

Pop Oana Monica

Student ID 2132996

Module code: BMSW4003

Module: Digital Skills and Research Methods

Lecturer name: Ejiro Esowode

Assignment title:

DSR Assessment 2 Individual Report

Abstract

The research has discussed the influence VLE has on UWTSD's students' learning process and experience. Moreover, the VLE is the online platform that teachers use to make the learning experience better for the students. Therefore, by gathering both secondary and primary data, its impact has been known through this research. Along with that, the benefits and demerits of VLE have also been described. To eliminate the issues, some recommendations have been provided through which the learning experience of students can be improved.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	5
1.1 Introduction	5
1.2 Research Background	5
1.3 Aim and Objectives.....	5
1.3.1 Aim	5
1.3.2 Objectives	5
1.4 Research Questions	6
1.5 Research Rationale.....	6
2. Literature Review.....	7
2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.1.1 Brief Description of VLE.....	7
2.1.2 Merits and Challenges of VLE	7
2.1.3 Strategies to Improve VLE	8
2.2 Summary	8
3. Methodology	9
3.1 Introduction.....	9
3.2 Research Onion	9
3.3 Research Methods	9
3.3.1 Research Design.....	9

3.3.2 Research Philosophy	10
3.3.3 Research Approach	10
3.3.4 Research Choice.....	10
3.3.5 Research Strategy.....	10
3.3.6 Sampling	10
3.3.7 Data Collection and Analysis.....	10
3.4 Ethical Considerations	11
3.5 Limitations	11
3.6 Summary	11
4. Findings, analysis and discussion	12
4.1 Primary data analysis	12
4.2 Secondary data analysis	17
4.3 Summary of the findings.....	18
5. Conclusion and Recommendations.....	19
5.1 Conclusion	19
5.2 Recommendations.....	19
References.....	20
Appendix 1: Questionnaire	22
Appendix 2: Survey Result	23

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The following research will be based on Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and its impact on the student's learning process. The virtual learning system that is specifically used in a university campus based in London, the UK named University of Wales Trinity Saint David, will be the main focus here. VLE is a digital system in which students get to learn about the subjects on a platform which is web-based. There are specific platforms in universities in which the courses, study materials, and classes are uploaded where students can learn about things. Thus, its influence on students of UWTSD's learning experience will be elaborated.

1.2 Research Background

Virtual Learning Experience is one of the necessary educational technologies now where universities are trying to find the best way possible to continue classes. During the pandemic, classes were hampered in most of the universities in the UK and for this reason, they have tried different approaches to continuing education. Therefore, VLE was the only option for the universities and the usage of online materials and online courses increased in the UK where the age group of 16 to 24 used learning materials 46% and the age group of 25 to 34 have used it 24% (Chevalier, 2022). Therefore, from this research, it can be known how much it has impacted the students' learning procedure.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

1.3.1 Aim

To understand the influence VLE has on the students of UWTSD's learning process.

1.3.2 Objectives

1. To find out the factors, tools and technologies involved in a Virtual Learning Environment.
2. To evaluate the merits and challenges students can get from the Virtual Learning Environment.

3. To analyse the strategies to improve VLE that can help the university in providing a good learning environment.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the factors, tools and technologies involved in the Virtual Learning Environment?
2. What are the merits and challenges students can get from a Virtual Learning Environment?
3. What are the strategies to improve VLE that can help the university in providing a good learning environment?

1.5 Research Rationale

This research will be done for knowing how VLE impacts a student of UWTSD's learning experience. In recent times, VLE has been a leading platform for universities as students and teachers cannot be physically present in the classrooms. In British Higher Education, a total of 176 institutions have been analysed and it has been seen from the study that only 3% of them are not using VLE and 43% of them are using Moodle (Mosley, 2022). Therefore, it can be said that the university would get a number of advantages from this for which the research would be conducted.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The following part of the research will discuss the various aspects that are included in a Virtual Learning Environment. the influence has on a student's educational career and the way universities can improve their experience would be discussed. all of the discussion will be based on the information that can be found in the published materials so that it will be authentic.

2.1.1 Brief Description of VLE

In accordance with Torres Martín, (2021), a VLE is an digital platform where an educational institution can provide knowledge about a subject matter to the students using web-based technologies. This is used in educational institutions like universities in order to enhance the learning experience of students. In a VLE, the internet plays a big role as classes are held online, and courses, and modules, all are availed by the students through the online platform. Other than that, computer systems are also necessary for VLE. The components that a VLE allows are content management, learner administration and engagement, curriculum planning, real-time communication and collaboration. By using this, universities can make students' learning procedure improved by enhancing their communication and collaboration.

2.1.2 Merits and Challenges of VLE

According to Sprague, (2020), VLE has a number of disadvantages and advantages which would work as merits and pitfalls for the students respectively. The main benefit that the students get from a VLE is flexibility. When studying in their own homes, students do not have to commute to their universities and can finish their courses from their homes. Other than that, they can access the subject material whenever they want, can do cost savings and also can save valuable time. However, according to Kurbakova, (2020), there are several negative impacts of VLE like extra

training is needed to be habituated to the virtual classroom. Along with this, the need for proper infrastructure, and problems in communication can also be challenges for the students.

2.1.3 Strategies to Improve VLE

While using a university's VLE, students can come across various issues which the university should consider and make some strategies to eliminate issues. According to Boitnott, (2022), there are several approaches through which VLE can be better. The platform should be simplified so that the students can find the needed materials more easily. Additionally, the efficiency of the students should be enhanced with some other tools. There must be an accurate time provided in the VLE in which the lecturers would be available to help the students. Communication and collaboration can be improved through this and students' learning experience will be better.

2.2 Summary

This particular part of the research has used some articles, web pages, and journals to elaborate on the different factors of VLE. Along with that, its benefits and issues have also been discussed. The way of improving VLE has been given above.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The following part will describe the several techniques and methods which would be used for making the research more effective. In this section, some processes will be chosen so that a systematic structure is gained to carry out the research. The reliability and validity of the research will be evaluated in the research methodology.

3.2 Research Onion

A research model named Saunders Research Onion has been used by the researcher which was developed by Saunders in the year of 2007. This model has many layers in which the innermost stage is the most tactical and the outer layers are philosophical. Therefore, using this model, the researcher has made a proper framework and gained a positive outcome.

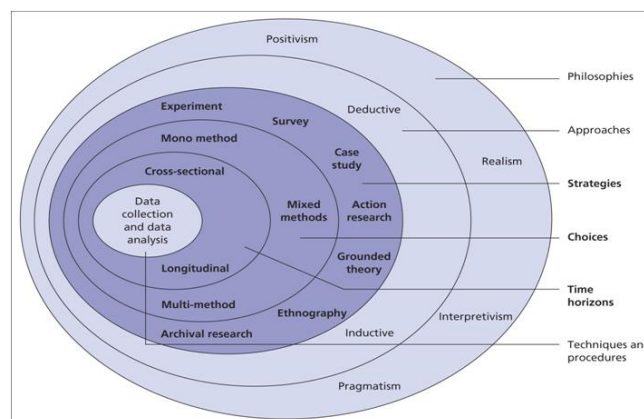


Figure 1: Saunders Research Onion

Source: (Iovino and Tsitsianis, 2020)

3.3 Research Methods

3.3.1 Research Design

The descriptive design has been used by the researcher through which factual information can be achieved regarding the influence of this platform on the students of UWTSD's learning experience like how, when and where it has occurred.

3.3.2 Research Philosophy

Positivism has been used by the researcher through which the general data and information has been collected. The belief of the impact of VLE that is present and followed by people naturally have been gathered by the researcher using this philosophy (Marsonet, 2019).

3.3.3 Research Approach

A deductive approach has been maintained in this research as the researcher has made a proper strategy to test the objectives regarding the effect of VLE on students' learning which is based on an existing theory.

3.3.4 Research Choice

A mixed process has been used where qualitative and quantitative data regarding the impact of VLE has been merged and compared to evaluate it efficiently (Fournier, 2022).

3.3.5 Research Strategy

For collecting the real-time data, a survey has been done through which information on how VLE impacted their learning experience, has been gathered directly from the students of the university.

3.3.6 Sampling

Here simple random sampling is conducted to select 25 students from the London campus of UWTSD. From this strategy, the survey result has been unbiased and more reliable as students have been chosen haphazardly (Simkus, 2022).

3.3.7 Data Collection and Analysis

Both secondary and primary sources have been used in this research. The survey has worked as a primary data source and from some articles, books and web pages regarding the impact of VLE students' learning process, secondary data has been achieved.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The researcher has followed the Data Protection Act to secure the collected information, has taken consent from the selected students and cited the sources to conduct the research ethically (Research-methodology, 2022).

3.5 Limitations

The researcher has come across the problem of completing the research on time as both secondary and primary data collection analyses were involved.

3.6 Summary

The above section consists of some methods, tools and techniques through which an appropriate structure has been achieved to gather the needed data for the success of the research.

4. Findings, analysis and discussion

4.1 Primary data analysis

1. How long has UWTSD been using VLE?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Less than 8 months	14	56%
1 year	6	24%
More than 1 year	5	20%

Table 1: Response in percentage for question 1

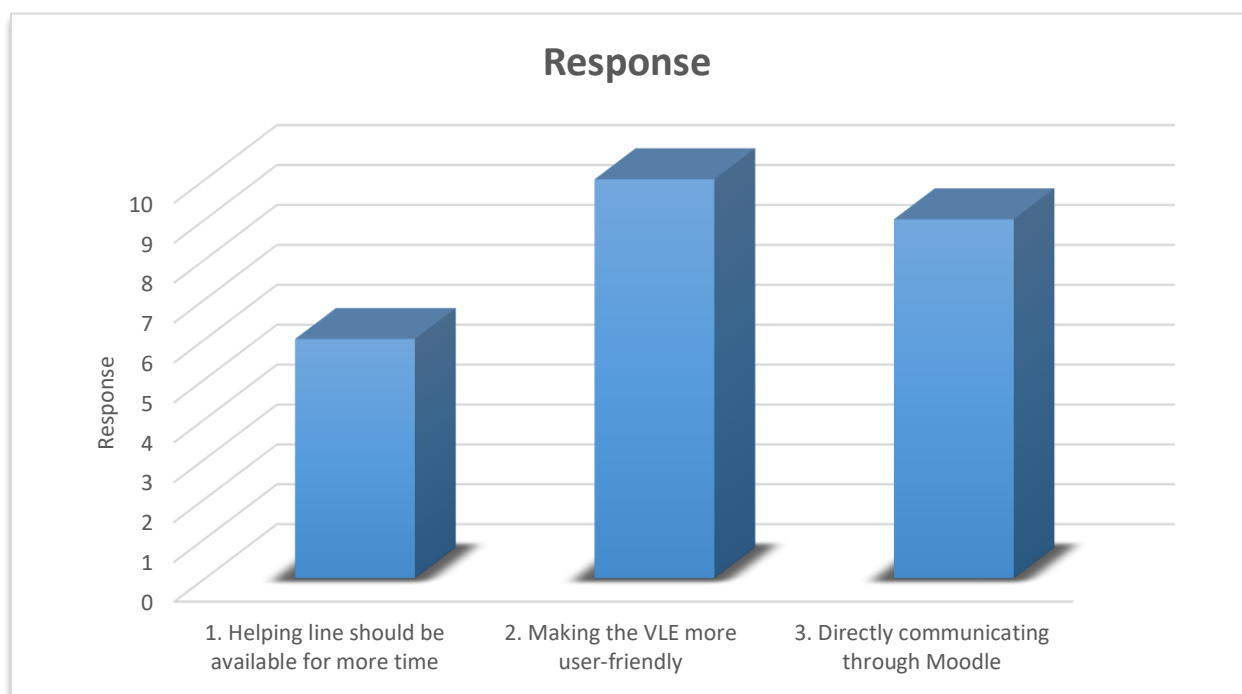


Figure 2: Survey result for question 1

2. How is your experience on Moodle?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
---------	----------	------------------------

Good	13	52%
Medium	8	32%
Bad	4	16%

Table 2: Response in percentage for question 2

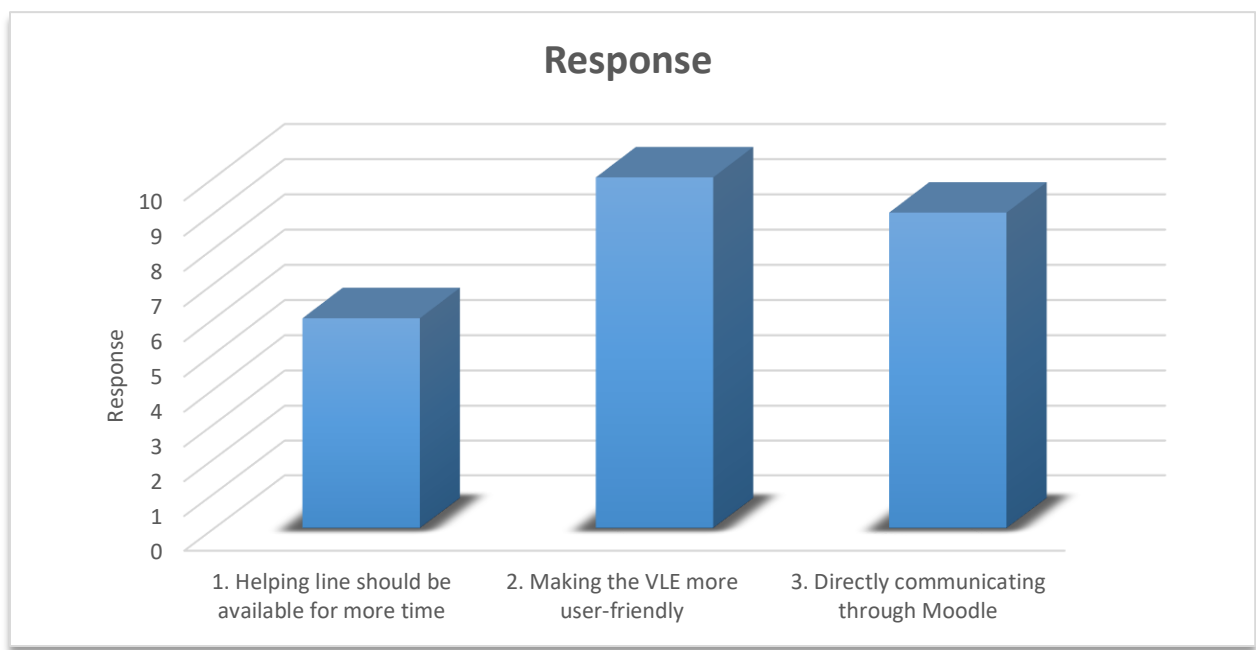


Figure 3: Survey result for question 2

3. What is the major advantage you got from Moodle?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Cost savings	8	32%
Saving more time	8	32%

Flexibility	9	36%
-------------	---	-----

Table 3: Response in percentage for question 3

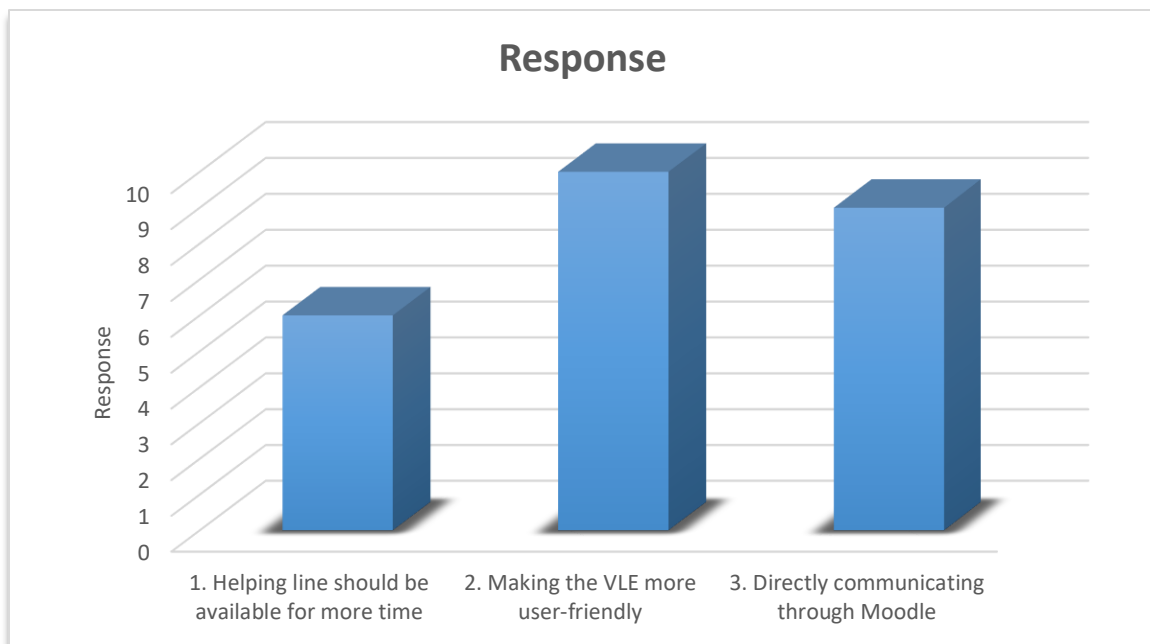


Figure 4: Survey result for question 3

4. What is the major disadvantage you got from Moodle?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
Lesser communication	11	44%
Clustered emails	6	24%
Lack of help	8	32%

Table 4: Response in percentage for question 4

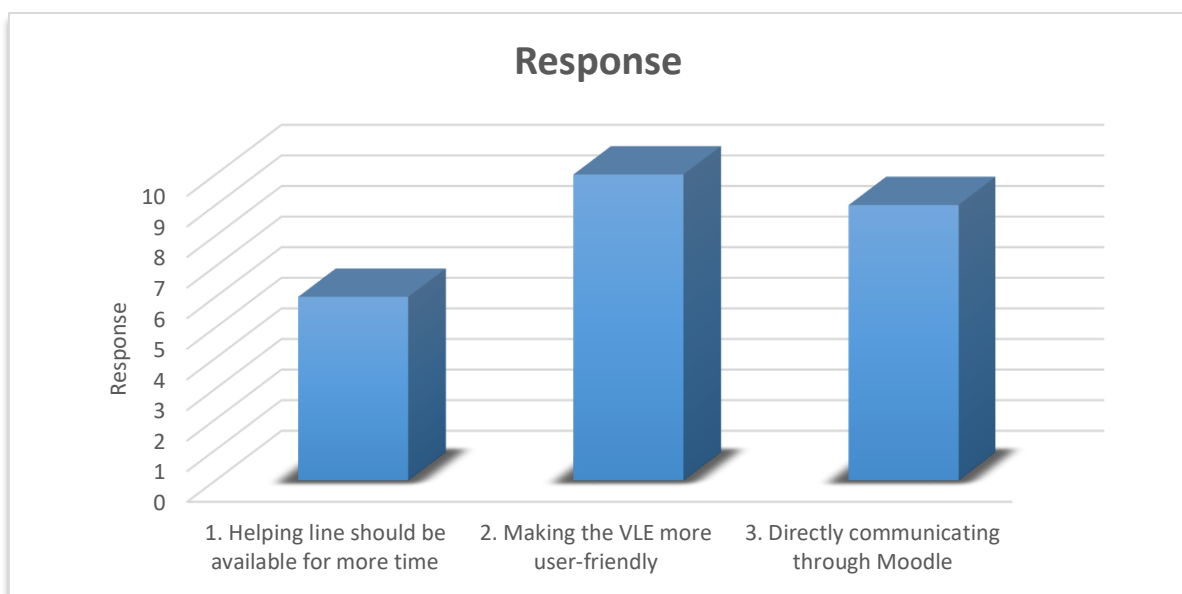


Figure 5: Survey result for question 4

5. What can UWTSD do for the betterment of Moodle?

Options	Response	Response in percentage
1. Helping line should be available for more time	6	24%
2. Making the VLE more user-friendly	10	40%
3. Directly communicating through Moodle	9	36%

Table 5: Response in percentage for question 5

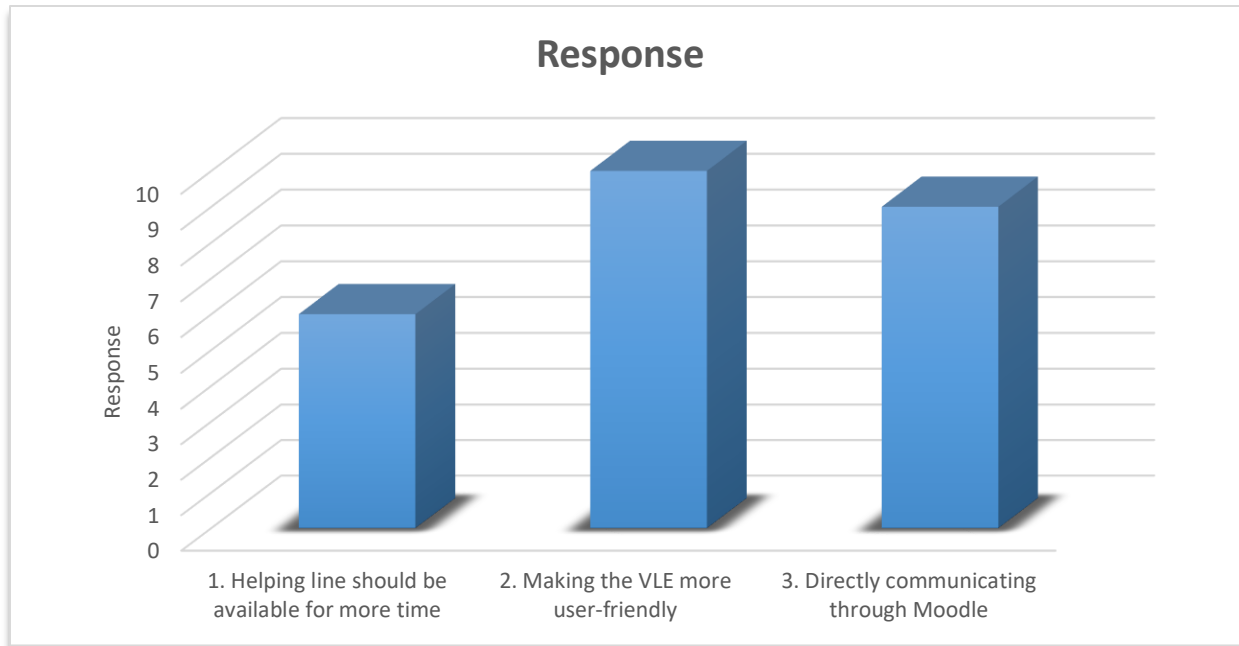


Figure 6: Survey result for question 5

4.2 Secondary data analysis

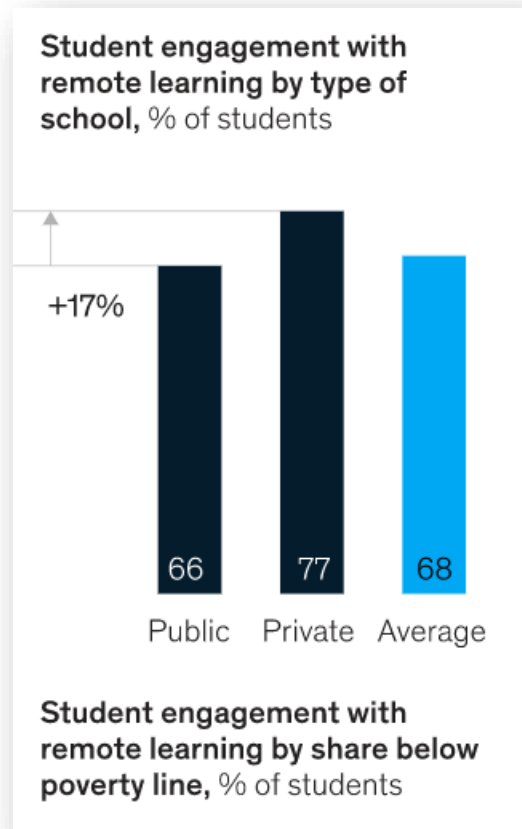


Figure 7: Impact of VLE on students' learning process

Source: (Chen *et al.*, 2021)

VLE has played a huge role in the student's learning process in which they have been educated through online platforms. For this reason, students of UWTSD have benefited through their online learning platform Moodle. From the image, it can be seen that students' engagement has increased during this time. Their engagement with the studies has enhanced to 77% who have been privately studying. Other than that, in public education student engagement increased by 66%, therefore, while studying through VLE, on average student engagement increased by 68%. Therefore, it can be said that students of the university have been influenced positively by VLE.

4.3 Summary of the findings

The period of time that VLE has been used in the university and students' experience has been known. In this way, through these findings, the description related to the VLE of the university has been known. The challenges of using Moodle at the university and the benefits are also known (Sprague, 2020). Some strategies have been known using which the university can improve students' learning experience. In this manner, from this analysis, the different aspects of VLE and its impact has been known (Boitnott, 2022).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The above discussion has been based on research on how VLE impacts students' learning experiences. For getting a proper outcome, some objectives have been set along with an aim. A rationale and background of the research have been discussed. Based on the objectives, some topics related to the research problem have been described with the help of some secondary resources. Primary and secondary data analyses have been done and finally, some recommendations have been provided to make the VLE better.

5.2 Recommendations

VLE has been an important part of students' learning during the pandemic, therefore, the London Campus of UWTSD is recommended to make the VLE more easy to use. By doing this, students can avail their required materials anytime they want. This is a significant part of Moodle where students make their professional account of the university. Therefore, making the VLE easier to access can help the students to learn better.

Timing of the helpline is as well recommended to increase so that students can get the needed help anytime they want. This should not be bound to the fixed university hours as when learning from their homes, students access the site anytime they want. Therefore, having the helpline for a longer period of time can make students' experience better.

References

- Chevalier, S., 2022. Online learning in Great Britain 2020. Statista. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/882117/online-learning-in-the-uk-by-demographic/> [Accessed August 2022].
- Marsonet, M., 2019. Philosophy and logical positivism. Academicus. International Scientific Journal, 19.
- Fournier, A.B., 2022. How are qualitative and quantitative research different? Verywell Mind. Available at: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-difference-between-quantitative-and-qualitative-research-4588136> [Accessed August 2022].
- Mosley, N., 2022. What's the current state of the VLE market in UK higher education? Neil Mosley. Available at: <https://www.neilmosley.com/blog/whats-the-current-state-of-the-vlelms-space-in-uk-higher-education> [Accessed August 2022].
- Torres Martín, C., Acal, C., El Homrani, M. and Mingorance Estrada, Á.C., 2021. Impact on the virtual learning environment due to COVID-19. Sustainability, 13(2), p.582.
- Kurbakova, S., Volkova, Z. and Kurbakov, A., 2020, July. Virtual learning and educational environment: New opportunities and challenges under the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020 The 4th International Conference on Education and Multimedia Technology (pp. 167-171).
- Sprague, E., 2020. Virtual learning advantages and disadvantages. Unboxedtechnology. Available at: <https://www.unboxedtechnology.com/blog/virtual-learning-advantages-and-disadvantages/> [Accessed August 2022].
- Iovino, F. and Tsitsianis, N., 2020. The methodology of the research. In Changes in European energy markets. Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Research-methodology, 2022. Ethical considerations - research methodology. Research-methodology. Available at: <https://research-methodology.net/research-methodology/ethical-considerations/> [Accessed August 2022].

Simkus, J., 2022. Simple random sampling: Definition, steps and examples. Simple Random Sampling | Definition, Steps & Examples - Simply Psychology. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/simple-random-sampling.html> [Accessed August 2022].

Chen, L.-K., Dorn, E., Sarakatsannis, J. & Wiesinger, A., 2021. Teacher survey: Learning loss is global—and significant. [Online] Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/teacher-survey-learning-loss-is-global-and-significant>. [Accessed August 2022].

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1. How long has UWTSD been using VLE?

Less than 8 months

1 year

More than 1 year

2. How is your experience on Moodle?

Good

Medium

Bad

3. What is the major advantage you got from Moodle?

Cost savings

Saving more time

Flexibility

4. What is the major disadvantage you got from Moodle?

Lesser communication

Clustered emails

Lack of help

5. What can UWTSD do for the betterment of the Moodle?

1. Helping line should be available for more time

2. Making the VLE more user-friendly

3. Directly communicating through Moodle

Appendix 2: Survey Result

