

Research report on effect of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) – on the student's learning experience

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Introduction:

In this modern world of digitalization, it is a common practice to use virtual medium in education sector. Virtual education is providing learning instructions through computer, internet and other multimedia resources. In this practice both the students and teachers are separated by time, place or both. The instructor provides learning materials through internet. The virtual learning experience has a great impact on today's educational area as both the time and cost have reduced to a great extent and also the vast amount of knowledge available on web makes learning easier and effective. Higher education is employing more virtual learning experiences to its students as millennials are more prone to learn through internet and social media. The study is conducted to find out the impact of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) on students' educational experience at the University of Wales.

Aim:

The aim of the research is finding out the positive and negative impact of virtual learning on the students of the mentioned University. This also aims at finding out how using virtual network in learning method changes effectiveness and efficiency in learning. If there are any drawbacks of using this method, it also will be focused and discussed.

Objectives:

The broad objective of the research is to assess the effect of VLE on student's educational system and experience. Apart from these, there are some specific objectives as well. They are:

- 1) To find out whether the virtual learning experience is effective or not.
- 2) If there are any negative effect of virtual learning experience.
- 3) Required steps to minimize the negative impact and make virtual learning experience more effective.

Required Questions:

This study intends to find out the answer of the next questions to successfully complete the study. The following questions are mentioned in the questionnaire, analysis & findings of the study.

1. What is virtual learning environment (VLE)?
2. How does VLE helps the students in their study?
3. How students find VLE in their daily life as a part of education?

Literature Review:

Racheva, 2017 describes that virtual education is one kind of learning that can be increased by using computers and/or the web both outside and inside the institution. Maximum time, training is held online. Those activities happen online and the teacher and students are detached. Distance learning takes place in a virtual classroom environment with digital study resources built for auto (asynchronous) or real-time (synchronous) online instruction and tutoring.

Monica, 2016 describes that VLE is a set of digital tools that aid in teaching and learning. The best digital learning software incorporates the most modern advancements in educational technology. VLEs, at their most basic, disseminate information in a format of documents, news, and notices. They offer a variety of electronic resources available, ranging from notes to video presentations, podcasts, hyperlinks, and more. Message boards, moderated forums, and mailing lists are all available for communication. They provide a relaxing environment for both learning outcomes. They oversee material delivery across divisions as well as mark registration and administration.

Kanimozhi, 2018 expressed that virtual learning environments can offer useful experiences. Although new technologies are now underutilized in several areas of the curriculum, they will bring greater opportunities in the future. Networking is used to add value and increase interactivity. In the context of a virtual learning environment, technological advancements ensure that nearly all traditional classroom equipment can be recycled. In a virtual learning environment, materials is simulated. There are numerous new virtual learning environments in the future as well as exciting prospects. Students may have greater opportunities as a result of new networks. However, careful planning and ingenuity will be necessary to ensure that the learning experience will be more effective and efficient than traditional learning. Mobility is also important to consider so that learning can take place in the most optimal setting. If there are cost and time constraints, students should have access to the computer. There will be a variety of additional hardware and software requirements. One of the most significant drawbacks of the VLE is lack of face-to-face communication is the student's absence of face-to-face human engagement. Traditional educational contexts provide opportunities for social interaction. Virtual reality has a significant impact on students' personal and social development. Traditional learning environments may not be able to completely replace them. Classrooms and teacher-student interaction are important and they can be ensured through virtual media too.

Caprara and Caprara, 2021 state that the ability to provide access to information and training at times and from anywhere, this types of learning has increased much in popularity. Moreover, the

goal is to(a) increase the availability of materials for learners who are unable or unwilling to attend traditional methods, (b) more cost-effectively assembling educational content, c) allowing teachers to handle students while maintaining high quality comparable to similar traditional teaching.

Kinshuk, 2002 stated that the growing popularity of developing digital technology confronts educators with new opportunities and problems. Only familiarization is required of instructors in order to benefit of the educational opportunities. Not only to take advantage of the opportunities they give, but to encourage students should use safe procedures and act professionally making use of these technologies. However, this will be a continuing challenge "to integrate the emergent possibilities" with a long-term commitment to the environment. A future project will be developed as part of ongoing study. Attempt to increase the number of e-technologies available. excellent practices are assessed and disseminated and exemplars through the internet, in addition to giving a system for continuous updates.

Govindarajan and Srivastava, 2020 discuss that there are equipment difficulties that should be solved before online education invade, as majority who have had our daily schedules turned into a series of video conferences can confirm. We are certain that information media (social media, cloud computing and artificial intelligence) can be applied at times, but it can be recognized that many work is due. Broadband network and digital imbalance must be focused on the hardware part. Because learners in same class receive the same delivery. Moreover, online learning expand the digital divide. Richer students have latest laptops, faster internet connectivity, and more advanced audio-visual equipment. Furthermore, to assure learning outcomes and course completion, online classes require academic services on the floor: educational researcher, trainees, and guides. There is a difference amongst colleges as well, which will be permanent in the present research. Compared to budget fixed public institutions, top non-govt. colleges have mightier IT framework and a larger IT support function to professor rates.

Methodology:

Research methodology is the framework which informs about in which way the research is done. The philosophy, approaches, sample techniques, collection of data etc. are here. It also portrays that the research is conducted in a way to gain the aim and goals of the study. In this study, multiple methods are used to collect data. The survey is the most popular and easier method to create multiple responses in a limited time. The numeric data analysis was done

under quantitative data analysis and non-numeric was done under qualitative analysis. There were two types of data collection method.

1) Primary data collection: The key ways to collect primary data are:

- Questionnaire
- Interview
- Focus

2) Secondary data collection: These types of data are collected from sources such as term papers, newspaper, articles etc. Majority of the collected information are from virtual sources. These sources are highly reliable, valid and practical.

Sampling:

Simple random sampling method is used. Total 20 students are chosen as the sample size for the research. Population size of the report is 80 students and this sample represents all the population. It is a sampling technique which gives scope that it will remain free from biases.

Data analysis:

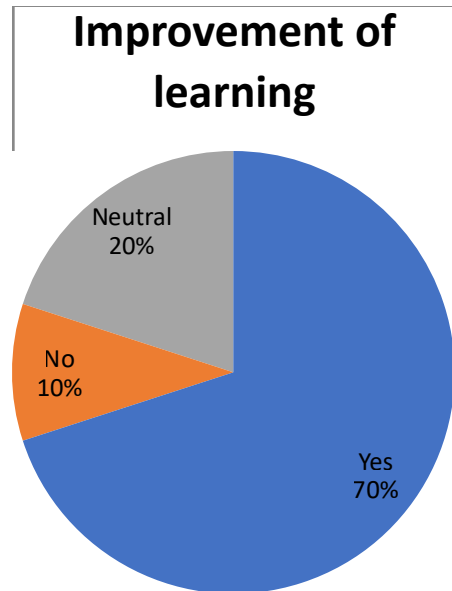
From data collected through different questions which show that the perception of students on their experience with virtual learning. The questions are divided in two categories : open ended and close ended. Close ended question provide direct information so it that it can be used in qualitative analysis. So, firstly data presentation with pie charts will be shown like the number of respondent and indirect open ended question helps to do qualitative analysis.

The rationale of the research:

This whole research aims to understand the views of the students about the virtual learning experiences. The covid-19 pandemic has introduced new normal trends in the global areas especially in educational sector. To ensure effective and efficient and also some higher level of productive education, maintaining the huge effect of virtual learning is real. This also can focus on some drawbacks and how they can be minimized.

Quantitative analysis:

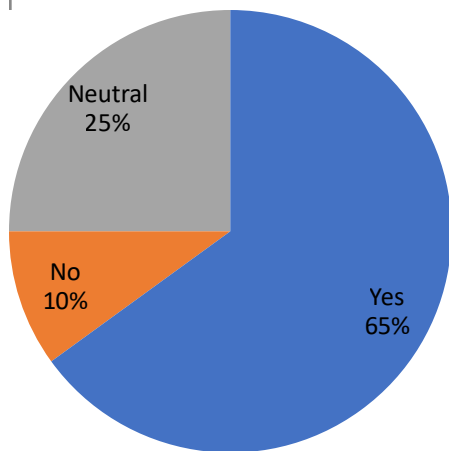
Question 1:



Out of 20 samples of this research, 14 of the students agreed that virtual learning is improving their learning capability. 4 of them remained neutral and 2 of them think that VLE is not improving their learning. It is clear from this that VLE is having a great impact on the learning of students.

Question 2:

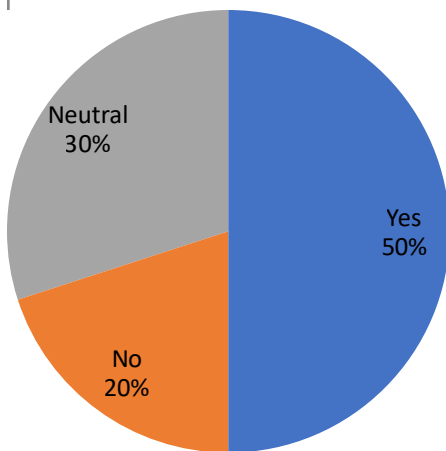
Effective communication



Regarding the effectiveness of communication in VLE system, 13 of the students said that the effectiveness of communication is ensured among the lecturers and students, 2 of them said no and rest 5 remain neutral. This also show a clear picture that virtual learning is not ineffective in communication though it doesn't ensure face to face communication.

Question 3:

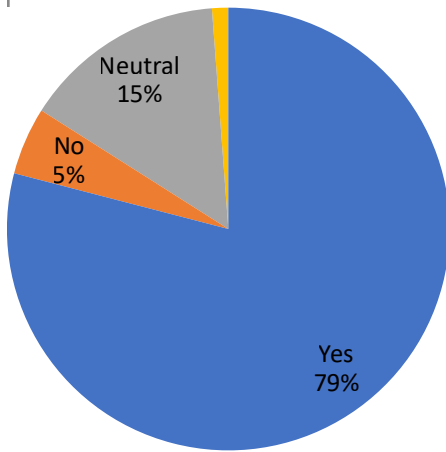
Availability of materials



In regard to the availability of course materials and resources, the result is quite disappointing. Only 50% or 10 students agree that resources are available online. 6 remain neutral and 4 denied. This shows that there is a shortage of course materials and resources required for the students in VLE.

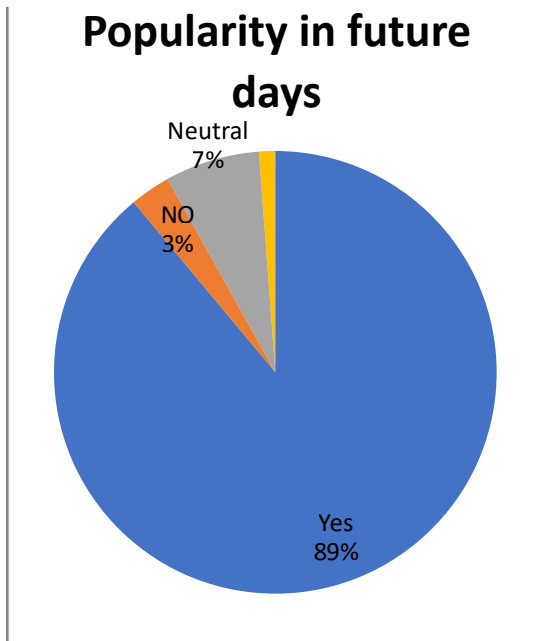
Question 4:

Training to use VLE



This is quite satisfactory that majority of the students, here around 16 from sample size 20 students are well trained to use VLE. The remain portion can be trained to use virtual learning experiences in any time.

Question 5:



It is no doubt that in future days there will be no better options than virtual learning. Which is accelerated with the COVID-19 pandemic, has got its popularity so much that, after being normal, it is also used in huge areas, especially in education sector. And obviously the millennials are the main users of virtual learning and they are habituated with it. The result shows this above.

Findings from the qualitative analysis:

In the open ended question, students were asked to provide their opinions regarding mass usage of VLE in higher studies and which kinds of problems they face in conducting with VLE. There are different types of opinions regarding the mass usage of VLE. For example, some students take it easily and some don't. Some think there should be a balance between virtual and traditional methods. If a summary is made, it is found that both are important to the students as both have some advantages so that they can enjoy both. And in case of the second open ended question, there are still a huge problem like security breaches, network issues, cost, unavailability of resources, lack of personal contact etc. poses a lot of difficulties in pursuing their studies using VLE. It is very much impressive that majority of the students participated and answer nearly all the questions, especially the open ended were also touched by everybody. As there are problems, there must be solutions. Effective steps from the university authority can ensure these difficulties will be removed soon.

Conclusion:

University of Wales is one of the finest universities of London. As being a part of the globalization race, introduction of Virtual Learning Experience will benefit the students to a great extent in future days. As they will be habituated by it, this technical knowledge will keep them more advanced in their professional life. It is necessary that the university authority will be more focused to the problems faced by the students and will take immediate steps so that students can enjoy the full benefit of VLE. And to keep pace with the modern world, virtual learning should be studied more to make it more efficient to make the best use of it.

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Appendix:

Questionnaire:

No.	Question		Answer	
1.	Do you think Virtual Learning Experience can improve your experience of learning?	Yes	No	Neutral
2.	Do you think you can communicate effectively with your lecturers and classmates using VLE?	Yes	No	Neutral
3.	Do you find your required course materials in VLE?	Yes	No	Neutral
4.	Do you have proper training to use VLE?	Yes	No	Neutral
5.	Do you think VLE will be more popular in the future days?	Yes	No	Neutral
6.	What is your opinion regarding mass use of VLE in higher studies?			
7.	Do you find any types of difficulties in using VLE? If yes, then which types of problems?			