students	YES	NO
22	15	7

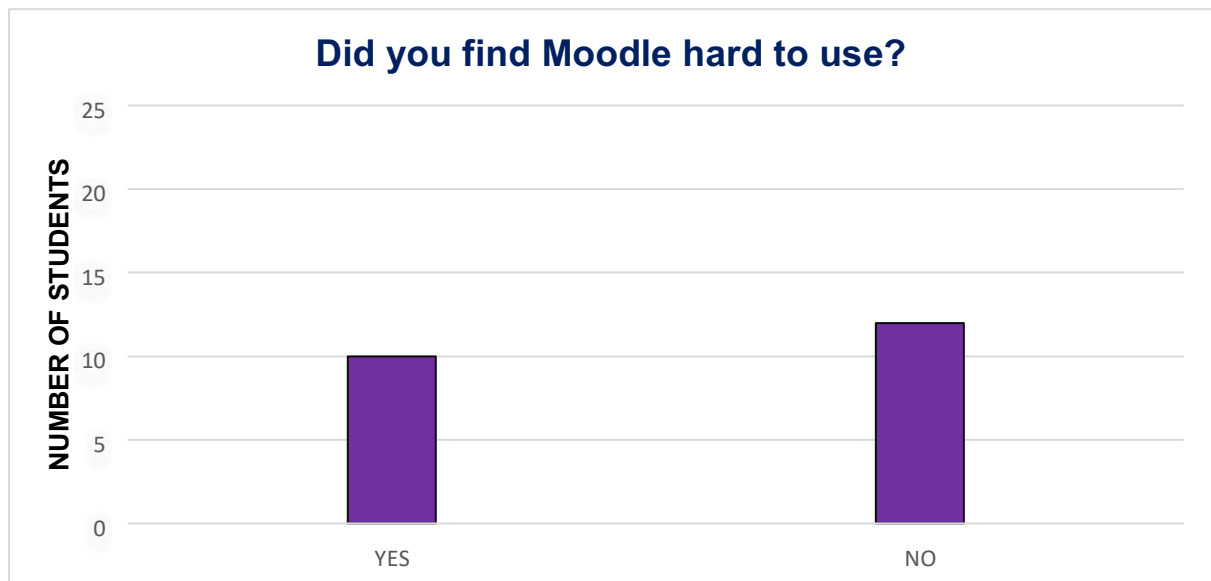
- **Question 2 Analysis.**

In this pie chart we can see same results as in Question 1, where a total of a 68% (15 students) would recommend Moodle to other students from different universities, but also, a 32% (7 students) would not.

The percentage and answers gotten from Questions 1 and 2 are the same due to the fact the same students who think Moodle has support their studies, they would also recommend it to students who do not know about it. Moodle indeed, is not an essential platform in student's life, but it is likely to be recommended as once students get to know and understand how it works, it is a really easy application to use(this point will be covered In Question 3).

What is more, it can be used in any kind of electronic device, so its accessibility is higher, and that can be also one of the reasons why Moodle is overall recommended between students from different universities.

- **Question 3.**



Number of Students	YES	NO
22	10	12

- **Question 3 Analysis.**

In this column chart we can see an almost equal disagreement as 10 students answered “Yes” and 12 answered “No”.

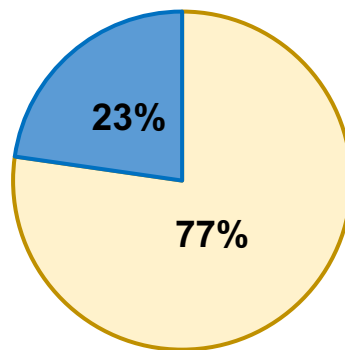
As mentioned in Question 2, Moodle can be seen as an easy system to use. What is more, as covered in Literature review, “Students with higher technological self-efficacy can find Moodle easier to understand rather than students with lower self-efficacy.” (Peng, et al., 2006).

There are lots of students who at first can find Moodle a hard learning platform to use as there are lots of sections or “iconography” “term referred to all the symbols which links to the different sections” (Example, 2020), and can be not so easy to get used to, but at the same time, to almost half of the students answering this survey, acknowledge Moodle as an easy system to use due to their facilities with internet literacy. Therefore, those students who are explained once how it works and what they can find, it is unlikely that they will need to be shown twice.

- **Question 4.**

Do you feel Moodle should provide more information and research points? For example, PDF'S, books or reports to support your studies.

yes no



Number of Students	YES	NO
22	17	5

- **Question 4 Analysis.**

In this pie chart, a 77% of students (17 in total) agreed that Moodle should have access to more research documents, PDF's and books to support their studies, leaving just a 23% (5 in total) disagreeing.

Although Moodle has become a daily used tool in student life, we can see that many student lacks finding helpful information to support their studies instead than just to find what is covered in lectures.

As mentioned as well in Literature Review, in another survey carried in a different university, students ranked from most to least used section which they were using in Moodle. As 'Assignments' was one of the most used sections, I can demonstrate that the need of other resources to support them is essential, as the more resources, the more students can learn, gain knowledge and discover more and different points of view.

-Question 5.



Number of students	0	0	3	3	3	2	7	5	2	0
Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not Satisfactory										Extremely satisfactory

- Question 5 Analysis.

In this column chart, students were asked how satisfactory or not was their experience using Moodle. Out of 22 Students average answer and highest one was 7 out of 10. 9 Students scored 3, 4 and 5 to their satisfaction with this platform, other 2 students scored it 6, and the remain 7 students scored it 8 and 9.

It is likely that students who see their experience more satisfactorily than others, are more familiarised with this platform. Although none of them scored it 10, as extremely satisfying, their recommendations, satisfaction and 'how useful' answers which students gave, the outcome was positive, as more students were overall happy with the services the platform offers.

Summary of Findings.

From my analysis collected from the close-ended and opened-ended questions proposed in the questionnaire, the overall outcome was positive.

In opened-ended questions such as how happy they were with Moodle's effectiveness; Students overall answer were happy and found Moodle effective. Other questions such as which section was the most useful for them, answering modules, where they could find power points and other resources to support previous lectures or information which they wanted to cover when they went back home.

Although institution's Moodle platform could always improve, (as mentioned in Question 4 about including some more resources such as more documents), at UWTSD, Moodle has become an important and successful platform which helps students with their studies no matter where they are as per its easy accessibility from all technological devices.

It is a positive outcome as it means university itself is doing a good job in terms of their virtual learning platform services, what is more, it means that it cannot get worse, but better.

CONCLUSION

An overall of Students at UWTSD in London are happy with Moodle platform services, meaning that this report's objective acknowledging the positive impact of Moodle was accomplished, demonstrating it with the results obtained. Therefore, although Moodle platforms can always improve, UWTSD virtual learning platform is doing a good job supporting students learning experience.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Questionnaire.

Questionnaire

The impact of Virtual Learning Environment on the Students of UWTSD London.

This survey is conducted as part of a research project for Digital Skills and Research Methods (BMSW 4003 Term 2)

Desiree Ortiz, a student of UWTSD London, ID Number- 1906167

Please answer the following questions:

1. Did you find Moodle as an interesting application to support your studies? Yes No

2. Would you recommend Moodle to another students from a different university in case they did not know about it?
Yes No

3. Did you find Moodle hard to use?
Yes No

4. Do you feel Moodle should provide more information and research points? For example, PDF's, books, reports to support your studies.

Yes No

5. If the answer is yes to question no 4 then explain briefly.

6. In a few words explain the most useful section and the less useful section in Moodle for you?

7. How would you describe your experience using Moodle? (In a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is extremely satisfying)

8. Do you think your studies are well supported now after discovering and using Moodle or it did not change? (Explain in a few words)
9. How happy you are with the effectiveness of VLE (Moodle)

Appendix 2: Table of results.

Summary of data extracted from the Questionnaire 'The impact of Virtual Learning Environment on the Students of UWTSD London'			
1. Did you find Moodle as an interesting application to support your studies?			
Number of students and friends answering: 22.	YES	15	NO 7
2. Would you recommend Moodle to another students from different University in case they did not know about it?			
Number of students and friends answering: 22.	YES	15	NO 7
3. Did you find Moodle hard to use?			
Number of students and friends answering: 22.	YES	12	NO 10
4. Do you feel Moodle should provide more information and research points? For example PDF'S, books, reports to support your studies.			
Number of students and friends answering: 22.	YES	17	NO 5
In question N. 4, Students were asked 'In few words explain the most useful section in Moodle for you'. The average answer which was given was 'Power points' to check when they were home after classes.			
In question N.5 Students were asked to 'Explain the most useful section in Moodle for you?'. In summary, students and friends explained that the most useful section was power points which helped them to remember lectures after classes.			
N.6 How would you describe your experience using Moodle (in a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is extremely satisfying)?			
AVERAGE : 7			
In question N. 7 Students and friends were asked "Do you think your studies are well supported after discovering and using Moodle or it did not change? (Explain in few words)". Students and friends who also study in different university summary answer is that Moodle was helping them quite more than before experiencing it, leading to make lectures and study life easier.			
In question N. 8, Students and friends were asked to answer 'How happy you are with the effectiveness of VLE (Moodle)?'. The average answer of Students and friends was 'happy' leading, from my own analysis, that Moodle is an effective tool which students around the world, and in this case, University of Trinity Wales, use quite frequently.			

