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ASSIGNMENT TITLE:

The impact of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) – Moodle on students' learning experience in the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, London Campus.

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INTRODUCTION

Virtual learning environment is a pure virtual campus (online) without a face-to-face interaction or a conventional classroom that uses Information Communication Technology tools(Computers) in the learning process (Barajas, 2003). it is rapidly becoming a preferred medium in the teaching and learning processes in institutions of learning across the United Kingdom and the world at large. With the outbreak of coronavirus across the globe, where governments are shutting down schools, colleges, Universities and even banning social events such as football matches, music concerts and so on, Virtual Learning Environment-Moodle is a timely invention.

Research statistics suggests that, the use of Virtual Learning Environment has an impact on students' achievement, promotes independent learning and increases students' motivation to learn (JISC, 2008). Students using Moodle can be assigned 'tasks' to complete at their own pace, time and location then submit it digitally without the need to print it.

RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this research is to investigate;

- The impact of Virtual Learning Environment(VLE)-Moodle, on the students of the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, London campus.
- The limitations of the virtual learning environment and the possible solutions to it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical background on the use of Virtual Learning Environment(VLE)-Moodle.

Pin pointing precisely how long virtual learning environment utilization has existed, is quite challenging since some institutions such as the Open University has been using computers for learning as far back as 1970s. In 2000, Blackboard a commercial virtual learning environment acquired patent rights. By 2010, Blackboard software usage had spread to nearly 4000 institutions of learning in over sixty nations (Blackboard, 2011). Moodle was developed and introduced in 2001 originally to help educators create online courses (Ofsted, 2009).

General positive impacts;

Several research studies have asserted that, the use of Moodle has positively impacted on students' learning, thus;

- The use of virtual learning environment promotes student reflection and encourage critical, analytical and independent thinking.
- It can promote progressive reflection, increase enthusiasm and confidence.
- It improved preparedness to learn, and generally improve performance.
- If the virtual learning environment (VLE)-Moodle is well-maintained and the students well guided on how to use it, it can enable students of all learning abilities be able to attain the best possible education.
- The utilization of Moodle in the university of Wales, Trinity Saint David, according to this research, has alleviated the loss of teaching and learning time that would have been lost due to the coronavirus pandemic which has, forced the university to shut it doors to in-class teaching.
- Peng et al. (2019), in a research titled "The Effects of Virtual Learning Environment on High School Students' English Learning Performance and Attitude", The results showed that Virtual Learning Environment helped students to enrich their learning experiences and views towards English language. In the study, it was also found out that students

generally agreed that Virtual Learning Environment provided a meaningful learning method.

General negative impacts;

On the negative, research studies show that;

- Control of the learning condition or environment at a given time is practically impossible.
- Access to Moodle requires computers and internet, which some students may not have at times.
- The cost of internet is expensive. This hinders some students from accessing Moodle at times.
- The use of some modes of virtual learning environment such as radio, YouTube and Facebook denies students the chance to ask questions for clarification instantly, which may cause delays in progress.
- Utilization of virtual learning environment denies learners the benefits of a constructive dialogue and a community atmosphere produced by a conventional setting, (Robertson 2002).
- Bromage (2003) in Demian (2015),” The use of virtual learning environment and their impact on academic performance”, observed that, if the resources provided online are too comprehensive, students can stop attending lectures preferring to access lecture materials online instead and do their studies from the comfort of their university halls, hostels or homes.

METHODOLOGY

This was a qualitative research conducted using a questionnaire (refer to figure 1 in the appendices) as the data collection tool for the interview. It investigated the impact of virtual learning environment- Moodle on the students of the university of Wales, Trinity Saint David, London campus. Information for this report was sourced from both primary and secondary data sources, a list of which is provided in the Reference list.

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of the current students of of the university of Wales, Trinity Saint David, London campuses at Oval and Holborn.

Procedure

The samples were purposefully selected from the university population. A total of 30 respondents were contacted and given a questionnaire via email and WhatsApp because the university had closed due to corona virus pandemic. 28 respondents completed and returned the questionnaire.

A consent form (*Refer to figure 2 in appendices*) for ethical and legal purposes in respect of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was given to each respondent to sign. A copy signed by both the researcher and respondent was retained by both parties. No identifiable personal information was collected and participation was voluntary.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire consisting of ten questions was designed using the Likert five scale to carry out the assessment. Refer to figure 1 in the appendices for a copy.

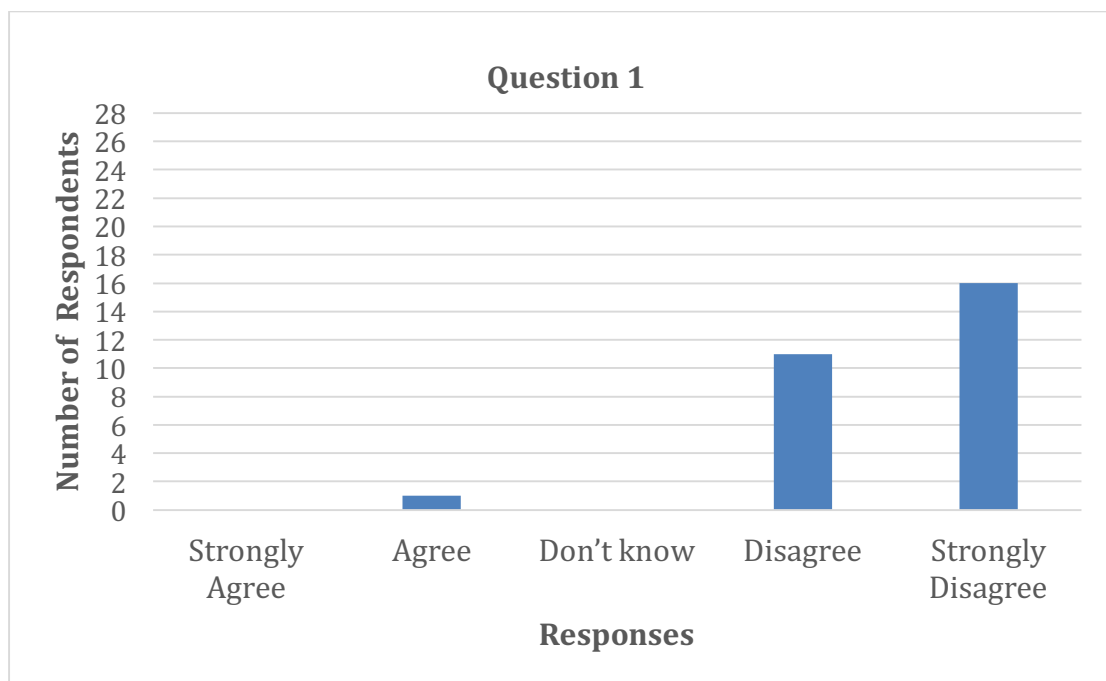
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data collected was analyzed using Microsoft excel.

1. Using Moodle frequently, greatly impacts your learning positively.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	15	0	2	1

Graphical analysis



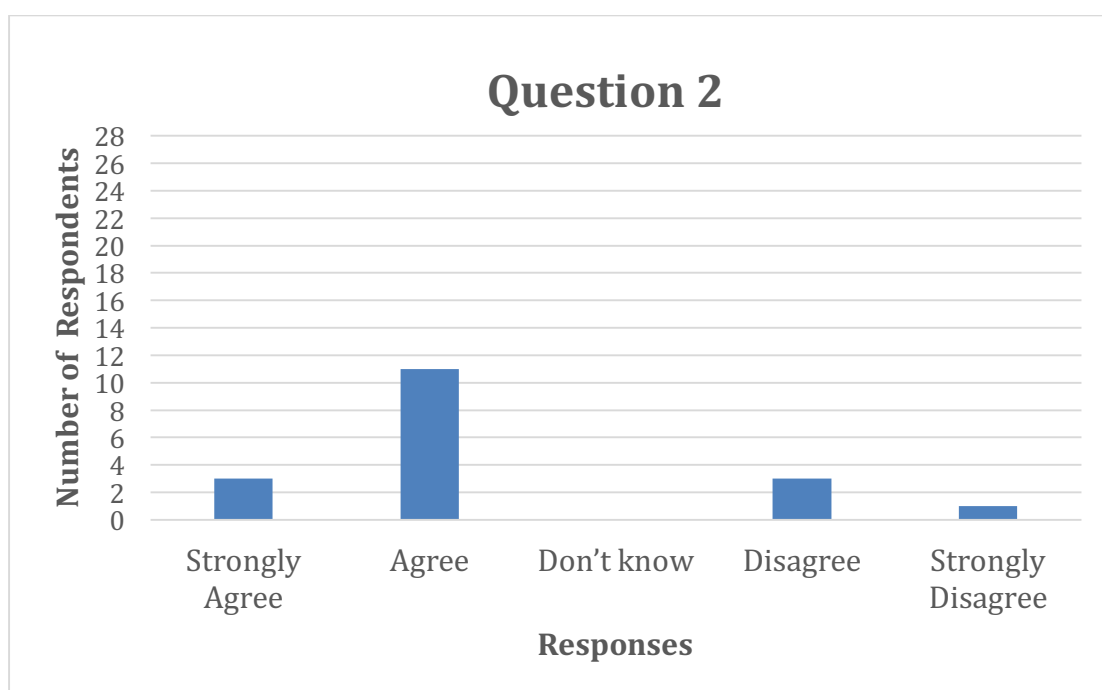
The interpretation

According to the research, as shown in the graph, 33.3% strongly agreed and 50% agreed that, frequent use of Moodle positively impacts on learning where as, only 6% disagreed and 3.3% strongly disagreed. Implying that 83.3% of the respondents recommends the use of Moodle as a medium of learning compared to 36.9% who disagree.

2. Virtual learning environment is not a good way of learning.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	0	14	11

Graphical analysis



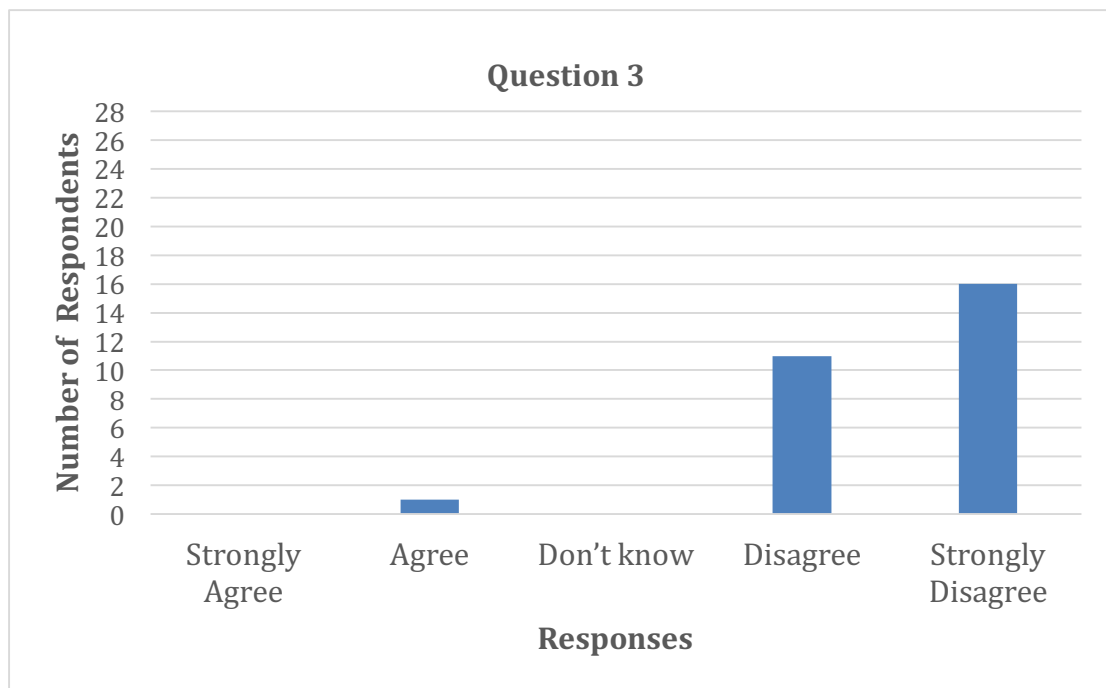
The interpretation

In this case, as shown in the graph, 3.3% strongly agreed and 6.6% agreed that, Virtual learning environment is not a good way of learning where as, 46.6% disagreed and 36.6% strongly disagreed. Implying that 9.9% of the respondents do not recommend the use of Moodle as a medium of learning and 83.2% recommend it.

3. Moodle usage negatively impacts on students' learning.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
0	1	0	11	16

Graphical analysis



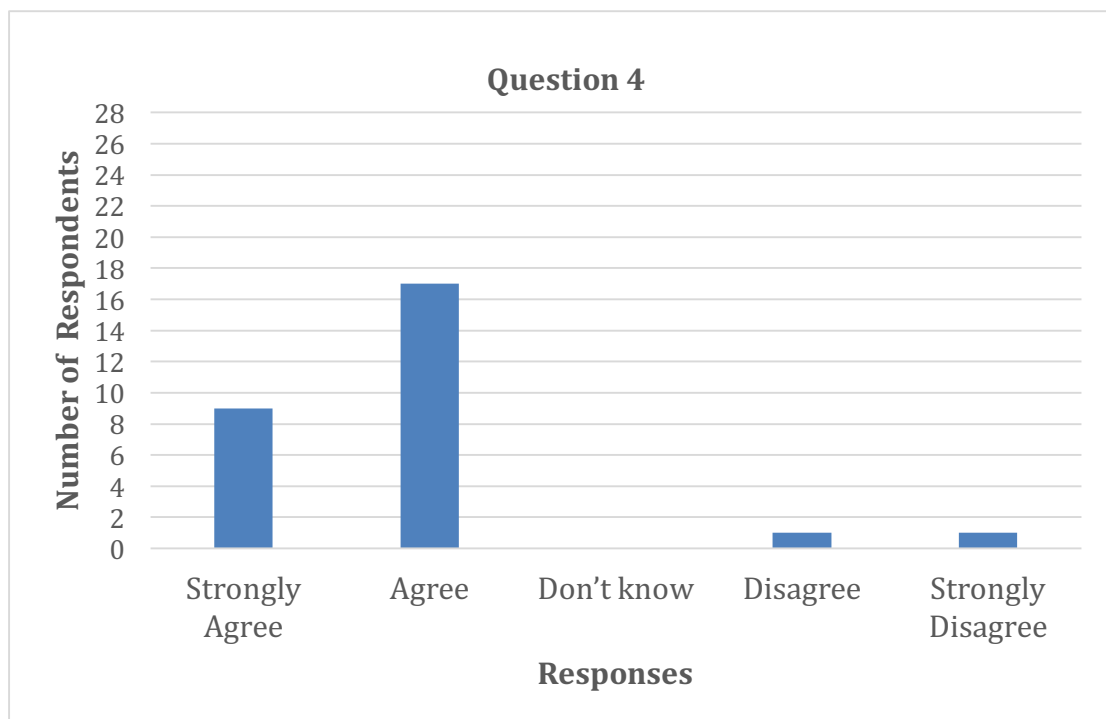
The interpretation

In this instance, as shown in the graph, 0% strongly agreed and 3.3% agreed that, using Moodle negatively impacts on learning where as, 17.1% disagreed, 53.3% strongly disagreed and 6.6% had no idea. Implying that 70.4% of the respondents recommends the use of Moodle as a medium of learning compared to 3.3% who disagree.

4. **Using virtual learning environment encourages you to learn independently.**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	6	0	4	10

Graphical analysis



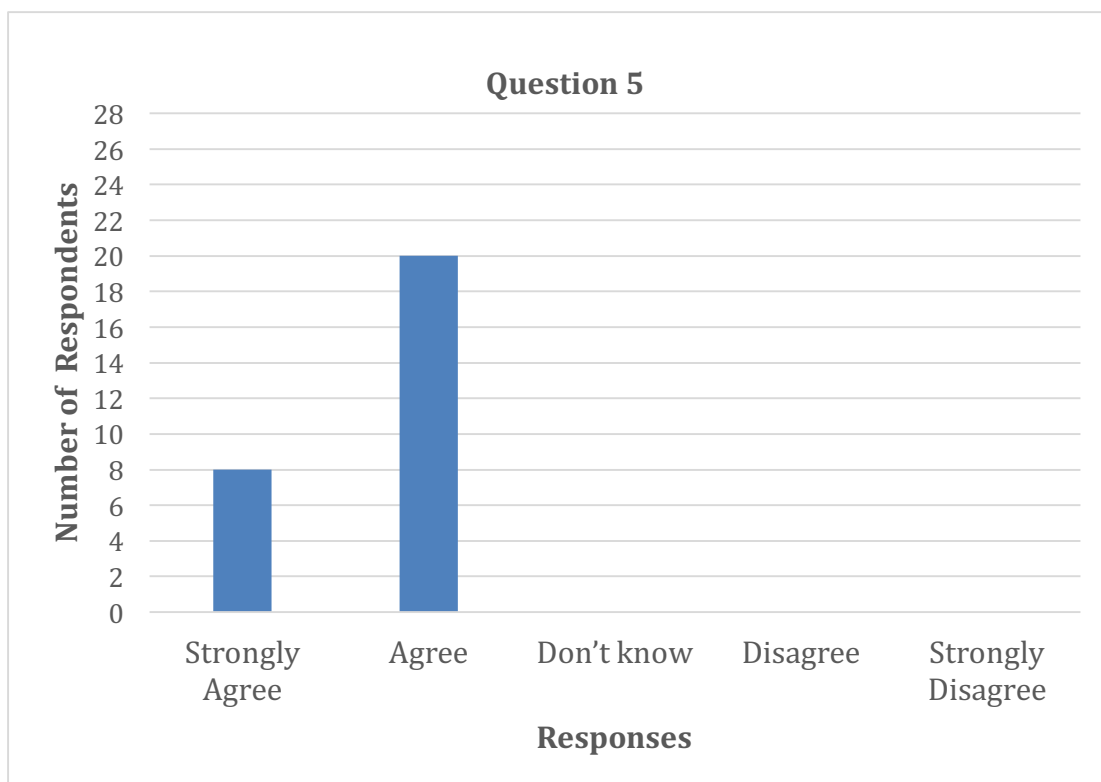
The interpretation

In this scenario, as shown in the graph, 26.6% strongly agreed and 20% agreed that, using virtual learning environment encourages students to learn independently where as, 13.3% disagreed, 33.3% strongly disagreed, implying that 46.6% of the respondents agree with the suggestion and 46.6% disagree.

5. Using Moodle has enhanced students' learning at UWTSD.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13	11	0	3	1

Graphical analysis



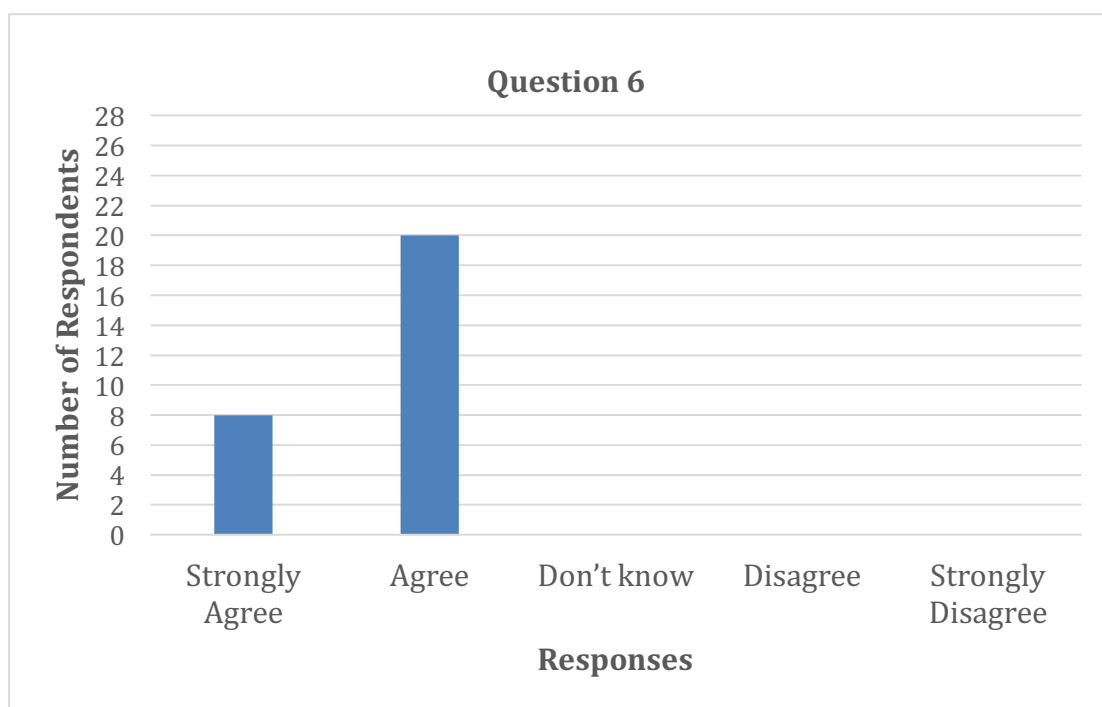
The interpretation

In this case, as shown in the graph, 43.3% strongly agreed and 36.6% agreed that, using Moodle has enhanced learning at University of Wales, Saint David where as, 10% disagreed, 3.3% strongly disagreed implying that 49.9% of the respondents recommends the use of Moodle as a medium of learning 13.3% do not.

6. Virtual learning environment has improved lecture delivery at UWTSD.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	17	0	1	1

Graphical analysis



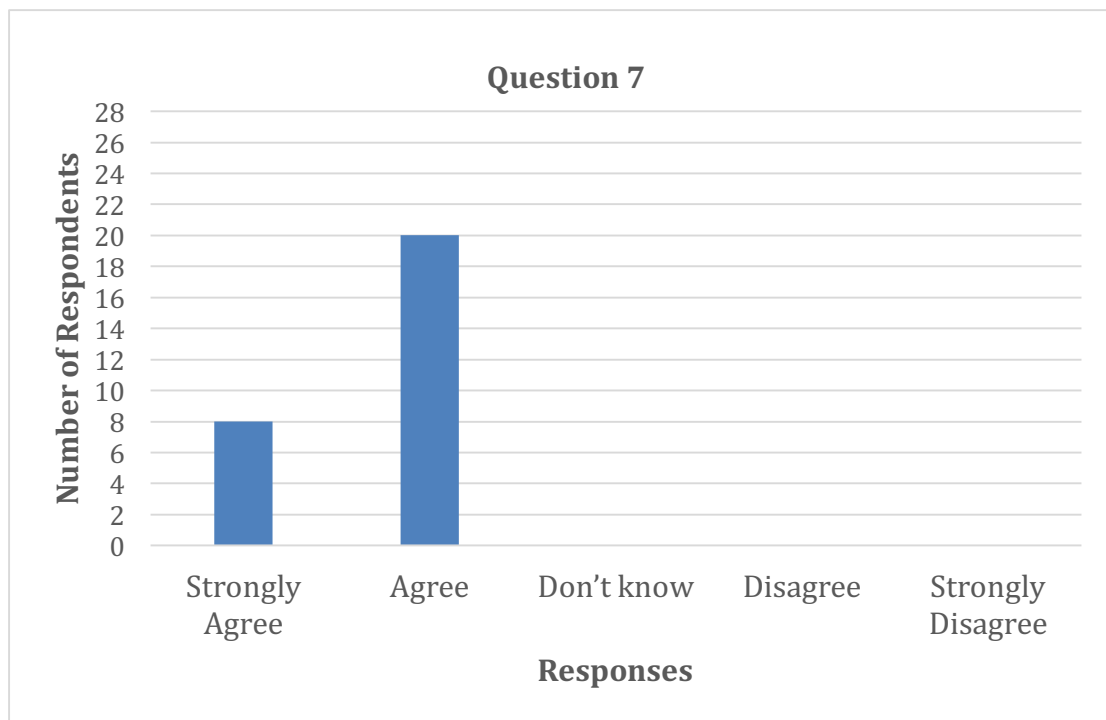
The interpretation

According to the findings in this scenario, as shown in the graph, 30% strongly agreed and 56.6% agreed that, Virtual learning environment has improved lecture delivery at the University of Wales, Saint David where as, 3.3% disagreed, another 3.3% strongly disagreed implying that 86.6% of the respondents recommends the use of Moodle as a medium of teaching compared to 9.9% who disagree.

7. Improvement is needed to make Moodle a better learning tool.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	20	0	0	0

Graphical analysis



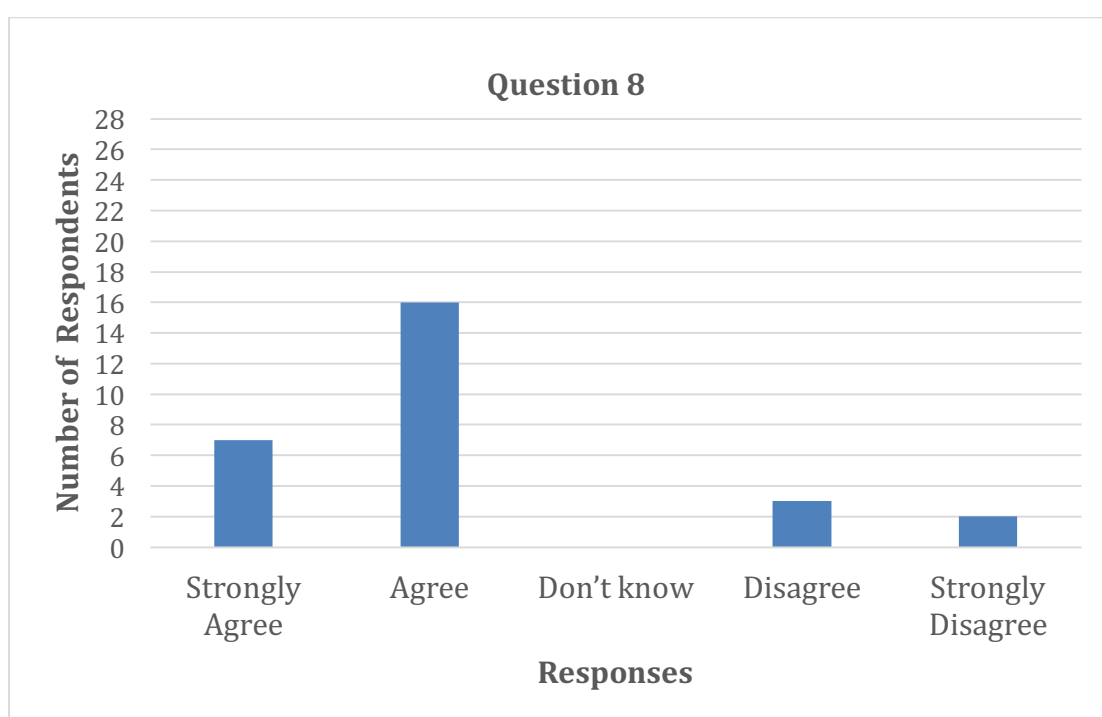
The interpretation

As per this result, as shown in the graph, 26.6% strongly agreed and 66.6% agreed that, improvement is needed to make Moodle a better tool where as, 0% either disagreed or strongly implying that 93.2% of the respondents agreed with the view and 0% disagreed.

8. Virtual learning environment is more resourceful than conventional teaching method.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	13	0	6	2

Graphical analysis



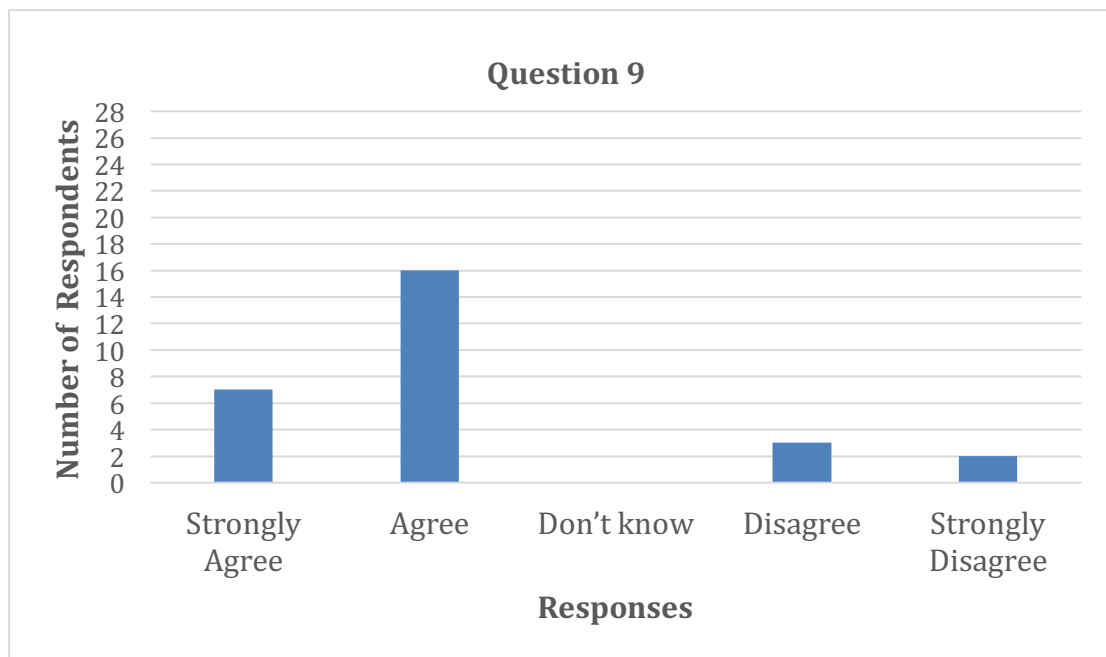
The interpretation

The result in this case, as shown in the graph, reveals that, 23.3% strongly agreed and 43.3% agreed that, Virtual learning environment is more resourceful than conventional teaching where as, 20% disagreed, 6.6% strongly disagreed implying that 46.6% of the respondents recommends the use of Moodle as a medium of teaching compared to 26.6% who disagree.

9. Using Moodle makes learning more enjoyable.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	15	0	3	1

Graphical analysis



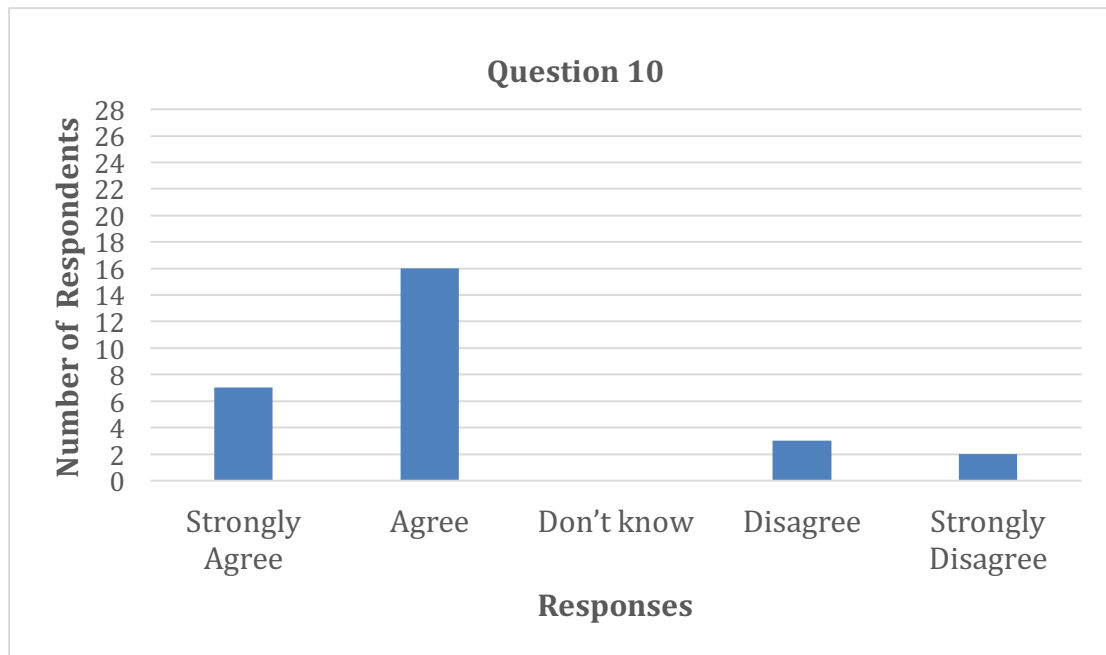
The interpretation

According to the research result in this scenario, as shown in the graph, 30% strongly agreed and 50% agreed that, using Moodle makes learning more enjoyable where as, 10% disagreed, 3.3% strongly disagreed implying that 80% of the respondents recommends the use of Moodle as a medium of teaching and learning where as 13.3% disagree.

10. Moodle is great learning resource.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	16	0	3	2

Graphical analysis



The interpretation

In this case, as shown in the graph, 23.3% strongly agreed and 53.3% agreed that, using Moodle is a great learning resource where as, 10% disagreed, 6.6% strongly disagreed and another 6.6% had no idea. Implying that 76.6% of the respondents recommends the use of Moodle as a medium of learning compared to 16.6% who disagree.

Summary of Results

The result of the research shows that, 78.7% of respondents agree that, the use of virtual learning environment -Moodle in the University of Wales, Trinity

Saint David, has positively impacted on the students' learning while 17.7% disagree.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESAECCH

The primary data of this research was originally meant to be gathered using a face-to-face interview format but, this was hindered by the abrupt closure of the University due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Inadequate time was another hindering factor. These made it impossible to collect the primary data from a larger sample size so as to come up with a more realistic and comprehensive result.

CONCLUSION

Whilst this research suggests that, the use of Moodle has positively impacted on students' learning at the university of Wales, Trinity saint David, this is not a conclusive study considering the sample size that was used. With a larger sample size, the result may differ.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

I therefore recommend that, the next researcher conducts the research when the respondents are in the university and also uses a larger sample size for a more accurate and realistic result.

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1. Peng et al. (2019) "The Effects of Virtual Learning Environment on High School Students' English Learning Performance and Attitude". In: Rønningsbakk L., Wu TT., Sandnes F., Huang YM. (eds) *Innovative Technologies and Learning*. ICITL 2019. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol. 11937. Springer, Cham. (Accessed: 26th March 2020). Available at: https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-35343-8_85
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APPENDICES

Figure 1: Questionnaire

1. Using Moodle frequently, greatly impacts your learning positively.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. Virtual learning environment is not a good way of learning.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. Moodle usage negatively impacts on students' learning.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. Using virtual learning environment encourages you to learn independently.

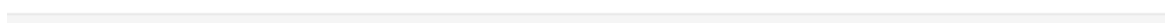
Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. Using Moodle has enhanced students' learning at UWTSD.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. Virtual learning environment has improved lecture delivery at UWTSD.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree



7. Improvement is needed to make Moodle a better learning tool.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

8. Virtual learning environment is more resourceful than conventional teaching method.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. Using Moodle makes learning more enjoyable.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

10. Moodle is great learning resource.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Figure 2: Consent Form



**IMPACT OF THE VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT ON STUDENTS OF
UNIVERSITY OF WALES, TRINITY SAINT DAVID.**

CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH

I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

I understand that;

Even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within fourteen days after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

The purpose of the study has been explained to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and that participation involves completing a questionnaire and that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

All information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) guidelines.

Any personally identifiable information on the results of this research that may reveal my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of such a data which may reveal my identity.

The signed consent form and completed questionnaire will be retained in a secure place only accessible by the researcher or any person authorized by the researcher until the examination board confirms the results of this research.

A copy of my questionnaire in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained at for a period of two years from the date of the examination board's report.

Participant

I confirm that, I am giving a informed consent by participating in this study.

Name Signature Date

Researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study.

Name Signature Date