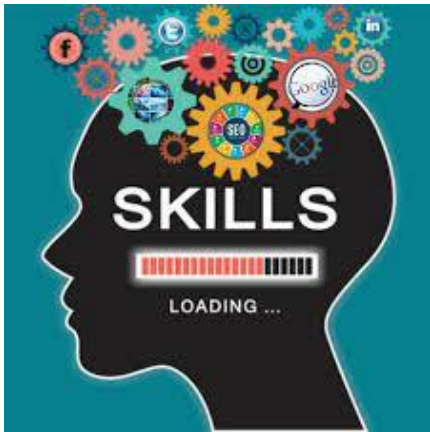




Component 2 - Research Report

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Digital Skills and Research Methods



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Introduction

Digital skills can be defined as “the ability to find, evaluate, use, share and create content using digital devices, such as computers and smartphones” (UNLV CONTINUING EDUCATION, 2022). Digital skills are an essential part of today's society. These skills are needed to allow personnel to prosper in today's technological society. Many jobs today need the staff to have a strong comprehension on digital skills and the ability to be able to implement these digital skills within their tasks. For instance, as an essential digital skills company, they look for:

- The ability to email and instant message.
- The ability of word processing.
- The ability of web-based research and problem solving.
- The ability to enter and handle data (Adams, 2022).

Communication plays a key role in digital skills. Content that is found or created using digital skills must be shared with others. This is because with more staff members aware of the content gained using digital skills it will increase the collective knowledge of the members within the organisation allowing the business to prosper. There are different mediums which staff can use to communicate and transfer data on such as Outlook or Microsoft Teams.

This research paper will have a look into what purposes people may have for different communication platforms and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each platform in the workforce. From background knowledge gathered from personal use of communication platforms this paper will focus mainly on Microsoft Teams and Outlook.

Research Design

This section of the report will show the approach used when conducting a research project to support the hypothesis that was proposed. Ethical consideration and the method of conducting the research must be considered before collecting research data.

Research Question

The hypothesis that was proposed was that individuals would prefer using Microsoft Teams over Outlook as a form of communication. Microsoft Teams offers all the same functionality as Outlook and much more. For instance, the ability to perform video and voice calls with other individuals. Microsoft Teams also offers similar functionality such as the ability to share resources between individuals by uploading attachments. As Microsoft Teams provide instant messaging services, individuals can communicate instantly without any delays. “Mail can also be slow and less productive. According to the latest estimates, 32% of employees named Slack as one of the best tools that improved their productivity” (ActiveCollab, 2021). Slack is a communication software like Microsoft Teams which further defends the initial hypothesis that was proposed.

Method

To gather the research data for analysis, a Microsoft Forms online survey was used. The questionnaire has seven questions in it that are designed to elicit data from the students. A questionnaire is a research tool that consists of a variety of questions with the single goal of learning more about the respondents regarding a particular topic. A questionnaire is compared to a written interview that might occur via the phone, computer, over the mail, or in person.

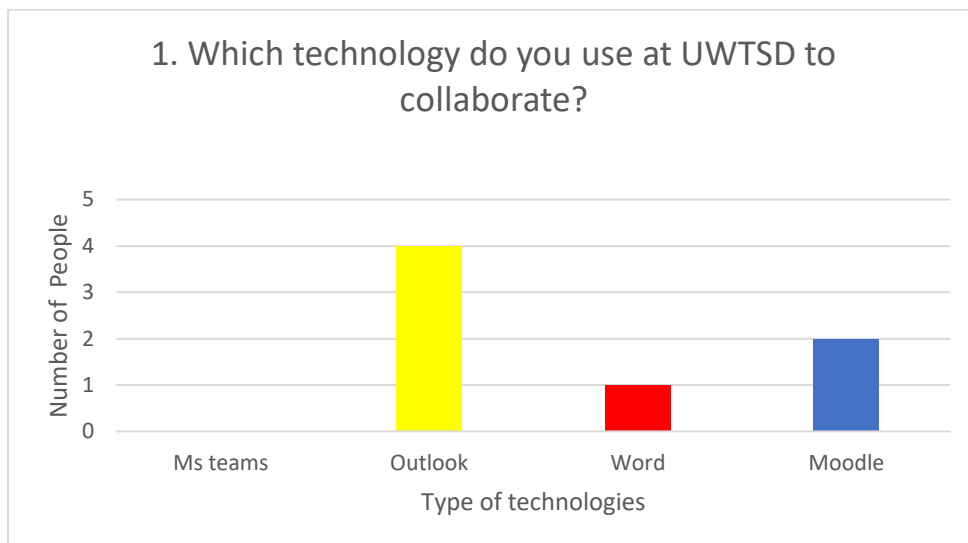
The style of questions that were asked to be answered are closed style questions. The answers were displayed as multi-choices for students to choose from. Since the questionnaire that was designed has only multiple choice answers the data collected is quantitative. Quantitative data is easier to create statistical analysis. This is useful as it can be used to support the hypothesis proposed. Furthermore, quantitative data is less susceptible to be biased therefore the data collected can be more reliable.

This is because the quantitative data is affordable, quick, and an efficient way of learning a considerable amount from a variety of people. Therefore, this was the most effective method of research to use. Especially during the Covid epidemic, individuals are less likely to answer these questions in public places even after the decline in the epidemic, so the executive decision was to use an online platform (Microsoft Forms) was chosen. The link to allow users to fill out the form can be easily shared, and users can fill out the form within their own time not obstructing their daily lives. Consent forms were not necessary for this research method because students' private information was not requested.

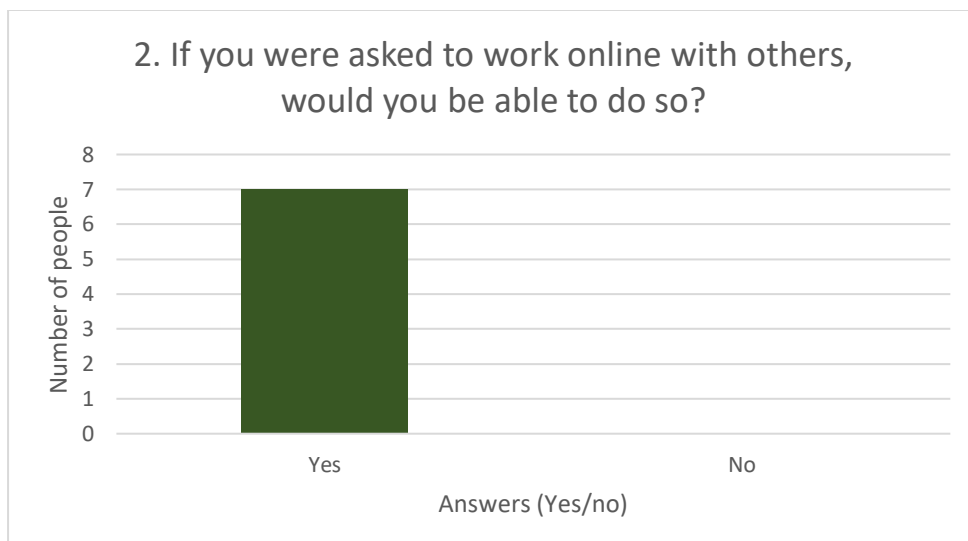
Ethical Consideration

"Ethical considerations are essentially about avoiding any harm to children and young people as a result of their participation in your organisation's decision making" (ACYP, n.d.). When designing the questionnaire ethical consideration must be thought of. Users will have to participate in the completion of the questionnaire. One-way ethical consideration was performed was by asking the users consent whether they would like us to use the data they have provided or not. Another way ethical consideration was performed was by limiting the need to ask non-essential questions of the users. Information such as users' occupation, address or other private details was not asked to be told. This is important as part of the Data protection act; data minimisation is needed. Therefore, non-essential details of the users were not asked. The final way ethical consideration was done was by concealing the user's identity. User's results were collected but was then assigned to a participant number such as participant 1, participant 2 and so on. This provides protection to users who do not want to share their identity. By performing these protection methods, it keeps the individuals who took place in the research safe and anonymous.

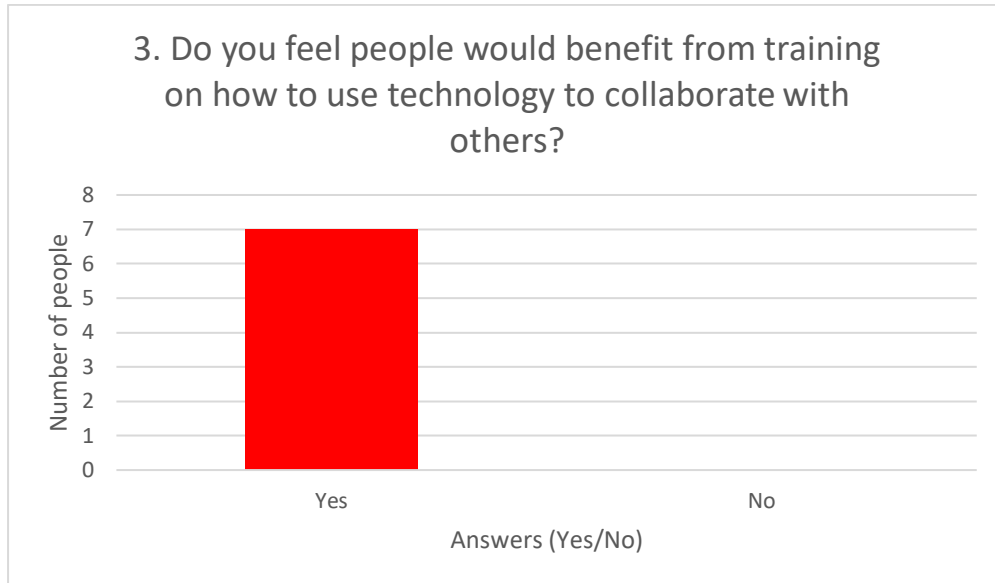
Results



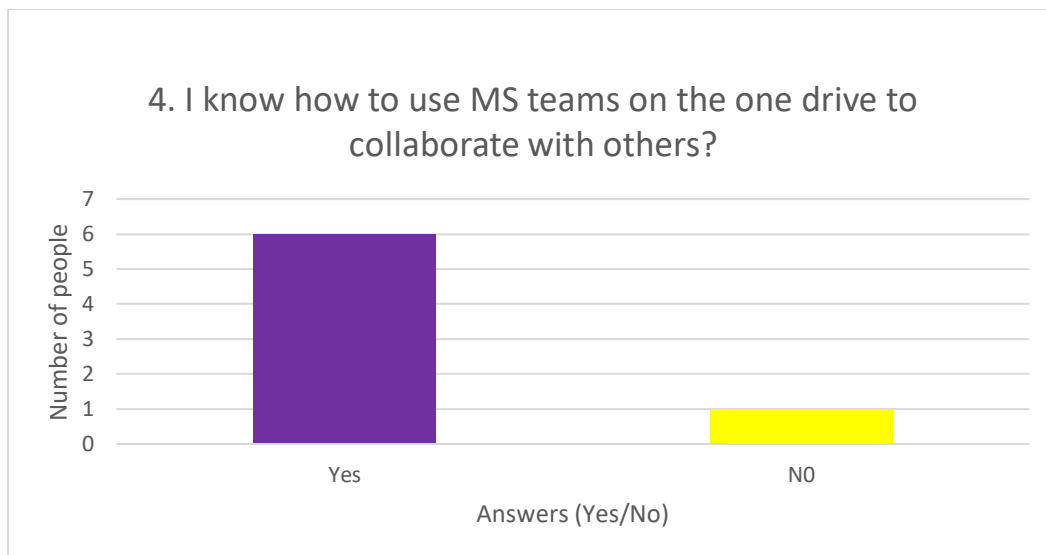
In the questionnaire the first question asks, “which technology do you use at UWTSD to collaborate?” 4 students have said they use Outlook, 1 Student have said they use Word and 2 students have said they use Moodle. At the moment no students have chosen Microsoft Teams which illustrates students may have lack of understanding on Microsoft Team and conclude that is why no student have chosen Microsoft Teams.



In the questionnaire the second question asks, “If you were asked to work online with others, would you be able to do so?” All individuals answered “yes” rather than “no”. 100% of participants said yes, they would be able to work online with others. From this you can infer the participants must have experience with communication platforms. Therefore, user will have less difficulties using Microsoft Teams.

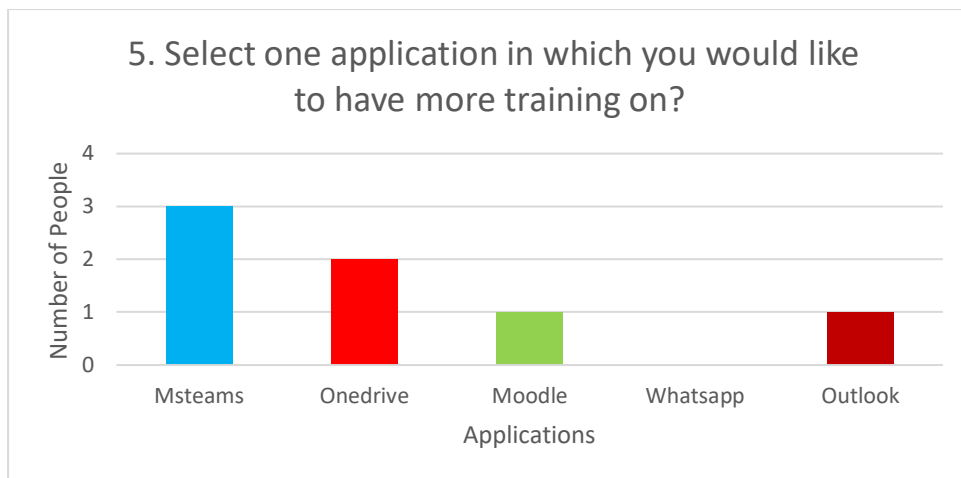


According to the third question in the questionnaire, I asked people “Do you feel people would benefit from training on how to use technology to collaborate with others?” 100% of the participants stated that they do believe that they can benefit from training how to use technology to collaborate with others. By doing so individuals can learn how to use technology efficiently and safely.

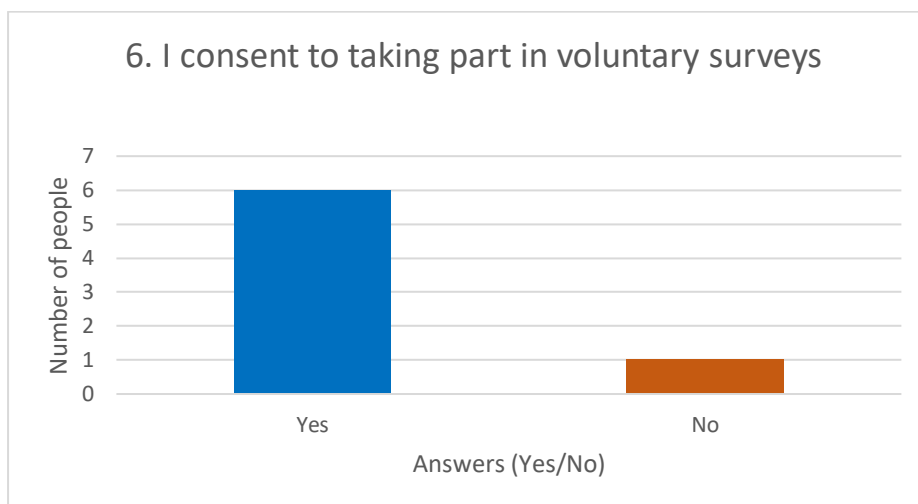


In question four from the questionnaire, I asked individuals “I know how to use MS teams on the one drive to collaborate with others?” The individuals had the choice to answer “yes” if that statement is true or “no” if the statement is false. 6 out of 7 individuals answered yes that they do know how to use MS teams on the one drive to collaborate with others, whereas the 1 out of 7 individuals did not know how to. Therefore, linking back to question three all 7 out of 7 people did believe that training

is beneficial because they can learn how to use MS teams to the best of their abilities.



In the fifth question of the questionnaire, I asked individuals to, “Select one application in which you would like to have more training on?” 3 out of 7 respondents picked Microsoft Teams, 2 out of 7 respondents picked OneDrive, whereas the remaining two individuals picked Moodle and Outlook. These results indicate that MS teams and OneDrive are a must for individuals to be familiar rather than Moodle, Outlook or even WhatsApp. Therefore, raising awareness on how to use these platforms correctly is a must.



In the Last question of the questionnaire, I asked individuals, “I consent to taking part in voluntary surveys.” 6 out of 7 individuals picked “yes” for their answers. Since no personal details were used from the individuals their consents for this questionnaire were not needed.

Discussion of Results

The data collection methods included seven participants, which might seem like a small sample size, but in reality, a key tenet is that most usability tests statistically do not require a significant sample because the “cost-benefit trade-off curve” (sidarus, et al., 2019) suggests that a sample size over seven would provide diminishing returns. However, only six people gave consent to use the answers they provided out of seven. Overall, students agreed with the hypothesis given.

In the fifth question of the questionnaire, I asked individuals to, “Select one application in which you would like to have more training on?” 3 out of 7 respondents picked Microsoft Teams. This shows that participants are eager to advance current knowledge on Microsoft Teams as they would like to use the platform in the future.

In question four from the questionnaire, I asked individuals “I know how to use MS teams on the one drive to collaborate with others?” The individuals had the choice to answer “yes” if that statement is true or “no” if the statement is false. 6 out of 7 individuals answered yes that they do know how to use MS teams on the one drive to collaborate with others, this shows that students have some familiarity of the functionality of Microsoft Teams.

Conclusion

In conclusion the questionnaires which were used to gather information were very effective as the results from the questionnaire answered the question of my research project. The questionnaires provided relative quantitative data to back the hypothesis given earlier in the paper. For future research project to improve my data and the trustworthiness of it a large pool of participant will be used. Furthermore, some qualitative data will be also acquired to get users feedback about certain topics which cannot be gained from quantitative data. Qualitative data can provide more insight on the user's perspective. Overall, the hypothesis that was proposed has been met and proven by the data collected.

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Appendix

- 1) URL for Microsoft form for collecting data for research.
<https://forms.office.com/e/PT99SphjX7>
- 2) URL for Questions asked in the questionnaire.
[Questionnaire.docx](#)
- 3) URL for List of answers of participants who answered the questionnaire.
[AnswersOfParticipantsQuestionnaire.docx](#)
- 4) URL for Excel document for graphs.
[collabration skills.xlsx](#)