

MODULE: DIGITAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODS

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Abstract

The following research has been based on the impact VLE has on the students' learning experience at the UWTSD London Campus. It is an online learning platform which consists of technologies and tools that provides better learning to the students. In this research, using real-time and published data, the impact been properly known that VLE has on the students of the university. The researcher has followed proper guidelines and gathered data which are ethically correct. In this way, a proper set of outcomes has been achieved from the research.

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Introduction

Introduction

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is one of the educational technologies which is a web-based platform for the digital factors included in the courses of educational institutions. In this research, the way VLE helps students of UWTSD London Campus in their studies will be discussed. The learning experience that the students of this university got through the Moodle of their university will be found in this research.

Background of the Research

Students have been seemingly having good experiences through Virtual Learning Environment. The online classes and courses were gaining popularity even before the pandemic which has also grown after the pandemic. From a study, it has been seen that, in a UK university, nearly 41% of the high education students have felt that their virtual education is better for them than learning in a classroom (Masterscompare, 2022). Therefore, in this research further information about the impact of VLE on the educational experience of the students will be learnt.

Research Aim and Objectives

Aim

To understand the way VLE can influence the experience of learning of the students at UWTSD London campus.

Objectives

1. To discuss the various aspects of the VLE at UWTSD London campus.
2. To find out the way students' learning experience improved through VLE.
3. To determine the positive effect of a VLE on students' education.

Research Questions

1. What are the various aspects of the VLE at the UWTSD London campus?
2. How have students' learning experiences improved through VLE?
3. What is the positive effect of a VLE on students' education?

Research Rationale

This research would be done to know about the Virtual Learning Environment and how it can help students to improve their education. Through VLE accessibility and inclusivity increase. Along with that, the cost savings and students' technical skills enhance. Therefore, this research will be discussing how VLE has impacted the learning experience on the UWTSD London campus (Funtech, 2020).

Literature Review/Review of the existing literature

Introduction

The following section will be based on the research problem which is the impact of VLE on the learning experience of students in UK universities. There will be a brief overview of the Virtual Learning Environment given. Along with that, its effect on the student's learning will be described using some secondary resources.

Virtual Learning Environment

According to Sadeghi (2019), Virtual Learning Environment is an online-based platform where both the teachers and students can enhance learning experiences of the students. This is not just like virtual learning which is targeted for the students who cannot join the physical classroom and apply for distance learning. There are many aspects involved in VLE such as quizzes, digital communication, polls and interaction. This guides a lecturer to create, disseminate and store the learning content and also plan the lessons to improve their communication with the students which helps students to make their learning experience better.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Virtual Learning Environment

VLE has many advantages and disadvantages on the basis of a student's learning experience. According to Dung, (2020), one of the most noticeable merits of VLE is that the classes are flexible which is a good opportunity for the students to learn. They can also save the classes for the future and can revise them as needed. Other than that, opportunities increase for students as online classes save time and cost. However, there are some challenges in VLE which can be problematic for the students. Lack of interaction, difficulties in hearing others, an extensive amount of time staring at the digital screens and more which are the issues that students face in VLE.

Effect of VLE on students' Learning Experience

Virtual Learning Environment is a learning process which is done online and where the classes and courses can be availed by students whenever they want. According to Majid and Hasim (2020), During the pandemic, VLE has helped the students a lot as they could continue their education from their homes. Therefore, it can be said that this learning process has been helpful for the students in many ways. The communication process between the students and the lecturers improved and they could clear their doubts regarding any subject matter more accurately. Other than that, they could access the stored courses and lessons whenever they want from their place just by logging into their VLE account. In this way, VLE has been a positive aspect for the students.

Summary

The above section has used some published sources like journals, and articles based on the research problem to discuss it. With the help of the sources, proper knowledge about VLE has been achieved. Moreover, its advantages and disadvantages along with its effect on students' learning have been described above.

Research Methodology

Introduction

This section of the research will elaborate on the processes and techniques which have been effective in getting the proper outcome from the research. Moreover, through the section, some stages will be covered which are the layers of Saunders' Research Onion. This is a model which was introduced by Saunders in 2007 and it has several stages which would make a proper structure of the research that will help in collecting data about the impact of VLE on students of UWTSD London campus' learning experience.

Research Methods

Research Design

There are many types of research designs such as Correlational, Descriptive, Diagnostic, Experimental and Explanatory. The descriptive research design has been chosen here through which the impact of VLE on UWTSD London campus students has been known and how it has impacted. However, the reason for the impact has not been described (Shuttleworth, 2022).

Research Philosophy

Among the four research philosophies such as pragmatism, positivism, interpretivism and realism, the positivism research philosophy has been selected by the researcher. Therefore, through the selected philosophy, the researcher can find out the actual information about the effect of VLE which is believed by a huge population.

Research Approach

There are three approaches according to the model such as inductive, deductive and abductive. Here, the deductive research approach has been followed by the researcher. Through this method, based on pre-existing theory on VLE, some strategies have been made in order to evaluate the objectives about its impact on the students' learning (Research-Methodology, 2022).

Research Strategy

There are many strategies through which data is collected like interviews, surveys, action research, case study research and more. In this research, survey and case study research strategies have been used. Through these, the required information about the impact of VLE on the students' learning has been achieved.

Research Choice

There are three kinds of research choices mixed, multi and mono. Depending on the two types of data qualitative and quantitative, these methods are chosen. In this research, the mixed method has been chosen by the researcher where both the numerical and non-numerical data regarding the student's learning experience through VLE have been gathered (Mcleod, 2019).

Data Collection Methods

The researcher has used both secondary and primary sources for gathering data about the effect of VLE on the process of learning of students. Primary data given real-time information and the secondary data has been achieved from the articles, books and journals related to the research topic and been evaluated by thematic analysis.

Sampling

Simple random sampling has been used by the researcher to collect the primary information. For the survey, this sampling method has been utilised in order to make the outcome more accurate. 20 students of UWTSD London campus have been chosen randomly which has given an unbiased result of the research problem which is the influence of VLE on students' learning experience (Shin, 2020).

Ethical Consideration

The first and foremost thing that the researcher has done is to take consent from the students who have been selected for the survey. Other than that, the data has been kept safeguarded according to the Data Protection Act of 2018. The secondary sources have also been mentioned to make the research more ethical.

Summary

The section has described the procedures and techniques which have been used in the research in order to gather the required information about the influence VLE has on the learning of the students. Through these choices, a proper outcome of the research has been achieved.

Results/Findings, analysis and discussion

Primary data analysis

1. How long have you been studying at UWTSD?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Less than 1 year	4	20%
1-3 years	11	55%
More than 3 years	5	25%

Table 1: Survey results for question 1

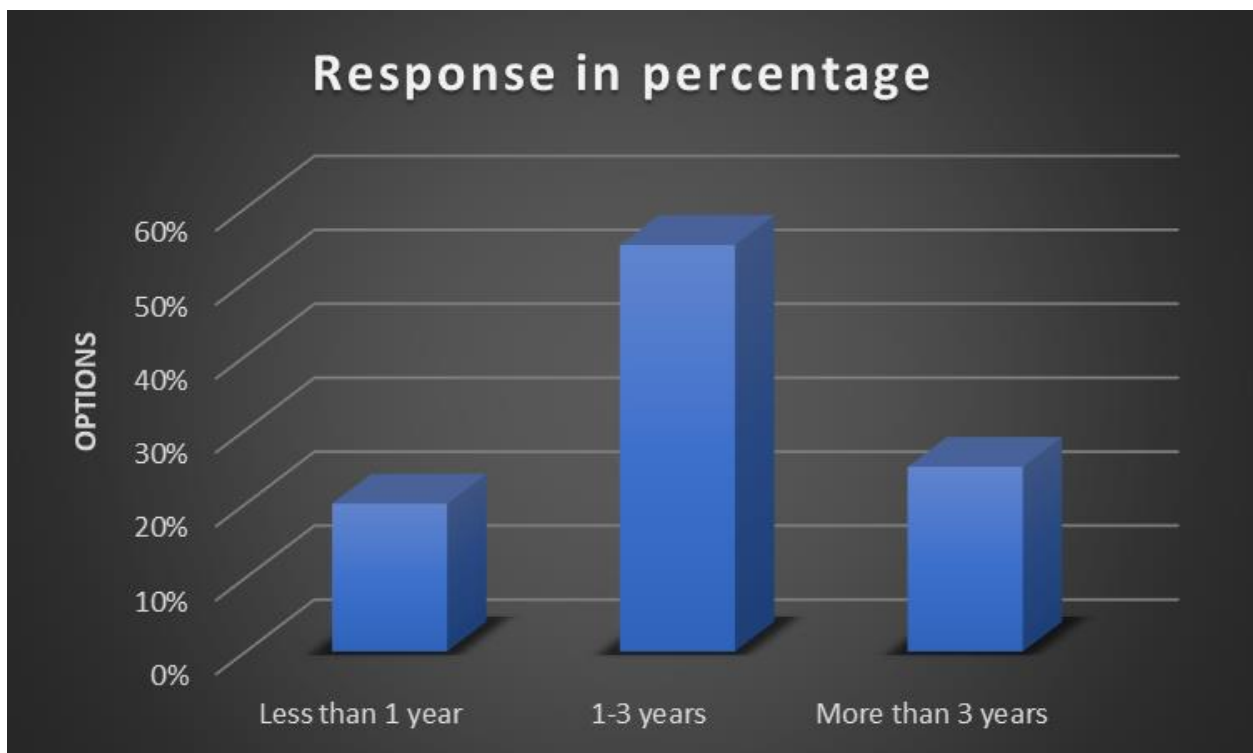


Figure 1: Graph of responses to questions 1

2. How long has the university been using Moodle?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Less than 1 year	5	25%
1-5 years	10	50%
More than 5 years	5	25%

Table 2: Survey results for question 2

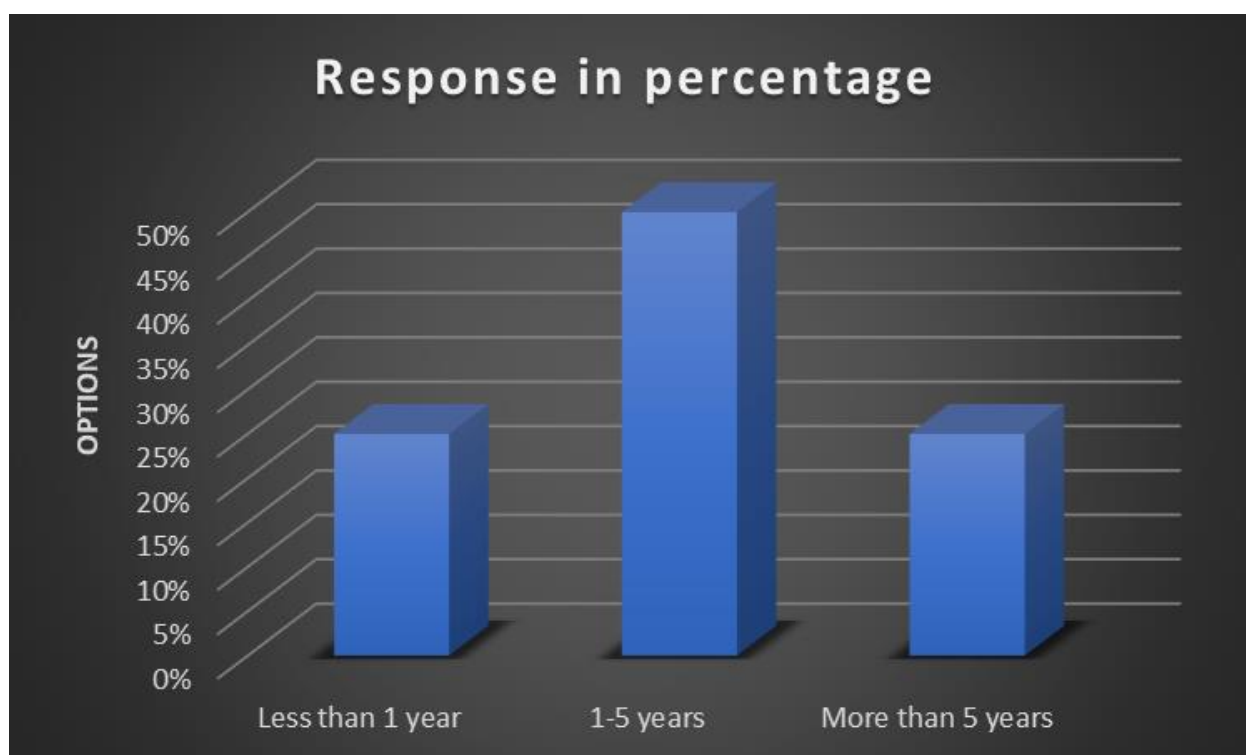


Figure 2: Graph of responses to questions 2

3. What are the positive aspects of Moodle that you enjoyed the most?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Cheap	12	60%
Customisable	2	10%
User-friendly	6	30%

Table 3: Survey results for question 3

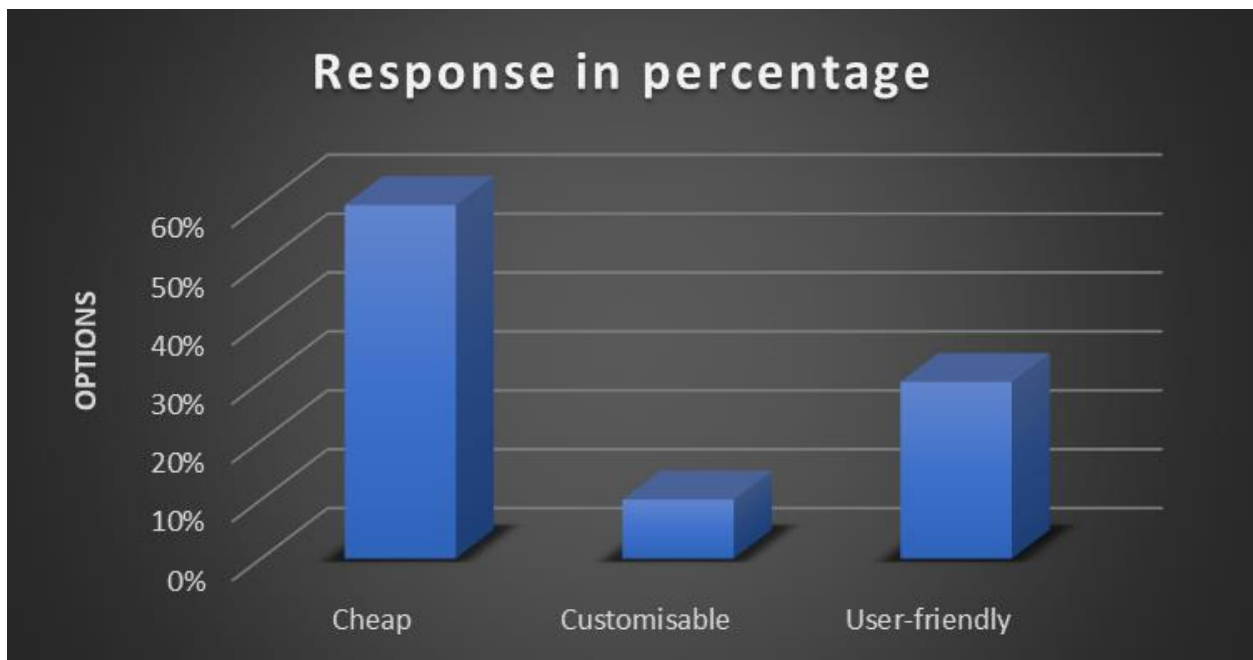


Figure 3: Graph of responses to questions 3

4. What are the main problems you faced in Moodle?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Lack of flexibility in the software	6	30%
Difficulty in deleting forums	5	25%
Many emails get mixed up	9	45%

Table 4: Survey results for question 4

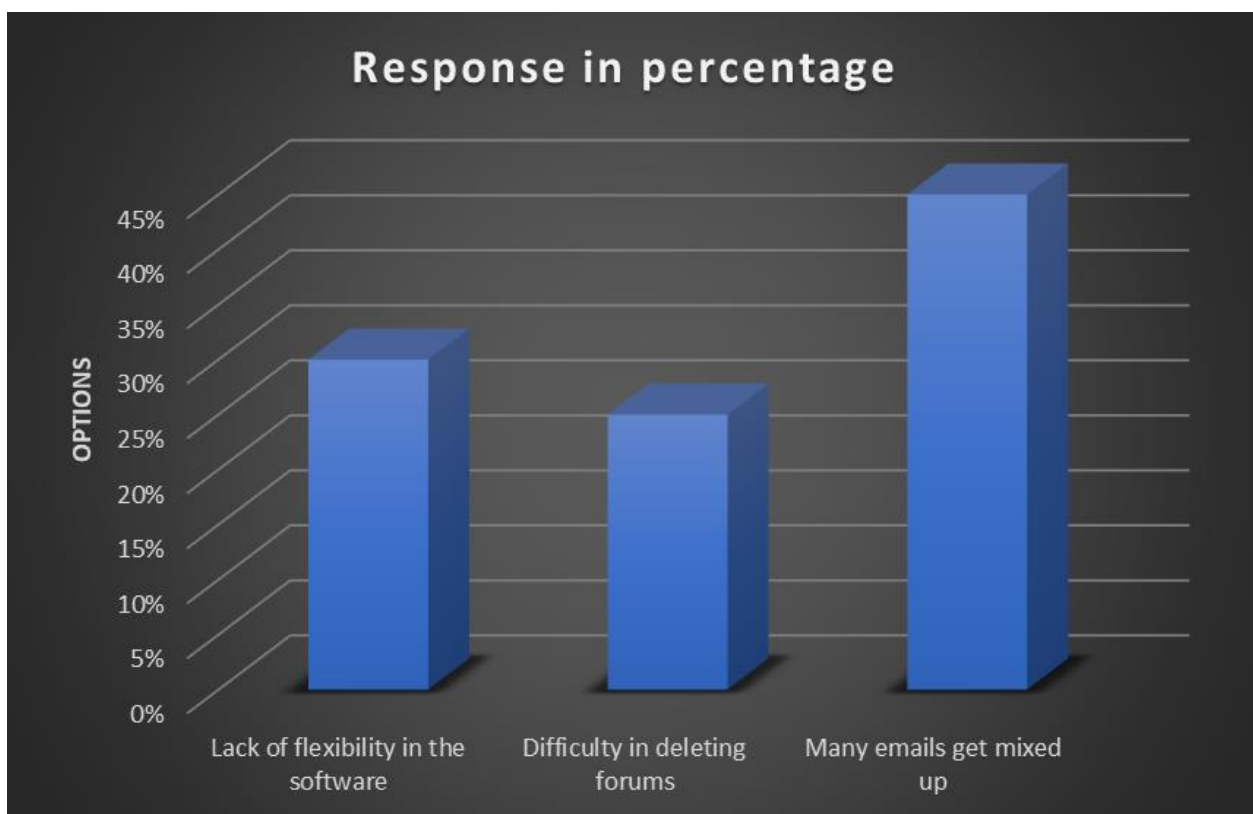


Figure 4: Graph of responses to questions 4

5. What can the university do to make the VLE better?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Modules should be saved after classes	8	40%
Account set-up should be easier	7	35%
IT service desk should be available more	5	25%

Table 5: Survey results for question 5

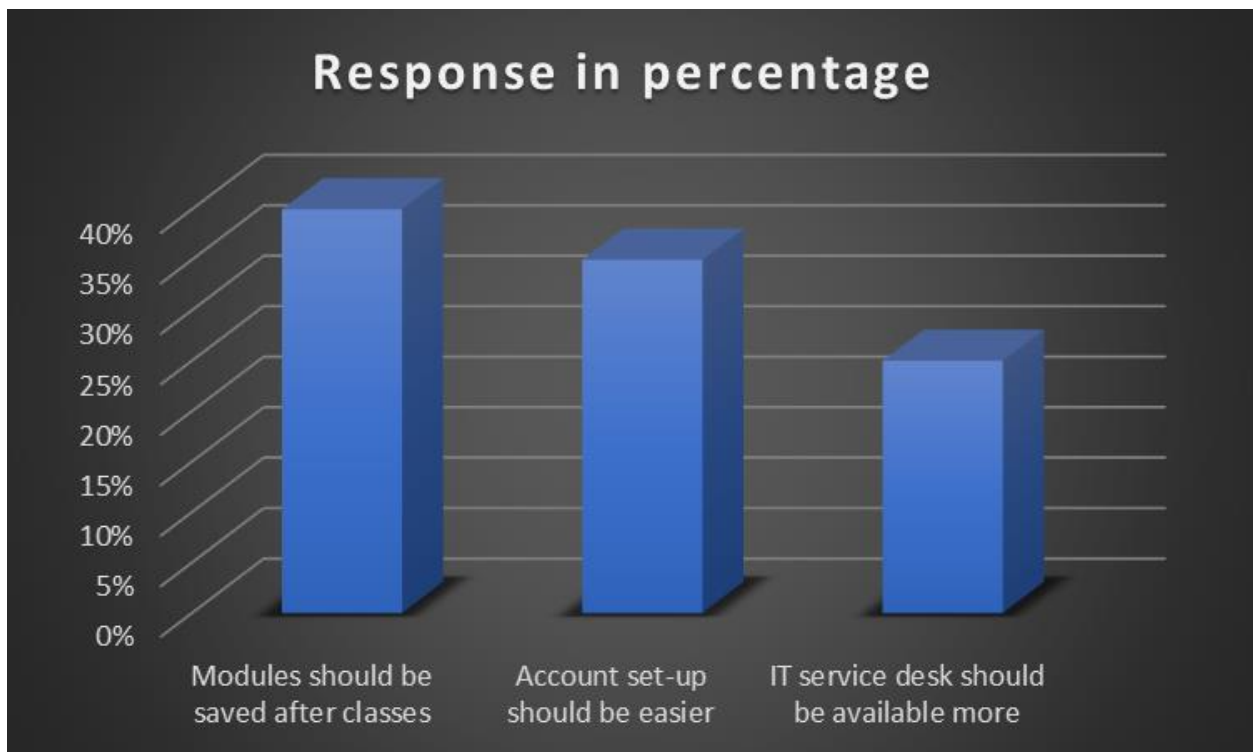


Figure 5: Graph of responses to questions 5

Secondary data analysis

The Virtual Learning environment has been very much helpful for the students of UWTSD London campus as it has many features like helping with the forgotten ID or password, a guide to use the system, finding out the email address, and linking the university's main to another main address and more. Other than that, there are many general benefits of VLE that have been achieved by the Moodle of this university.

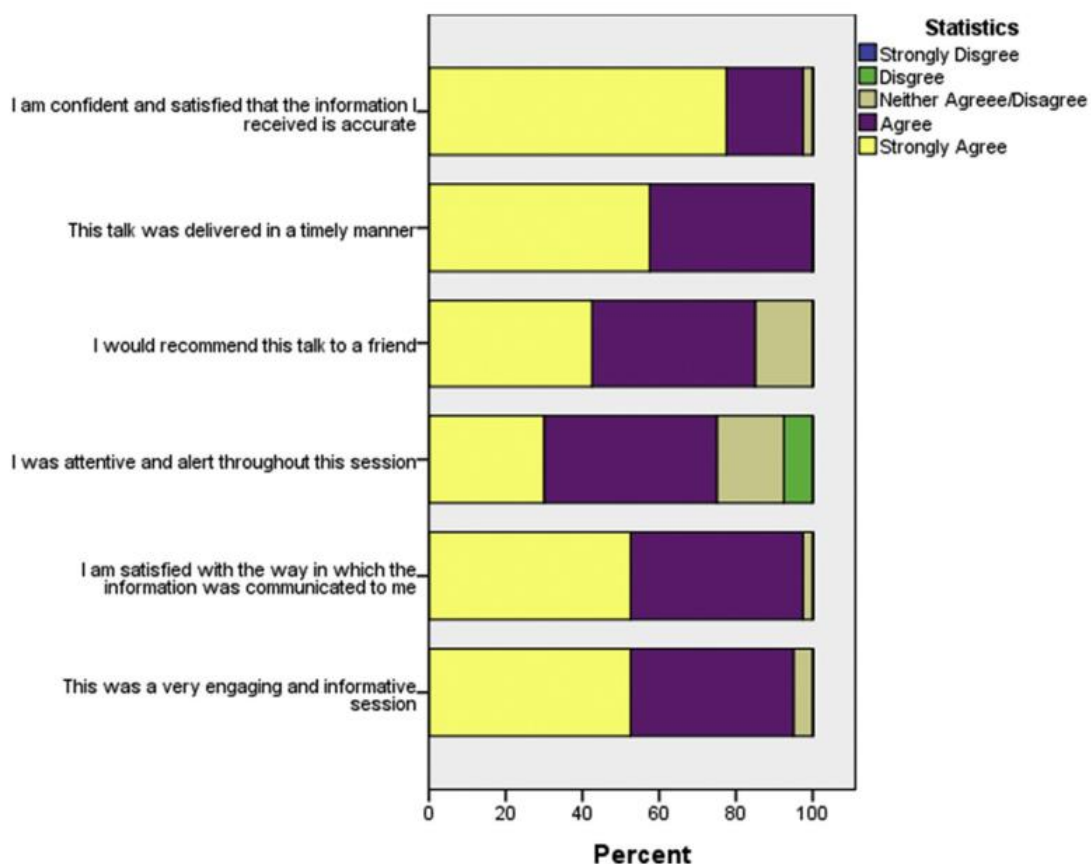


Figure 6: Impact of VLE on Students' Learning Experience

Source: (Ryan and Poole, 2019)

From the above image, it can be said that most of the students think that the information that they have achieved through VLE is correct and they are satisfied with it. Other than that, the classes were also held at the right time and delivered in a timely manner. Moreover, most of the students

have also agreed to recommend to their friends and the communication process has also been better.

Summary of the findings

It has been known from both of the findings that VLE has been helpful for the students in the universities. At UWTSD London Campus, the students have also benefited through Moodle. From the survey, it can be derived that the most attractive feature of Moodle is that it is cheap. However, the students have said that mixing up emails has been a challenge which have also been seen in the literature. They have also suggested that the modules be saved after every class so that they can revise them (Sadeghi, 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

The research has been based on the effect of VLE on the students of UWTSD London Campus' learning experience. For getting proper results from the research, an aim and some objectives have been set up. The reason for doing this research has also been described above. Based on the research problem, VLE, its merits and challenges and its effect on students' learning have been discussed using published literature. A methodology has been made depending on which primary and secondary data collection and analysis have been done to get the appropriate result.

Recommendations

It is recommended to the university to make Moodle more user-friendly as many students have said that they face issues in handling them. It is an online system for learning through which students can be educated while staying in their homes. While attending the classes and also revisiting the website they face problems with of availing the courses and previous classes. This should be managed by the university to make the process easier for the students.

It is also recommended to the university check for the maintenance of the VLE. There are many students who are visiting the website and accessing many classes and courses. It can result in issues in the Moodle website like mixing up often emails which have been one of the issues faced by the students. Therefore, this should also be considered by UWTSD London Campus to make students' learning experience better (Boitnott, 2022).

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1. How long have you been studying at UWTSD?

Less than 1 year

1-3 years

More than 3 years

2. How long has the university been using Moodle?

Less than 1 year

1-5 years

More than 5 years

3. What are the positive aspects of Moodle that you enjoyed the most?

Cheap

Customisable

User-friendly

4. What are the main problems you faced in Moodle?

Lack of flexibility in the software

Difficulty in deleting forums

Many emails get mixed up

5. What can the university do to make the VLE better?

Modules should be saved

Account set-up should be easier

IT service desk should be available more

Appendix 2: Excel result tables

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Less than 1 year	4	20%
1-3 years	11	55%
More than 3 years	5	25%

Table 6: Survey results for question 1

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Less than 1 year	5	25%
1-5 years	10	50%
More than 5 years	5	25%

Table 7: Survey results for question 2

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Cheap	12	60%
Customisable	2	10%
User-friendly	6	30%

Table 8: Survey results for question 3

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Lack of flexibility in the software	6	30%
Difficulty in deleting forums	5	25%
Many emails get mixed up	9	45%

Table 9: Survey results for question 4

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Modules should be saved after classes	8	40%
Account set-up should be easier	7	35%
IT service desk should be available more	5	25%

Table 10: Survey results for question 5