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Reality and Simulacra in E-learning:

The Case of Realistic Experiences in Higher Education Online Learning

Thesis

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V Praze dne 25.červen 2010   Irmawan Rahyadi

ABSTRACT

Digital technology will be the most influential technologies of the future for learning purpose. The internet always offers another new possibility to the learning method that we have been exposed as a traditional method.

These kinds of technology make a closer gap between reality and simulacra and will change our perspective of learning-life and the way we live it. The empirical study on the reality in the world of online learning has pointed the existences of the reality of its own. Current rationalization in the literatures insufficiently identifies the development of the gap between reality and simulacra as well as the impact to the audiences. The identification of the reality and simulacra in this particular media will bring the understanding of the usage and its implication.

Keywords: Internet; e-learning; education; reality; simulacra.

ABSTRAKT

Digitální technologie se stávají nejvlivnější učební technologií budoucnosti. Internet stále nabízí další nové možnosti rozvoje učebních metod, které rozvíjejí ty tradiční.Tyto nové technologie eliminují propast mezi realitou a simulakry a mění náš pohled na učení a způsob, jak ho prožíváme. Empirická studie o realitě ve světě online výuky v něm ukázala existenci svébytné reality.

Aktuální výzkum nedostatečně tematizuje rozvíjející se propast mezi realitou a simulakry, jakož i dopad na publikum. Identifikace reality a simulaker na konkrétním případě media e-learningu přináší vhled pro design nových aplikací a pochopení důsledků nasazení těchto technologií.

Klíčová slova: Internet, e-learning, vzdělávání, realita, simulakrum.

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To my little and my S, both of you are the inspiration.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. 1. Introduction and Problem Description

     1.1.1. Statement of the problem

Internet connects people across space and time distance. People access internet or entertainment, work-related activities and learning activities. People have the possibility to learn from trusted sources in the internet. Learning activities is organized through informal sources and formal institutions. Many formal and informal internet websites provide internet for learning.

Some institutions and companies offer technology in the form of software applications for learning. Learning online is a trend and a special term it in of itself. Learning online is one of the advantages of information technology today.

Learners have been exposed to a variety of learning activities online. Learning online indicate any learning activities via internet network connections. Learners who participate in online learning have the opportunities to explore the different learning method.

This learning methodology via online computer network connection is closely related with e-learning. E-learning has been described as" part of the biggest change in the way our species conduct training ……" (Horton, 2000 Pg: 6).

E-learning is beneficial for staff development, organizational training and students in formal education. While decision makers in organization worry about how e-learning should be a part of a daily work culture, educators in formal education institution look at the way how to use the technology in flexible and distance learning.

Education institutions from kindergarten through higher education have been reached by the proliferation of e-learning as a tool to enhance the learning experience for students. The limitation of cost and standardized or customized learning could be answered by this type of usage of information and computer technology.

Higher education institutions accept the challenges of the century by going global. One of the modern challenges is the new information and communication technology application in the higher education setting.

Some universities blend their courses with e-learning course. Some of them are satisfied enough to have implemented electronic system for course material and assignments management in the course delivery system.

Students have been exposed to the traditional learning environment for quite a while now. This traditional environment has been blended by the new learning environment. Learning environment has been described as a "….. condition under which the teaching-learning process unfolds in the classroom. "(Artzt and Thomas 2002).

Information and computer technology brings the possibility to create more sophisticated learning environment. This type of learning environment put forward by e-learning. "An e-learning environment comprises the tools and content required to facilitate an online learning experience for students." (Ma, 2006. Pg.75)

The problem arises for the student is the realities on both environments are different. Whether or not threaded discussion is as real as class discussion, synchronous chat is as real as chat with your classmate next to you, or whiteboard tools is as real as looking at whiteboard in front of the class.

The reason of the necessity of the research questions according to Baudrillard lies on nature of the e-learning. E-learning uses electronic and it belongs to a product of electronic media culture. Students who enroll in an e-learning course could be understood better by using concept of post modernism.

The student experiences make the teaching and learning process a step to get a learning outcome. The reality of the whole learning experience is according to individual student at the end. Is it the gap between the realities in traditional learning experience with the experience student had with the e-learning?

The realistic experience from student who had exposed to this both approaches of teaching and learning process is the problematic scope in this paper.

The whole effort in this paper is to see whether or not the realistic experiences is the same or different on both environments. The other part of the problem is the existence of simulacra in e-learning environment. Whether or not realistic experience from student in e-learning environment is actually a simulacra experience is also a problematic focus on this paper.

The aims of the paper are revealing an existence of some kind of reality and to pinpoint any impact to the student in the e-learning environment in relations with the awareness of the reality.

After student experiences some kind of learning environments, he would have a range of accumulated knowledge about the teaching and learning process he has gone through. This experience will be observed in the next chapters by means of empirical studies and theoretical review and environment compare and contrast method as well.

The methodology of the research is the combination of empirical studies on a set of student population in the e-learning environment and the analysis based on the theoretical studies. The bigger portion of the research is content analysis of the e-learning environment based on the theoretical stand by Baudrillard. The tools for the methodology will be discussed more comprehensive in chapter 3.

The result of the research will contribute in the area of e-learning to encourage the research field on the social side of e-learning instead of the technological side of the area. This is also the reason why I chose the particular approach in the area of e-learning to make the socio cultural perspectives on e-learning more engaged.

The previous research on the particular issue on e-learning has the general approach on the e-learning as a general term. This fact resulted in contribution to the socio cultural side of e-learning through this paper.

The question of reality in e-learning is somewhat neglected because most of the student take the teaching-learning process for granted. The research looks at the relationship between the existence of reality in e-learning and the impact that e-learning convey to student's learning experience.

The research question will be answered in the limited environment. This is also the limitation of the research and the research is inviting further research in the wider or different environments. The limitation is the environment is in the scope of higher education institution. The environment is within an open course where students voluntarily enroll to the course. E-learning is presented in the form of blended course as an optional course out of traditional course in the member university.

The main result of the research reveal the reality in e-learning perceives to be the same with the reality in traditional. The important part in teaching and learning process conducted in higher education is the learning outcomes.

1.1.2. Definition of terms

The terms use in this section is around the reality and simulacra based on the primary literatures from Baudrillard. The other part of the section explains about terms in e-learning capacity.

The definition section in the introduction is only a bridge to the literature review in chapter 2 where the primary literatures and theoretical based is clarified in a greater details.

- Blackboard Academic Suite is a virtual learning environment developed by Blackboard Incorporated. (http://www.blackboard.com/)

- Moddle is a free web application that educators can use to create online learning environment. (http://moodle.org/)

- Reality is the simulacrum of the symbolic. (Baudrillard, 1981 Pg. 162)

- Simulacra exemplify the separation of an ideal existence and the existence apprehensible to the sense. (Richter, 1997)

- E-learning is the use of information and computer technologies to create learning experiences. (Horton, 2006 Pg. 1)

- Learning environment is a kind of scenery for teaching and learning. (Loughin and Suina, 1982 Pg. 1)

- Virtual learning environment is any combination of distance and face to face interaction provided that some kind of time and/or space virtuality is present. (Barajas, 2002)

- Hyperreality is the simulation of something which never really existed. (Baudrillard 1995)

1. 2. Background and Structure of the Dissertation

1.2.1. Chapter overview

An introduction of the whole paper is explained in Chapter 1. The first chapter also talks about the statement of the problem that the paper tries to answer. The distribution of the chapter is explained in this chapter.

Details of e-learning and the philosophical extents are described in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 describes the method and the survey study. The actual chapter gets deeper into methodology analysis, target population and sample size, survey design and execution.

Chapter 4 illustrates the body of the paper. It is the most important part of work based on the empirical studies and literature analysis. The first part of the chapter discuss on the existence of the reality and simulacra in e-learning environment. It is followed by impact on the learners in the environment. The particular chapter is concluded by the ideas for further research in the field. This last chapter takes up the biggest portion in the paper.

2. LITERATURE AND THEORITICAL REVIEWS

Almost all internets savvy knows twitter (Xifra, Grau 2010) as an online, web–based, and real-time social networking and social blogging service. It is now ready to be used for learning. The actual practical application of the world of internet and online sphere is unbelievably unlimited and the future of e-learning is going to be broader and broader.

Such an example as simple as twitter is one of the small e-learning in actual practical applications. Formal institutions for instance universities are developing ways to extend this methodology of learning to the higher level. At this moment, e-learning is growing and it has been a scope of interest in academic research.

The wider application in the actual software and technological breakthrough makes e-learning one of the widely used computing education assistant methodologies. Just to name a few of the applications in the actual world; nursing education, music, teacher education, e-learning in statistic, even workplace learning are employing this methodology.

In the future, learning will be closely related to e-learning. It is the future when people in the educational and pedagogical fields are talking about technology. The word "future" itself is equal to technology and e-learning is using technology at its actual application.

Personal Learning Environment (PLE) is the one of the future approaches of the field of e-learning (Attwell 2007). It is Attwell's expectation of e-learning who is director of the Wales based research organization and he has been monitored the rise and development of e-learning. Atwell came up with the conclusion that PLE will be the future. In the environment a particular learner will manage his own learning outcomes and will be able to control it. The learner develops and shares ideas in his own spaces within the environment.

The case of PLE above is just one of the possibilities in the future coming up for this learning process. Mobile learning, social learning, and interactive learning can also be considered as a future projection of the field.

The word "e-learning" has been used relatively shortly since the exposure of the educational method in the wider perspective. The word "E-learning" has been recorded in literature just recently in 1990 (U.S. National Research Council, 1990). However the idea behind the concept has been discussed much earlier.

Educational professionals have been using the term since the CBT system seminar in Los Angeles in 1999 (Cross, 2004). The concept behind e-learning came about from the similarity with distance learning or correspondence courses around 1840. The learning process that takes place without face to face communications took place the first time in form of postal correspond courses. This type of distance learning is the essence of today's e-learning. The early correspondence in England using postal services is followed by technology-related development. E-mail technology is then used to correspond that is to send and receive teaching materials. E-mail correspondence is found out to be successful type in the early days of e-learning development.

The linguistic level of the term is an issue in it of itself. Some literature and experts in computer and information technology have tried to define this term. Many definitions have been documented and enriched the characterization of the term.

E-learning is the use of computer network technology to deliver information and instruction to individuals (Welsh, Wanberg, Brown and Simmering, 2003). This definition looks at a particular aspect of e-learning as a process using a technology network. The reason why I choose this approach to start with is to show the development of the term.

E-learning was used in a limited area. It has emerged in a wider scope thanks to the usefulness of its method compared to other method of learning. In this paper, I will focus on e-learning in the higher education scope. E-learning makes distance, time and space not as obstacles instead they are managed in away to benefit both parties. The educator could reach the student with their thoughts and materials. The student receives and works in his or her own time and space.

In the light of the purpose of this chapter as an introduction to the main subject of the paper the scientific reason of the literature review need to be addressed. The literature review gives us command of the subject area, understanding of the problem, and justification of the

research topic, design and methodology (Hart 1998). Literature review is made also under the certain perspective on the issue and according to the interest of the writer.

I structure this literature review in a chronological as well as thematic form. The first part of the review will look at the e-learning perspective and the second part is going to be about social theory related content within the central theme.

2. 1. Segment of E-learning

I review the central theme of e-learning using the methodology based on Baudrillard's social theory some related trends within the area of research. The scope this review will fall within the area of e-learning in the higher education environment and the literature review on the reality and simulacra will be based on Baudrillard's theory.

I limit this literature review only within the higher education e-learning for the reason that the application of e-learning in the higher education has been extensively grown in last 30 years or so. The benefit of e-learning is highly prophesized to the institution therefore it has been developed since the early days (O'Neill, Singh, and O'Donoghue 2004).

Higher education institutions have popularized and adapted e-learning to bring forward the development in the educational field. Higher education institutions offer in the latest form e-learning in their full program or at least on a course by course. In this paper I shall focus on the university level of education.

This level of education has benefited from e-learning. It brings the change in the relationships between teachers and involve other's in supporting the learner such as library and information service people who support and develop the e-content and ensure the quality of the method as a whole (Maxine, 2005).

The social theory viewpoint of e-learning is also a growing field in the research area. The focus and development on the technological side of e-learning dominantly fill the trend of e-learning research on the other side the need to examine the socio-cultural is equally important to conduct (Illeris 2003).

The topic of simulacra in e-learning I chose in the paper belongs to the study of social existence of e-learning. It will look at the application of social sciences in particular the reality around the e-learning concept.

The main study underlining the central theme of this paper is "A social theory perspective on e-learning" (Remtulla 2008). The study was conducted within the study of socio-cultural significance in the technological environment of e-learning. Remtulla also follows the publication of his study by completing the full edition book on the particular issue which will be published in the beginning of 2010.

In order to understand the workplace of e-learning environment, Remtulla (2008) examined the need of looking at the social theory. He focused on the "simulation" notion from Baudrillard. He discussed simulation, reality, the hyperreal and the productivity of digital pedagogies. He found that many focal points on the research are still conducted within the area of technological and technical however the socio-cultural take in research is a bit neglected. He also found that the socio-cultural scope from Baudrillard needs to be explored in more details. In relation with the reality in e-learning environment, Remtulla found moderate difference between reality and virtual reality.

Reality and virtual are two words sometimes go together in discussion about the learning environment. The relationship between the two has been studied and noted in some recent research.

Arbaugh (2000) for example set a research on this particular issue. He tried to build a relationship between the "real" teaching and learning experience and the virtual one. He performed a study to compare between virtual classroom and physical classroom. He found no significant difference between the two environments, however there was an increase in female participation on the class discussion in the virtual environment. It is found through class discussion and interaction observation that men contributed about 55 % of the comment in the classroom section while women contributed about 65% of the comment in the internet-based section.

The second noteworthy finding is that the internet based course did not diminish the student learning, Arbaugh noticed on the case of MBA student. The study showed a higher self-motivation level in the internet-based course.

The last finding is that the two environments lack of differences. The area of interaction quality and dynamic in virtual and classroom environment are more likely in the same intensity. Considering the first application of learning software within the respondent, it was more difficult and time consuming for student to participate to interact within the internet-based section while in the classroom environment student also have a time constrain within a class time.

The realistic experiences in the two environments are going back to users' interpretation. Users openly perceive the stimuli from the surrounding and partner of communication in the learning process. One of the indicators user experiences in the learning environment is emotional response.

The other part of the relationship of reality and the world that consider being outside reality is the experiences from the users. Gilmore and Warren (2007) conducted a study on the emotional transformation through the use of the virtual in a teaching and learning setting. They research in particular on example of virtuality at work-teaching using online seminar. They found that, intimacy and reduced hierarchy of online environment make the interaction between tutors and student more creative, and a possibility of complex and critical thinking engagement rather than in classroom setting.

Gilmore and Warren (2007) put their discussion into three categories. The first category is about intimacy, in this category they concluded the intimacy via computer mediated environment make possible the unique interaction advantages that bring a positive impact to enhance the whole learning experience.

The second category is play. Play is something that I engage during the entirety of life. The notion of "creative playful" within online interaction in relations with the deduction of body and attendance of social clues concludes that the potential of applying more complex thought, ideas, and tentative outcomes.

The third category is pride and shame. The enhancement of spontaneity and participation is shown when the reduction of teacher hierarchy in online environment. The possibilities of shame discharged via mutually shared expression of contrition and act of reparation also come out of the research.

Three studies mentioned above are the base of the discussion in this paper. It is necessary to note that Remtulla's study is basically a paper and pencil methodology, while Arbaugh and Gilmore and Warren apply data presentation and stage presentation. Arbaugh looks at MBA student Midwestern U.S. University, while Gilmore and Warren examined a specific online seminar as a part of undergraduate final year modules.

The space in e-learning takes place in virtual world. The face to face's space is considered to be traditional while new approach brought by e-learning make possible the wider scope of learning purposes. The virtual space used by e-learning nowadays is defined as the any location that enable participant of the leaning process to be connected to each other using network digital services (Brown, 2005:3). The format of the connection could be synchronous or asynchronous.

The virtual space opened up the intersection with the term reality. Virtual reality has been researched by many researchers as an interesting and challenging aspect of e-learning or as research topic by itself. The broad definition of virtual reality is the computational method used by users to get into multimedia environment that copies reality (Khalifa Y.M., Bogorad D., Gibson V., Peifer J., Nussbaum J., 2006). This reality is trying to model the learning reality in traditional manner.

In the traditional manner the learning manner is described in face to face lesson in the classroom where teacher delivers lesson's material in the 'real-time' to student. Reality is defined in many different approaches.

2. 2. Philosophy related extent

Reality has been defined far earlier from Plato in philosophical point of view. Reality in the nature of its linguistic representation and conceptual is the existence of things, events and relations (Mattessich R, 2003). Even though the description of reality hasn't answered completely the scientists and philosophers, the model of reality help them to put a limit in what is reality.

Virtual reality as something users involve in e-learning post a question of the limitation of reality itself. Multimedia or any media with more than three media is still real or it is reality in different form.

The virtual reality and e-learning development which used computer technology network take place in postmodern environment. This is the reason why I would like to observe it using postmodern philosopher as Baudrillard.

Baudrillard looks at reality as something more than real and could be beyond fiction (Baudrillard J, 1994). The process of reality to imitate the model in any form possible brings the technology in place. Computer technology is the one that place an important role in the subject.

Baudrillard says "The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory—precession of simulacra—that engenders the territory" (1983). Since he used the metaphor of the map in cartographer drawing a map for the territory, Baudrillard in this quotation explains that simulacra is the fact that reality is preceded by the model in this case is map.

The model or the representation of the reality is leading in the appearance instead of the reality itself. Technology makes possible any model that is closer and closer to the reality with the multimedia approach. Technology plays a significant role in building reality's model used in e-learning.

E-learning is a part in systems where communication between parties is made possible by the application of information computer technology. E-learning environment is noted some terms related with the essence of reality within its structure.

User now couldn't really distinguish between the real learning methodologies in face-to face setting with the virtual setting in e-learning. Multimedia tools such as synchronous formats could make possible users to communicate in real-time and even face to face. Not only the day to day learning process could be established in the virtual reality, but also the disciplinary process could take place. Disciplinary process is a part of learning role (Foucault, 1995).

The subject being questioned in this paper is whether or not this reality the e-learning taking place in is making a different in user quality of perception on the learning methodology and the quality of the program compare within the reality itself.

Baudrillard then explained about simulacra in his book Simulacra and Simulation as something like a copy without an original. This term is crucial to the research because the research question is looking for the existence of the reality and/or simulacra.

The sign of any electronic media culture such as e-learning might be observed using the four successive phases: 1) It is the reflection of a basic reality. 2) It masks and perverts a basic reality. 3) It masks the absence of a basic reality. 4) It bears no relations to any reality whatever. It is its own pure simulacra.

These phases are the tools to understand the sign in the modern life to represent reality. Baudrillard stresses on the postmodern culture. This is the reason I analysis e-learning as a product of postmodern culture using Baudrillard theory of Simulacra.

One other division from Baudrillard that will be used in analysis the existence of the Simulacra is Orders of Simulacra. He divided into 3 orders; 1) Counterfeit, 2) Production, 3) Simulation.

3. METHOD ASPECT AND SURVEY STUDY

3. 1. Methodology analysis

In order to answer the research questions and to prove the hypothesis that I set out in this chapter I will lay out the method application to get the empirical study into application and the content analysis of the particular learning environment.

The content analysis has been conducted as well to compliment the validity of the empirical data that has proven to be poor in respond rates. The content analyses of the chosen learning environments investigated Blackboard Academics Suite and Moodle.

Method used in the paper is going to be inductive. The reason is because this approach is used to research some aspect from the reality based on the empirical verification of general conclusion derive from the observation on the field (Adams, Khan, Raeside and White 2007).

The empirical study analyses the users of e-learning in this case are university students who come from the university in the area of Europe, America, Asia and Africa. All students share e-learning courses. The approach chose to best answer the research question is a combination between the quantitative and qualitative research. Since qualitative research helps addressing social problem in the real life (Silverman 2004) in the research finding students' experiences is the aim of the study. Some qualitative data are drawn from a higher education environment in the form of online interview with the individual student.

Qualitative data is a description from the empirical data. While quantitative data is most often arbitrary, qualitative data is a variety of data (Tesch 1990). The analysis of both data resulted in the conclusion at the end of the paper to answer the research questions.

Respondents of the study are chosen to describe the experiences in the e-learning environment they have apprehended in the higher education setting. Questionnaires organized and handed out to supply information that is needed to compose the actual students' experiences in the environment researched (Kane and Mary 2007).

Sources of data in this paper will be a primary data collected in the online survey tools. The online survey tool chosen is surveyshare ("Surveying the online," 1999-2010). It is an online survey service which provides straightforward method of constructing online survey. The method of this online tool fits the method in the research applied in the paper.   Data gathering procedure used surveyshare. It organizes to attract some respondents from target population to be online and answer some questions in the online web-based survey tools. Statistical treatment used an analytic treatment for a survey method.

3.2. Target population and sample size.

Target population is students from different universities who share common e-learning courses. They are from Charles University, Graz University and Leuphana University Luneberg and others. Only few students knew each other outside the e-learning environments.

Both courses are delivered in English. They need regular access to internet (at least once a week, preferably more) and some IT skills. The courses are suitable for students in the late stages of their bachelors/early master studies. The courses open up the possibility for student to collaborate in a group within Europe and outside Europe.

One course used Blackboard Academic Suite as a course management system. This course offered in winter semester. The students were organized in group. They chose a case study. The group worked on the report with specific method the analysis the research problem. One group was appointed with a tutor and experts. Consultation of the organization and formulation of case study report was available from the tutor and experts as well. Student collaborated to reach the final report as the outcome of the course. The assessment of a group and individual student was started from the beginning of the course. The final marking consist of the group final work from experts (50%), the group process from tutor (25%) and the individual work from tutor (25%).

The other course is delivered by Moodle as the course management system. This course is offered in summer semester. The course offered the possibility to collaborate with student from across universities and countries. Student didn't need to have a specific expertise to enroll

in the course. Student was given five parts of the whole course with specific goals, tasks, assessments and evaluations. These parts also had some resources for student to go over. Reading lists, introduction to discussion with expert, journal article and discussion forum are some the content of the course. The first part of the course was the basic orientation within the environment. The first assignment was the ethical code of conduct and plagiarism. The rest of the assignments were wiki text. It finished with the final production handbook of case studies which was included in the wiki space.

It ran through the whole semester. The student had an experience on wiki text on one of the assignments. Discussion with an expert was one of the features within the environment. The sample size is calculated using the sample quota process management in order to make sure that the sample represents the population.

Student enrolled in the course through their formal university course system. The tutor in the university will organizes user name and password specifically for the student. The profile of the sample has been gathered from the survey and the results are as follow (see Appendix 1);

- Most of them are undergraduate students with the smallest number of postgraduate students. Respondents have different university degrees. It will give a different perspective into perception of academic background and experiences.

- Most of their native languages are not English, however they speaks English as a second language. The language of the courses are English doesn't seem to affect the participation to e-learning course in English.

- Majority of respondent are studying at Europe universities. Only a small percentage is studying in university outside Europe. This is maybe because the hosts' universities of the e-learning Courses are located in Europe and should be a positive point of improvement for the provider of the course to enhance the socialization of the course to get more participation from outside Europe.

- Majority of respondents have above average computer skills. The profile sets a standard framework of thinking about the realistic experiences in e-learning.

- Majority of the respondent has enrolled in an e-learning course. Students have some experiences in e-learning environments as a knowledge based to share their thoughts about the reality in e-learning.

4. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW

The environment framework is within the Blackboard Academic Suite and Moodle. The two learning environments have individual tools and space in the way they cater students' need to be succeeded course.

The aim of the course deliver by e-learning environment is basically the same with the traditional learning environment. The learning outcomes are more to the application of the technology and in adjustment with the technology acquisition based on individual ability.

The competencies of technological sides from students are in reality makes the different between the performances of students to be succeeded in the e-learning environment. The e-learning outcomes sometimes don't have any significantly direct effects in the situation when student has experience in the Information Computer Technology (Wan, Wang, Haggerty, 2008 pg. 518). However tutors of the course really need to consider the technological side of the learning outcomes because the e-learning environment is different with the traditional environments.

The different of both environments is under microscope to be able to reveal what kind of reality in the e-learning environment. The provider of any course despite the type of the environment claims the presentation of the tools and space in the environment for student to be able to perform better.

This part of the chapter is the analysis of the existence of the reality via the tools and the spaces available in the two online software. The Blackboard Academic Suite and Moodle are the two software used in the e-learning course chosen as the scope of the research. The courses selected are the full online courses without face to face meeting to accompany the course delivery. The host university holds many participants from different universities. The aims of these courses are to gather collaboration of ideas and works from students from different background across universities.

E-learning environments are described below as an environment analysis;

4.1. Blackboard Academic Suite

The first learning environment is Blackboard Academic Suite. The software mainly is a platform accessible on-line with tools to work together as a learning community. The tools and features create the learning environment. The features are listed and analyzed to find the activity involve in the environments.

The feature classification of the programs is listed to make some details information of the learning environment. The functions of the whole system are divided into three groups.
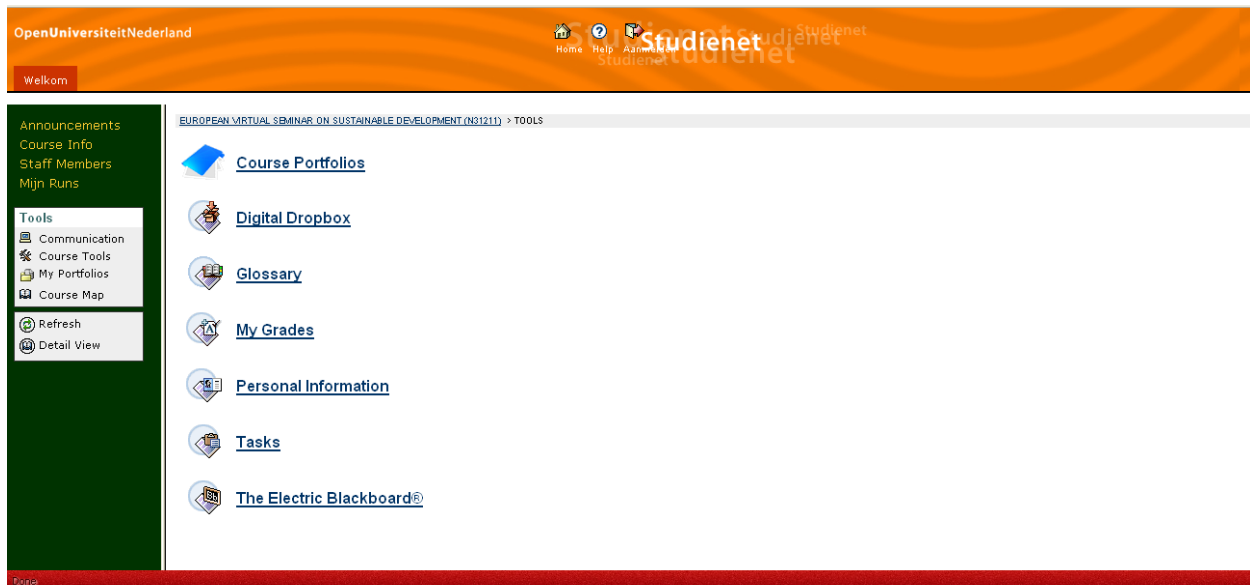
Figure 1. Blackboard Academic Suite Environment.

The details of the functions could be broke down into these categories below:

1. Communication

2. Content

3. Management

The relationship between members of the learning environment needs to take into account. The student-student, student-tutor, student-administrator, and tutor-administrator relationship use the communication tools provided within the environments.
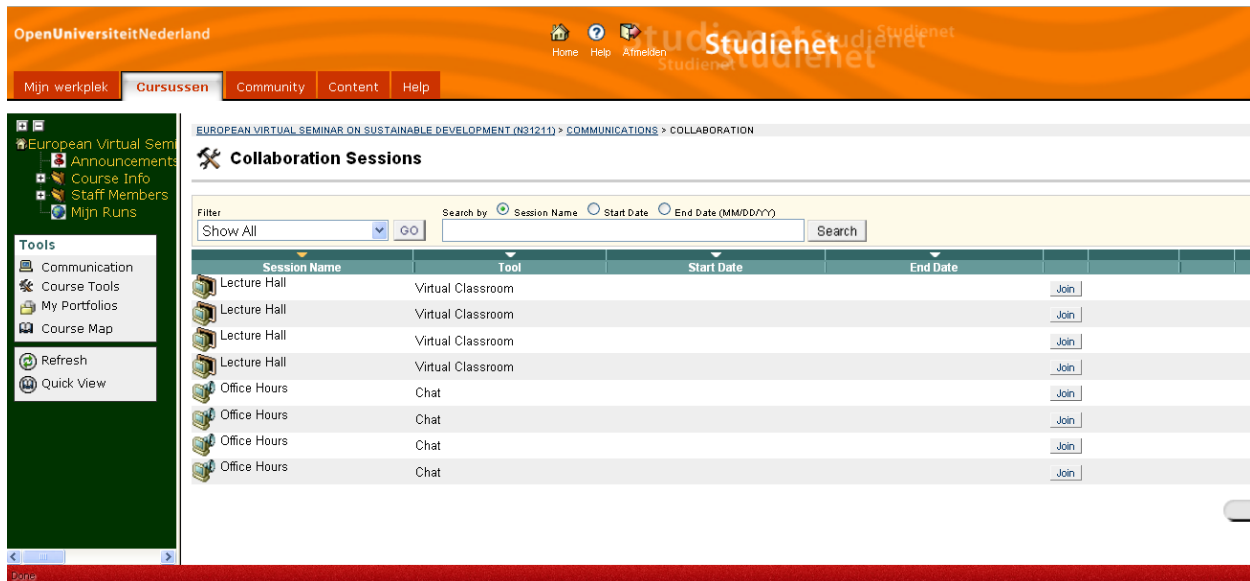
Figure 2. Collaboration Sessions.

Blackboard Academic Suite provides tools for communication and interaction for one course in a way range of tool. It divided into two levels of communication;

- Student to members in the course:

  o *Discussion Board*: forum type of communication, divided into different threads, serve as a basic orientation in the first time.

  o *Collaboration*: virtual classroom, chat room, only for limited time, set and organize by administrator.

  o Email facilities: to send email via the environment to the member, possible to select the receiver (all users, all groups, all teaching assistant users, all student users, all examiner users, a particular user, a particular group)

     o *Group Pages*: only accessible for the members of the group

     o *Messages*: individual message organization (inbox folder and sent item)

   • Student to members in the group:

     o Group discussion board:

     o *Collaboration*

     o File exchange

     o Email facilities

Figure 3. Discussion Board.

  Announcement, Chat, Discussions, and *Mail* are some of the features in communication sections of the environment. Communication is essential to get the feedback from the student. This communication is the key to a successful learning and teaching process. The relationship between good communication and intermediate outcomes of student learning is positive (McIlrath and Huitt 1995).

Announcement is accessible to all. The tool allows only professors and tutor to post message or note. The appearance is on the tab or as a pop-up window during access to the environment. The announcement tabs are divided into four sections. They are *View Today, View Last & Days; View Last 30 Days* and *View All*. This section id the update news about the course and only can be read in the web.

Chat, as explicitly self-described by the title is the tool to communicate within the environment. All members have the access and permission to read and post messages. The rules of the communication instruction are set by the administrator of each course.

The chat tool in this learning environment is also called whiteboard. The tool is in the form of individual page or a folder. The real-time format is possible in the tool to communicate. The disadvantage of the real-time, if a member late for the chatting he won't be able to access the previous activity. The chat is interconnected closely with the whiteboard feature. The whiteboard allows all members to upload a file, create slideshow, print the whiteboard, and type directly on the whiteboard

The second important part in Blackboard's learning environment is content part. Some features are implanted as contents in the environment. Course content is the main part of the content. Professor and tutors have access to post article, assignments, video and presentations. *Calendar* is the feature that is accessible for all members to be able to schedule deadlines. The due dates of tests and assignments are likely to be post in this calendar sections. The students find them useful to get updates of what are happening in the environment.
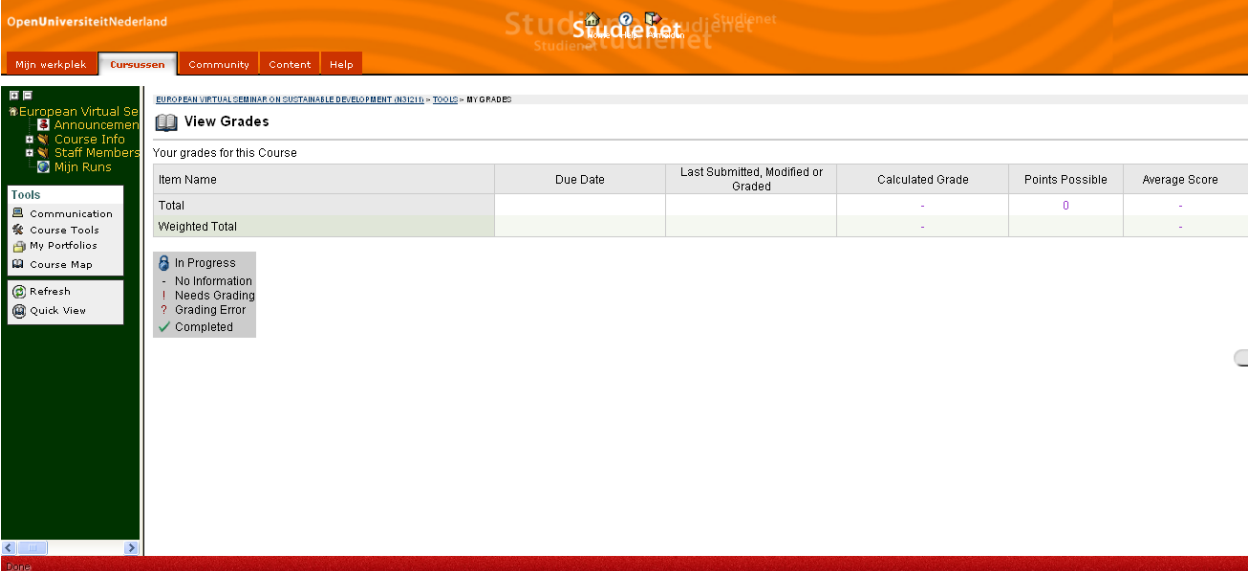
Learning modules is the tool that is used for online classes. It is accessible by students and professor is allowed posting different lecture or materials. The system administrator made the organization of the modules in the format of Module tabs or in different tabs.

Assessments is the tab where professor posts quizzes and exams. The title of the tab might be changed by the administrator to adjust with the nature of the actual course. This particular course as a research target named the tool with "Course Portfolios".

All members also allow posting any type of files including other multimedia materials. The function is accommodated by Media library tool, in the particular environment as a sample it is under the function *Digital Dropbox*.

Assignments feature in the environment is a little bit different with the last one. The posted assignment is accessible to all members and it allows students to submit the work online. The particular feature is named *Task*. It has status, due date and priority and subject tabs and it allows users to filter the screen option according to the tabs.

The next feature is *Grade Book*. The feature permits professor and tutors to post grade for a particular student and is only accessible for the student. The tool consists of table where the information of student's grade such as the calculated grade, Points possible, average score and weight of the grade are display in one sheet format. The information concerning the due date and the grade status are also available.

Figure 4. View Grades.

The content section also contains *Personal Information* feature. Student could edit his personal information in this feature. Setting CD-ROM Drive is also possible using this feature. Similarly with Facebook account, this course management system has a feature where student can manage his privacy. It is called *Set Privacy options*. Student could set which personal

information is going to be publicly seen or accessible. Student could hide or expose email address, address, work information or any other contact such as home phone, mobile phone and website.

Directory status for you profile is managed through this feature. The next feature in the personal information is setting *Visual Text Box Editor Options* and the last feature in this section is *Set Language Pack*. Student could choose his personalize language. The system default is English. There is more language available to choose from. There are Dutch, Spanish, Italian, French and Netherland.

The content tools are under the category of *Course Tools*. It is organized separately with the communication tools in order to distinguish the functions available for students.

The whole work and collaboration in the course center upon a group work. Students are organized in a specific group to tackle a case study given by tutor and a team of expert. Student only have access to his group pages. All the communication within group members is recorded and send as a digest to each member private email.
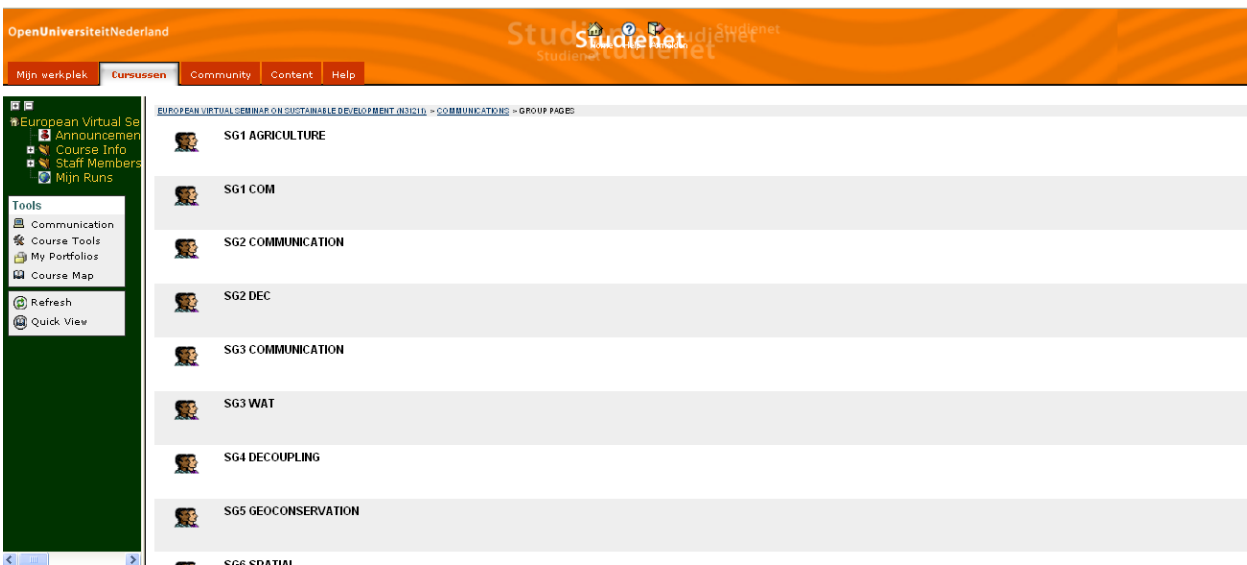

Figure 5. Group Pages

4.2 Moodle

The second learning environment in the analysis is managed in the platform of Moodle. This open source Learning Management System (LMS) has been used quite often after the integration from the commercial LMS to the open source (Martin-Blas, Serrano-Fernandez 2009: 36). The course management system has been developed since 2002. The inventor developed this so called platform with social constructionist pedagogy approach.

The collaboration work has been put forward to the enhancement of the system. A community has been formed for the further development and improvement of this system. The easy usage and the open source nature of the system make the system tempting for educator to apply in their course management.

This pedagogical method constructs a social setting where members share meaning and share artifacts to one another. Meaning is described as knowledge in the learning setting while artifact is illustrated as learning materials.

The process of getting knowledge is effective for a member in the environment as long as the other member receive a part of the knowledge back. The movement and interaction between members in the environment make a social setting and significance. Inputs from member inspire learning for other members in the environment.

The basic principle underlie this social constructionist pedagogy is the interaction with the environment creates knowledge. It means one organizes some technique to share and create knowledge for others. The process of collaboration is important in the environment.

The language application in the environment is flexible the language acquisition of members won't be a drawback for student to join the learning environment. One of the advantages of this personalize language in open source course management system is the developer doesn't need to worry about language barrier for the target audience. Most of course management system if it is available as an open source must be managed in English. Moodle with the collaboration development make this language obstacle as an opportunity. Moodle up to now has 70 language interfaces.

The access to environment is secured by email address and passwords. The guess access is also available with certain permission such as access to learning material or reading list. Moodle organizes its platform in a little bit different than Blackboard Academic Suite. They are in the different part of the navigation boxes. They are listed on the left side of the platform. They are *People, Activities* and *Administration*.

Sharing what student has in their minds is something highlighted in the environment. Motivating them to do so is some other issue however tools and feature provide by the system is more than enough to engage in collaborative work. *Forums* is the one tool that mostly used in relation with sharing knowledge and ideas in the environment.
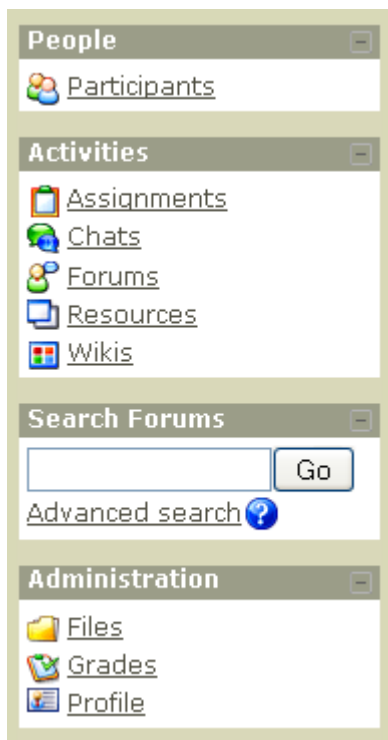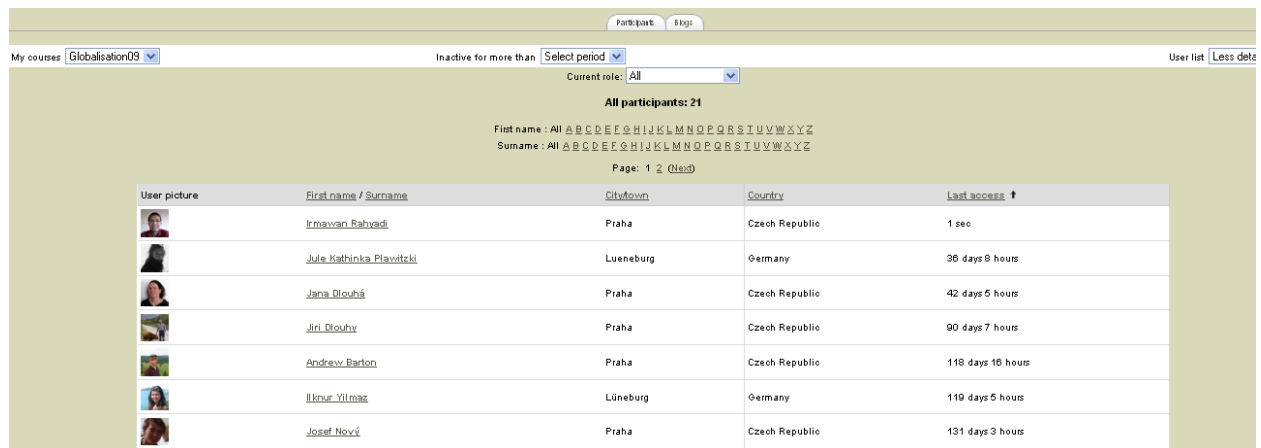

Figure 6. Moodle Panels

4.2.1. *People*

The first navigation panel is *People*. The only function in this panel is *Participant*. The part is the feature with the information about all the participants within the learning environments. The participants include student, professor, tutor and also administrator. One example of the application of this function is student requires filling in the personal data in this profile information.

Inactive participant in the environment is still taken care of by the default email setting. The email address as a username set also as a target email for digest form of update from the environment. Any update, post, announcement and task due date will come directly to user's private email straight after registration and signing up.
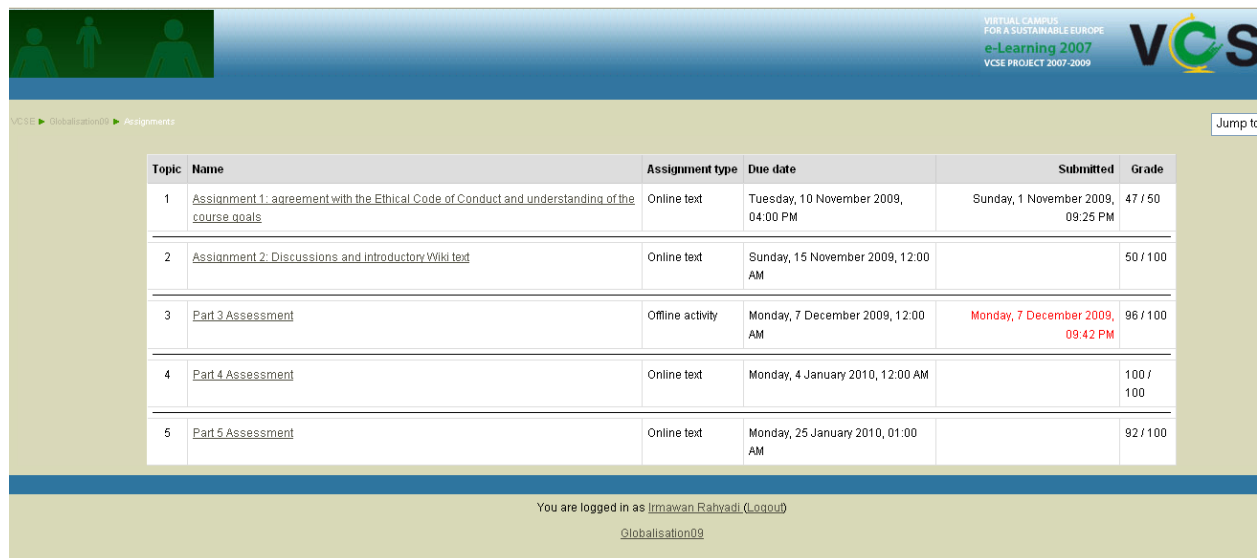

Figure 7. Moodle Profile.

All members are granted access to look up others profiles, posting in the forum and blogs. Only the particular student with valid account is able to edit this profile information. The function also allows the participant to be contacted via message as asynchronous communication available by the environment.

4.1.2. *Activities*

This feature panel is the main panel to navigate the environment. The panel consists of five functions. They are *Assignments, Chats, Forums, Resources,* and *Wikis*. They are the content related materials regarding the learning and teaching application of the environment.

Assignments is the first function in the list. The *Assignments* function contains topic names of the assignments assignment type, due date, submitted date and grade. Tutor, professor and administrator have access to post details in this function. Student only has access to open his personal assignment function or page.

Figure 8. Moodle Assignment.

The second function is *Chats*. It is a self-explanatory function where all members communicate in the functions area. It is one of the functions areas where members experience synchronous communication. It contains some chat rooms where members could communicate to anyone who is online at the time. The chat room is created by the administrator and caters the need of student along the course period for example to discuss group project and so on.

The third function is *Forum*s. This function is divided into two big threads. The General forums and Learning forums are two available forums for members to post message or create

thread. General forums contains news forum where basically posted, created and administer by tutors, professor. Student is only granted to see the posts.

The Learning forums have more to offer because in this forum the communication process interactively more open to all members. All members could create thread, add a new discussion topic, comment, share thoughts and ask questions about tasks, technical problems. The learning forum also contains more discussion threads and gathers more participation from members. The collaboration aspect in the environment makes the forum feature reliable. Student could easily posts learning additional learning materials. The whole process of communication within forum is recorded for further use and for easy tracking of idea and also for tutor for assessment purpose.

Figure 9. Moodle Forum

The fourth function in the activities panel is *Resources*. In this functions tutor, professor and administrator post information, reading material, and assistance. Most of the resources in this part are reading material. The materials posted are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is ready to be studied around the clock. This is the nature of learning material which is different from the traditional learning environment. Other than the advantage of unlimited access time, the materials are also reusable for the students and also tutor.

Resources compile material from different sources. They are divided into two types of materials. The first one is static materials (a text page, a web page, a link to anything on the web, a view into one of the course's directories and a label that displays any text or image). The second type of material is interactive material (assignments, multiple choice, journal, lesson, quiz and survey).

The last function on the panel is *Wikis*. *Wikis* is a learning support in the learning environment and it is the trend of the technology in learning (Krebs, Ludwig, and Muller 2010: 1469). This function in Moodle contains the wiki pages information, manual, topic, goal, tasks and communication issues.

This last function is also categorized as wiki module. The basic explanation of wiki pages is pages that are created by member together directly in the browser. The task of the course normally require student to created wiki pages on a certain topic related with the course.

This function is ran, posted and updated by tutor and administrator. Student accesses this part for information and also could make editing on the actual texts posted. The group project is one of the examples of the application of this function where students create wiki pages on certain topic.

4.2.3. *Administration*

This panel contains three functions. They are *Files, Grades*, and *Profile*. The *Files* is the functions where all members can upload files in any forms. All files available in the files page could be downloaded by all members as a study material, course handouts, course information and survey result.

The next function in this panel is *Grades.* It contains uncategorized and total points. We could see also statistical point from all students that participate. Student only has access to see his own grades while all the details posted by tutor or administrator.

The last one is *Profile* where the profile of an individual student is displayed on a page. Student could edit and change the information at all time. Student could change password, send

and read message from other members, post reply on forum write blogs etc within the profile's page.

The main part of the platform is called *Topic outline*. The center body of the platform basically lays out stages in the course. Course runs in a certain period of semester time. The course supported by the software is divided into some part to fulfill the aim of the course outcome.

Course background material is the feature in the beginning of this part. It consists of material for the basic orientation around the environment. The first on the list is *Course background.* Information about learning objectives, course approach, course ethic, and course structure are available in this page. The format of this page is wiki page that means student has access to edit and see the history of administrator.

The second on list still in wiki page format is *E-learning information*. It is an explanation about the technology use in for the environment. The next one on the list is *Assessment of course work* in wiki format. This third on the list consists of information about tasks, assignment, and exam. The rule of the handing in assessment, grading and final assessment is also provided.

The information about student usage of the platform, the performance, number of visits, time spent in the forum, etc are available for tutor and administrator. The data could be on the graph format or number format for the assessment material reason. Special assessment for a specific data or tools is also available.

Communication tools and rules is next on the list and still on wiki format. It contains brief info about discussion forums and netiquette. The next one is *Course time plan and overview* on word format. It consists of the breakdown of the time table from the start of the course until the final exam. The next list is *Contact and tutor's assistance*. The brief info on tutor and way to address each other is provided in this web page format. The last one on the list is *News forum*. The page will be directed to forum which read-only accessible for student and administered by tutor. It contains news update about the course. It is the same information as the one on the right part of the platform.

The end of *Course Background Material* is followed by the course management in parts. The parts are elaborated into 5 parts and each individual part has its own tasks and goals that have to be fulfilled by students.

Each course part has its own link to course material and resources that uses the function mentioned earlier. Every part of the course is set according to time chunk and each has the goals and tasks that have to be performed. Communication aspects of each course part are also an important feature of the topic outline panel.

The opposite panel of the platform is an update panel. It consists of *Latest News, Upcoming Events* and *Recent Activity*. All of information and messages in this panel will go directly as a default to student private email as a digest form. This aspect of communication and collaboration still attach in the update information of the course.

The involvement of the student is highly expected. The learning process of the one student does not depend on how the student perceives new knowledge but how the student shares the knowledge he has and other benefit for it. It is the principle of social constructivist.

<h2 style="text-align:center">5. ANALYSIS EXISTENCE OF REALITY AND SIMULACRA</h2>

The reality in the learning environment analysis is based on the elaboration of Baudrillard's theory. The reality here represents the modern culture via information technology. The learning environments as the place where students share and receive teaching and learning processes are the scope of the analysis. The literature review has shown some trend in the study of the environment.

This chapter will be based on Remtulla's point of view of socio cultural which look at the e-learning for workplace learning (Remtulla 2008). However the basis theory will be used to analysis on the research about e-learning for higher education institution with the specialization in two chosen course management systems which are Moodle and Blackboard Academic Suite.

Social perspectives on the learning environment are as equal as the technology side of the environments. The overview of the two learning environment which are Blackboard Academic Suite and Moodle conducted to get the understanding of an e-learning environments in contrast with the traditional learning environment.

The phase of the reality from Baudrillard is applicable in the learning environment to get to know the essence of the evolution of the reality being construction by the technology within the two learning environments.

5.1. E-learning as simulacrum

The learning environments that are supported by the two learning systems provide possibility of learning and teaching process to take place. Learning environment in the past didn't have to be presented with tool to deliver the learning material it has already there. E-learning to support the learning process happens with the help of technology. Learning environment created to get the member collaborate together to reach a learning outcome.

In e-learning members of the learning environment don't have to meet face to face. The delivering of learning messages and materials don't have to be in one physical space. The space

of the learning environment could be diminished. E-learning environment could be reached across geographical space. Students don't have to be in the same place at the same time. It also applies to professor. The teaching and learning process is still ongoing regardless the disappearance of face to face.

The disappearance of the face to face learning is the one that call for development in e-learning methods. The traditional learning environment is attached to the classroom. The focus in the classroom environment is related with the architectural point of view, teacher as the point of authority, and population of students (Barth J.M., Dunlap S.T., Dane H., Lochman J.E., Wells K.C. 2004: 115).

The e-learning environment revolves around the support act of teaching and learning. The learning material delivery to student as target audiences in this case makes the e-learning methods has a distinct nature compare to traditional method.

Baudrillard puts it in details elaboration, "It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the sign of the real for the real, that is to say of an operation of deterring every real process via its operational double, a programmatic, meta stable, perfectly descriptive machine that offers all the signs of the real and short-circuits all its vicissitudes." (Baudrillard 1994:2)

Baudrillard puts the details on simulacra to any form of reality. E-learning as simulacrum is not the imitation of the traditional learning environment. The e-learning method doesn't really try to imitate the learning environment in the classroom. The chosen course that I analyzed is full online course. The face to face learning is not disappeared. It is never existed for this particular course. The learning environment in the classroom where professor and student facing each other is never existed.

The course only provides the e-learning environment where student and professor interact in the study-place supported by specific software as mentioned above. The emphasis is no longer in the closer similarity of the e-learning environment with traditional environment.

E-learning method is no longer the duplication of the traditional environment or at least is not important anymore to get closer to it. E-learning is not even trying to imitate traditional

learning environment in a humorous way as Baudrillard mentioned above. It is not a form of classroom's parody.

The importance at this moment lies on the signs used in e-learning environment. This analysis bond directly to the overview of the tools and functions of the software mentioned earlier. The reality in e-learning uses its own signs to fit the learning environment ideally for the course.

The direct example of the sign in the theory from Baudrillard is the tools and functions in the platform of the software. It is the reality in the e-learning environment. The communication tool where student could contact other member in the environment in real time is one quick example to represent the existence of reality.

The signs are the tools and functions that ready to use and apply for every member of the environment. Sign is the whole focus in a semiotics analysis. Sausure stated that sign is one-to-one combinations of unique signifiers with particular signifieds (Macintosh 2000: 15).

Our major question to ask in the beginning of the research was that the reality in e-learning is not the same with the one in the traditional environment. The reality here closely related with the signs that act as signifiers to signify some signifieds in the e-learning.

The "sign of the real" in e-learning as a simulacrum is the channel of distribution of teaching and learning process in the environment. The software is the actually alternate the channel that professor has been using in the face to face environment.

Blackboard Academic Suite and Moodle organized a way and technique to alternate the "real" environment in traditional face to face learning with the "real" in the e-learning environment. The whole functions and tools available for users and students in the e-learning environment are not there in relation with substituting but they have the essential "reality" in themselves.

The "reality" in e-learning doesn't count on how it is similar or as close as the "reality" in traditional environment. It also doesn't relate with the fact that e-learning environment is trying to make the environment of traditional face to face into a different space of environment.

In order to structure the explanation of Baudrillard based theory of e-learning as simulacrum, I will divide the interpretation of the theory based on the two software as samples for the research:

> Blackboard Academic Suite

The first observed software is Blackboard Academic Suite. It concentrates on the platform that is ideal for the learning and teaching process. The company of Blackboard Incorporated has been specializing in creating online educational software, e-learning software and content management software.

The important thing for Blackboard Academics Suite is not the environment has to be similar with traditional environment or the communication tools have to be closely alike with face to face in the classroom. The brand moderated by Blackboard incorporated to aim certain areas to alternate the traditional environment.

Some of the aims are contributing to the existences of reality in e-learning. The brand enables the education provider to;

- Teach using advanced tools

- Build community across the campus

- Share educational content

These aims are in a way deterring the process in the face to face environment. The supportive side of e-learning software is still underlining the nature of e-learning method. However e-learning environment created with the software doesn't need any characteristics in face to face traditional environment any more. It is pushing away the old custom in classroom environment.

The application in the field is that some e-learning courses are still accompanied by face to face mentoring sessions. On the other hand the trend shows that this type of learning methodology brings a new opportunity to overcome drawbacks that are existed in traditional environment (Rosenlund and Damark-Bembenek, 1999: 6). The reason of combining the e-

learning method with the face to face meeting is initially for the integration reason. For example the courses I researched, are two full e-learning courses without any face to face sessions.

On top of the above facts, university moves from application of the traditional environment toward the e-learning application, for example the San Francisco University and the Open University UK (Cole and Foster 2007).

Without neglecting the historically benefit of traditional learning method, e-learning came up with the new method to push the learning process to a different direction. The operational of e-learning is managed by the software management. Baudrillard mentioned the involvement of "….programmatic, meta-stable, perfectly descriptive machine…." (Baudrillard. 1994). This elaboration fits the software program created just like Blackboard Academic Suite to support the creation of full e-learning environment.

The" machine" used in the reality of e-learning is the software and the hardware equipment behind the application of the e-learning process to the users. The initial aim mentioned earlier relates with the fact that the brand is trying to teach using advanced tools unlike the traditional environment.

The "machine" also contains e-learning software installed and configure in the server. The computer with internet access is the other prerequisite to be able to get the operational in the e-learning as a simulacrum. The computer with internet access has to be equipped with internet web browser application in any form possible in the market (Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Safari or Opera). The collaboration of tutor, professor and administrator is a part of machines to fit in the machine maintenance process.

The learning community build could be across the classroom or even greater than that as the courses I selected as sample, it covers across different university students across continent. The approach as such is not possible to be the imitation of the traditional method of teaching and learning method. It is the alternation of the real with the real.

Blackboard Academics Suite has the initial signs of the reality of e-learning environment which shown from the tools and functions. The brand opens the reality of e-learning open

straight after student log onto the portal of the course. The functions that I have discussed earlier are some of the explicit signs of the reality that e-learning brings about.

Blackboard Academic Suite alternates the nature of traditional environment such physical present of the student and professor with the functions such as communication, content and administration in the e-learning environment.

➢ Moodle

The same application is done by Moddle as the sign to alternate the real with the real in e-learning environment. Moodle is open source e-learning software. This software package makes possible the deliverance of teaching material and the creation of learning environment. The software is capable of managing the system for free and creates the powerful, flexible and engaging online courses and experiences (Rice 2006).

The application of the software in many difference educational institutes reaches to 30,000 (Cole, Foster 2007) institutes around the world. Moodle are not a new thing to higher education institutes as well as school, businesses and individual. The initially creation of Moodle is developed by the educators not engineer. It brings about the difference with the first software I discussed.

The signs from the traditional environment are alternated with content, forums, chats, messaging, quizzes, and different function and tools that Moodle organizes. The operational design of class in model is actually brings the reality of the e-learning environment where all members collaborate to teach and learn.

Moodle as short for Modular Object-oriented Dynamic Learning Environment has the distinct nature from Blackboard Academic Suite. One nature that is different from Blackboard Academic Suite is that the software in open source software. It means that anybody who wants to integrate the software to the pedagogy method could freely do that. It is also the key in the application of Moodle because of essence of the academic where the value of freedom, peer review and sharing of one knowledge matter to justify one argument in the academic level.

Open source means also that users can write new feature for the creation of the custom feature for the initial purpose of the course. It contributes to the improve performance of the

whole course. It allows users to fix bugs and learn one another to solve a programming problem. The community of the programming of this software has built up into a large community where they all join forces in the improvement of the software application in the real field.

This nature of free open source does matter in application compare to commercial source such as Blackboard Academics Suite. It brings the users of the software with financial limitation to explore more into the application of e-learning environment into the course. While some study contrasted this commercial systems as Blackboard Academics Suite and the free systems as Moodle and others, some higher education institutions are using both or convert from one system to the other for some reason, for example Vassar College, USA.

The combination of the two systems is also possible. It is for example applied by Louisiana Technical College USA where they are applying Blackboard Academic Suite as a online courses system that they chose for"… web enhanced course content…"(Blackboard and Moodle Administration 1999-2010) and Moodle for the same purpose.

Moodle manages content of the learning by creating and running the content management using the function in the system. The syllabus or a course outlines which used to be important part of the first class in the traditional classroom environment. The "…..operation of deterring of every real process…" (Baudrillard 1994) in this case is applicable where the adding of the syllabus by Moodle moderator in the beginning of the content management.

The syllabus will be there the whole time while the syllabus of the face to face environment has to be asked from the professor to get the hold of. The syllabus in Moodle is available to download any time until the end of the course even after the courses finish it will be accessible.

The capability of Moodle to create such "machine" of reality to create such learning environment is possible by the technological advances of the system. The workspace for students and other members of the environment is created for the purpose to generate its unique reality. This reality is the e-learning environment. This particular environment requires specific operational software and hardware to operate. Some technological necessities are also required in order to access the full learning capability of the environment.

Baudrillard didn't make this point of simulacrum specifically on e-learning however the theory could be used to locate the reality that is exist in e-learning environment. The point of "parody" in his elaboration of simulacrum above could mean that the imitation of the real with some simulation in the post modern culture that Baudrillard observe is only a composition of misrepresentation of reality in a satirical mimicry. The exact example for the imitation as a parody applies to film and other entertainment products and also the famous example that Baudrillard commented a lot which is Disneyland.

E-learning as simulacrum is in the fact related with the existence with the reality which alternates the reality in traditional environment with the software and hardware. The media-centered (Remtulla 2007) approach of e-learning makes the reality in the e-learning environment full of media related application.

The reality in e-learning environment revolves around the operational of these different media or channels of the space to work. The workspace for student and other members of the environment are the reality for them. The functions and tools from Blackboard Academic Suite and Moodle create the environment.

The main point of the reality in the e-learning environment is the channel and the exploration of the information management in the environment. The management of the content, communication and administration of information are the focus point of e-learning as simulacrum. The sign of the real that Baudrillard mentioned is the application of the two Course Management Systems.

Course Management System functions and purpose is to facilitate the learning and teaching process. The product of the facilitation is the learning environment. The reality is in the environment not he facilitation of the software. Blackboard Incorporated and Moodle community have developed the environment creation to the latest series.

The environment described in the literature review in the early chapter above underline the reality we are talking about here. The environment, where teaching and learning take place and stretch out to a greater sense, is the focus of research and development of the two systems. Blackboard Incorporated and Martin Dougiamas as a founder of Moodle thought about this environment and improved it until this contemporary version of the systems.

The environment is assisted by the technology of the future. The educational technology is an umbrella of the field where the users could benefit from advantage of the technology. The limited scope of the environment already set by the Blackboard Incorporated for Blackboard Academics Suite compare to Moodle is not a drawback for the e-learning environment. The scope is more unlimited because the nature of the open source of Moodle. The environment analysis is important to see the existences of the reality in e-learning. The users' expectation and experiences are the other important part of the reality existences and will be discussed further in the next sections.

5.2. The phase of representation

Baudrillard came up with four stages of simulacra. It describes the evolution or model of the representation of reality all the way to the full formation of simulacra. It is precisely describe in:

Such would be the successive phases of the image:

It is the reflection of a profound reality;

It masks and denatures a profound reality;

It masks the absence of a profound reality;

It has no relation to reality whatsoever; it is its own pure simulacrum.

(Baudrillard 1994:6)

The phases are useful to see how a specific event of a cultural product represent or not represent certain reality in the "real" world. The model has been used to analysis accounting representation to the real world (Mattessich 2003).

The application in e-learning should be a representation of the e-learning environment to the traditional environment in the classroom. The analysis of the reality using the phases by Baudrillard could be categorized into the ontological perspectives. The validation of the reason

why I choose to use this phases as the entry point to reveal the existences of the reality is because e-learning is the product of post modern culture also known as electronic culture.

The first phase is the sign is the reflection of the profound reality. It is the phase where the sign still count on fundamentally as the manifestation of the reality. The link between the signifier and signified is still clear in this phase. The representation is still reliable to the actual reality as an original. The first phase is related also with the idealistic representation of the reality but sometimes also the representation is more develop than the actual reality.

The example could be any statue of a famous figure or to be precise the host as the body of Christ. The products of the sculpture in the Roman time could be categorized in the first phase where the artist depicted people as the model as ideals of beauty or physical perfection. The idealistic idea of representation in this stage is a basic idea. The representation is in line with the reality represented.

The first phase in e-learning environment as the reality compare to traditional environment could be the appearances of the environment. The condition of the platform that is represent the actually classroom and architectural environment ideally could be in this level of stage. Whether it is Moodle or Blackboard Academic Suites or any other Course Management System, as long as it tries to copy paste the actual reality from the traditional environment as a reality belong to the level of the first stage of this category.

Learning environment created to facilitate the learning and teaching process is basically the reality. The representation in e-learning environment created with the help of software and Course Management System, such as Moodle and Blackboard Academic Suites. The reality being represented in this stage is ideally the same with the representation. If the student could communicate to professor just like communication in the classroom it is the sign that the reality being reflected exactly. The representation is a reflection of the profound reality if the test and quizzes tools are the same with the in class test taking procedure.

The motive and aim of the initial development of the Course Management System as a system to deliver the learning material is probably another issue. Baudrillard in particular only listed the phase as other philosopher notion of representation. In relation with e-learning, the

question in this stage is whether or not e-learning environment is the reflection of the profound reality in the traditional learning environment.

Students experience the reality in the e-learning environment and they don't pay any attention to the reality where they are in. Imagine a student consulting a particular literature for final essay in the classroom to a professor, at the same time another student in e-learning environment sending an email asking the same question. The first student enrolls for a traditional course while the second student enrolls in e-learning course. Does the reality in the environment represent the reality of other? If the answer yes, the observation to the environment must be followed up by using the analysis of every individual tools and function in the e-learning. The representation of reality as such more complicated than the representation of figure into a sculpture.

Let's look at a single detail. Moodle as Course Management System create a learning environment where student and professor can conduct learning and teaching process. The observation into the content managing practices and procedure reveals that the content management in Moodle far more complicated that the one in the traditional environment.

Moodle set the content adding procedure as the first thing in the procedure list for Moodle administrator. Adding a label for a particular syllabus is the first step then followed by the composing a text page. This procedure within the traditional environment might be as simple a typing a syllabus on a file and print them out for the whole class.

The representation of a syllabus as a word file in a content management in Moodle for a sheet of syllabus paper is not that simple in practice. The contemporary practice of a face to face environment also involves a computer aided tool for professor the difference in here is if we are talking about the full online course. Most of the universities this day have the electronic student system where syllabus is available all around the academic year.

The development of asynchronous to synchronous mode of communication via chat room provided by Moodle developer and the synchronous conversation with chat "Light" is the other attempt to represent the "reality" of communication in the "real" world.

The reality of the group discussion in the classroom for example could be represented by this" Chat Light" from Blackboard Academic Suite. The aim of this tool is to be used for peer mentoring, study groups, guest speaker presentation, and more.

The tool tries to represent the reality and more in the classroom for example the features like; recorded sessions, session archives, sending private messages, viewing participant information, and creating "breakout" sessions.

The second phase is it masks and denatures a profound reality. This phase involve in the area of the quality of value of the representation from the reality. The comparison from the first phase is the representation in the first phase is the good representation while the second is the bad representation (McIntosh 2000:15). The representation in quality is distorted and is shown a perfect image for the reality. The example in this stage could be some distorted painting about "The Last Supper" with the image like Madonna sitting on the chairs among others Christ student.

In this second stage, e-learning might be in some part fits in the category. The feature in the e-learning environment could create a distorted representation of the reality in face to face environment when the communication breakdown happens. The human error is inevitable so does machine.

The two Course Management Systems being observed, neither Moodle nor Blackboard Academic System shows a bad representation of the reality in the traditional learning environment. Moodle is aiming for the support system in the field of Course Management System. Blackboard Academic Suite aims to create virtual learning environment through platform equip with different type of tools and feature.

The third phase is it masks the absence of any profound reality. The phase describes the condition where the image now appears as a reality. People don't see any reality anymore instead on the sight is only the representation that appears.

The question in relation to e-learning in this stage is whether or not e-learning is a representation of the traditional environment and the traditional environment does not appear in the public. This case probably applies more to the full online course for specific course only

available in an e-learning format. Open University is one of the examples of the higher education that offers the full online course without any appearance of the face to face course being offer.

The particular course can only offer in online format or the particular university only delivers their courses in online format. This condition is the absence of the traditional format of the course; student couldn't select the same course in the different format other than the online format. The same case applies for the course being observed in this paper. The courses are only offer in online format and the student never seen the same course offer in the traditional manner.

Thus the realistic experience of the student observe in this research revolves in the third phase of the representation based on Baudrillard. The reality of the representation of the e-learning is publicly appear as a course offer in the university and the reality as the traditional courses it not there for public eye.

The fourth phase is a representation of the reality that doesn't even have any relationships what so ever with the reality as the original. The presentation in this phase surfaces earlier than the reality itself. It is the pure simulacra for Baudrillard. The presentation lost is contact with the reality. The example could be as simple as the virtual reality in the internet where a computer generated figure presenting some material to us. The reality is actually a human being but the audience could really link the figure with any human being alive to trace the existence of the original.

E-learning is still could be link to the reality in hand where the learning environment is the original reality. The link still exist even though the course only being offer in the online format. E-learning has never been lost its link to the classically learning environment. It is always considered to be a learning environment where student and professor collaborate.

5.3. Contiguity with virtual reality

There is a positive contiguity to virtual reality theory from Baudrillard if we talk about simulacrum. The need to look at the other parts of the theory from Baudrillard is because the explanation contributes to the understanding of the philosophical side of simulacrum.

The definition on virtual reality elaborates the phenomenon of the postmodern culture. Internet and the product related to it. E-learning uses the internet computer technology to create a reality. The idea of virtual reality based on Baudrillard has been around since 1991 (Poster and Aronowitz 2001: 121).

The technological perspectives of virtual reality are the tools to create the type of reality. The technology of television is an initial trigger of Baudrillard virtual reality. He actually commented and remarked on Gulf War where television is a universal mirror. The audiences at that time prefers virtual catastrophe instead of the real damage by the war in Gulf area. The television is the media spreading this virtual reality.

The Gulf didn't actually take place according to Baudrillard. It was only the media spectacle where the media attacked every living room around the world with the images from the war scene. The whole idea behind the war was the perception of the military decision using the perceived intelligent from media via images, news and maps (Baudrillard 1995).

Virtual reality in this case was happening not in the Gulf area instead we could see the images of hand to hand combat in the dessert area. The area in which the war took place didn't really involve the real war instead it was a war game. This example of Gulf war really fits the definition of virtual reality by Baudrillard, since he didn't really imply the exact definition of the term explicitly.

Virtual reality to Baudrillard is almost the same understanding with simulation. This virtual reality is not supposed to create anything different from the real thing that it copied. In the case of the reality via communication in the electronic media it is the case of the virtual reality for the audiences.

The reality in the actual world is being reflected to the audiences by the help of mass media where the media send this reality through messages and signal to the audiences as

receivers. This is what Baudrillard called virtual reality where the reality being substitute by the reality of its own. The relation between reality and the virtual or simulation is still exist according to Baudrillard however this two types of reality are still different in essence.

This line of his idea of virtual reality changed a bit after his book "The Perfect Crime" out to the market. "The Perfect Crime" argues about how post modern culture with its products killed the reality with any evidences and murder weapons so they can get away with the crime (Baudrillard 1996). The question being answered in the book is also about the investigation of the crime against the murder of the real.

After this book Baudrillard thought that virtual reality is now quite different from simulation. The distinction lies on the transformational structure. While simulation heavily rely on the model that previously appeared in, within the virtual reality subject and object interactively construct cultural spaces and events.

For example in the cyber village where all the communication from communicator to receiver revolve around virtual reality, the cultural and social cues are put together again in the transformation. The same condition is applied in the helmet-glove construct where the users experience the signal in confuse mode to the reality before he puts the helmet on. By the time helmet and glove are on the new constellation of reality has to be put together again.

 The reality in the virtual reality is no longer has its trace to the earlier reality that it substituted. The environment within the helmet and glove is no longer the imagination of the real because it is the real. It is the reality inside a new constellation.

Virtual reality in the above example greatly related with technology. Baudrillard refers to this technology as something within the category of truer-than-the-true (Kellner 1994: 320). The technology makes the true reality in the environment before the helmet and glove on lost its value. The reality inside the helmet and glove is the one that more "real" according to Baudrillard.

The advancement of virtual reality in the technological side is becoming popular in the postmodern era. Television technology as well as cybernetics technology is Baudrillard point of

interest. Internet computer technology is also one of new technology is also the kind of technology creating the same virtual reality just like television and cinematic technology.

One of the famous cinematic productions of his virtual reality interpretation is the film Matrix from the director Andy Wachowski and Lana Wachowski. The movie has the centre point where people in the world are controlled and created by a special machine. The other people are categorized as rebels. This people are against the central super powerful computer who duplicates most of people. The movie even revealed and quoted Baudrillard book on Simulacra and Simulation. However Baudrillard rejected the association of his thoughts to this film and refused to collaborate in the making of the sequel of the movie.

Even though this Matrix is a pop culture production, many people consider the close association of the theme with the virtual reality idea from Baudrillard (Poole 2007). This is actually another virtual reality where audiences prefer the product of pop culture instead of the reality itself when Baudrillard rejected the association of the film theme. This is related with the fact that the virtual reality is more real than the actual reality in the "real" world in this case outside the television or movie screen.

Virtual reality for Baudrillard is still going to be a threat to reality itself (Baudrillard 2001). The technology development is also a challenge to reality. However we couldn't conclude that the relation to e-learning might be relevant to say the development of the e-learning technology is going to be a threat to reality in reality in traditional environment because the reality in e-learning is a bit different to this virtual reality based on Baudrillard.

In relation to this new media and technology, Baudrillard thinks that the people in post modern era have been a big fan of this technology. People become obsess and going to the direction of fatalistic and deterministic (Kellner 2005).

Baudrillard thinks that" …anything happens by technological mediation" (2003:40). The communication via instant messenger is a simple example of this point that Baudrillard made. The phenomenon of Facebook where students in the same classroom don't need to communicate and socialize in the face to face again instead they wait until they go home and comment or post some status update in the wall of their Facebook.

Remtulla suggested the two premises of Baudrillard interpretation of virtual reality (Remtulla 2008:141). The first premise is the fact that virtual reality is impossible to deny as a true sense"……..because it is perfect, verifiable and non contradictory."(Baudrillard . 2003:39). People now couldn't really see the different between talking face to face in the coffee shop with the talking in the same coffee shop in front of the computer connected via Skype. The function in the online software like Skype allows users to hear voice and to see face the face of the partner of communication just as they are in the same coffee shop as you.

The second premise is the fact that virtual is absorbed complete attention from people who live under the media and technology related world. People start the day from the time they wake up in the morning to consume media and technology productions. Morning news on television, talks show on radio in the car on the way to work, conference meeting with branches in the other states using special computer software, late night news before closing their eyes on the bedroom. Baudrillard states," we are not dealing with value; we are merely dealing with a turning–into-data, a turning into calculations, a generalized computation in which reality-effects disappear" (Baudrillard. 2003:4).

The virtual world based on Baudrillard is the world of total screen (Baudrillard. 2001:5). It is the world where people are not trying to grasp between the real and the virtual reality because the two streams are not going to the same direction. Baudrillard mentioned about the idea of cybersex and to the extreme cyberdeath. The two virtual reality options is awaiting us in the future. The question that he posted was is sex going to be left out in the "real" bedroom and on the "real" bed and people move to this cybersex as leisure activity without worry about safe sex and STDs.

Some other example of the virtual reality that Baudrillard mentioned in his "Impossible Exchange" (2001:14) are virtual reality takes a form of digital, information, universal computation and cloning. The technology is playing a big role in the development of Baudrillard views on virtual reality. The development of technology also shifted some of his views into adaptation and modification via some historical reviews of his works.

Baudrillard as a postmodernist (although he refuse to be categorized as one) view these technological phenomenon as post modern culture product. It is related with the theme of my

work which heavily relates with the used of Information Computer Technology. Information Computer Technology is fascinating for Baudrillard (Baudrillard, Gane 1993:44). It is the reason not to condemn the development of technology. Technology makes the fantasy; myth and fable become reality or at least wearing the cloth of reality.

Looking at the virtual reality in e-learning, the reality we have discussed earlier is not really the same with the virtual reality where it is undoubtedly true. The real and the true are two different entities. The contiguity of simulacra and virtual reality is the fact that the reality we are talking about here is the post modern cultural product related. The technological side of the reality is also related simulacra and virtual reality.

5.4. Contiguity with hyperreality

Another important term from Baudrillard that is related with reality is hyperreality. This hyperreality is one of the entrances for understanding Baudrillard point of view of the post modern culture products. Hyperreality is the vision where in some case Baudrillard thinks that the representation is more than the reality itself. It might be double the reality in value. The representation is taking form in symbols, signs, codes, and images and other types of reality depiction. This illustration of reality to just too much to handle by the target audiences and sometimes it causes the confusion (Remtulla 2008: 142).

The famous quote from Baudrillard's desert of the real could be used to describe the existence of the hyperreality in some of the real world example. Computer, media and technological experiences are some of the field that Baudrillard suggested. The areas are advocating the idea that the representation of the hyperreality is more real than the reality in the "real" world outside them.

The experiences people have in the hyperreality are the new experiences that go beyond the reality that they have been experience before as the new territory of experiences. This new territory is also captured by the interpretation from the film the Matrix. The reality is nothing compare to hyperreality.

Baudrillard point of view of electronic media is related with the creation of hyperreality in presentation (Merrin 2005:156). The electronic media produce any type of creation for the target audiences for a specific aims and the reality as a results of the construction is more than real than the actual reality. The reality is not shown as the product but it is the realization of the symbolic representation of reality which is taken for granted.

The media and the actual event for example lead the audiences to the representation form not the reality. The audiences expose to a single event of a medium in which is more important than the reality. This example from the television news about bombing in the event of war is something in the area of Baudrillard expertise. He also mentioned that the war (for instance in Gulf war) was not the matter of the how the General in the frontline receives the information to target a specific missile to a tank location. The important is the idea where the general has the information from the report of a journalist in the front line that made an interview with the opposing captain on the other side of the line.

This hyperreality is happening when the journalist made his report broadcast around the world to target (unfortunately) not specific audiences and at the end the decision makers in the opposing side used this information for the interest of their own. The bombing that took place in the front line destroy in a huge capacity. This fact is not as huge as the destruction by the time the journalist had his report broadcast.

The trend of the hyperreality is now becoming the pop cultural consumption of everyday life of people. The electronic media is consumed by millions audiences. Baudrillard implies the hyperreality makes the life of the people increases in some extent (Merrin. 2005:128) and at the same time reality decreases.

The hyperreality perception by audiences revolves around the semiotics territory as well. The fact that the signs and symbols deliver to the mass audiences from electronic media or different type of media requires and involves the semiotics point of view. The participation from the audiences was lost along the way because the nature of hyperreality where audiences amaze by the unilateralism of hyperreality.

The obsession and fascination of us as the audiences are the reason why Baudrillard disagreed with McLuhan in relation with the topic of audience participation in the media.

McLuhan stated that the audiences have high participation in this era of the electronic media exposure that we live in while Baudrillard stated that the participation is not significant and will increase to diminishing in the future.

This distinction from McLuhan bring the deeper understanding of the hyperreality based on Baudrillard. Hyperreality is once more proven to be more than real because in relation with the media and audiences relationships. The audiences could argue more to the reality presented by the media. The reality in this case is what Baudrillard calls hyperreality. The fascination from the audiences' side is the one that cause the hyperreality stay in one side of the spectrum and the audiences is only left dumbfounded (Baudrillard 1983:42-3).

The term is going to the direction of the application of the mass media and the institution like Disneyland (Tiffin, Terashima 2001:41). Hyperreality for Baudrillard is the tools to see the world awareness on the representation of the reality around us. The reality is connected with the information and media existence in the contemporary era. The information society that we live in contributes to the investigation of his view on hyperreality. The idea of the representation is lost along the way in interpretation of such reality is the key in this term based on Baudrillard. People now freely infer the signs they receive from the institution or mass media. The understanding by inferring is the more than real than the reality. This is hyperreality.

Disneyland as a concrete example related with America as the product of pop culture. In his point of view, Disneyland is not a product instead it is a generator of hyperreality (Perry 1998: 78). Disneyland enjoyed by millions of audiences and it is a replica of America in the beginning but not it is more real than America. People enjoy the reality and don't ask whether the parks and attractions offer in the place are the reality or more than real than the one that they will experience at home.

The park is the illusion in some part but this imaginary of the world couldn't be identified as true or false. The value is not important for some audiences rather the enjoyment of the place makes the audiences visit the place again and again. Disneyland is the America in miniature and this representation conveys Baudrillard as someone who criticizes the country influence to the European value (Baudrillard 1989). Baudrillard puts himself as a Euro thinker trying to draw an image of America in a book.

The hyperreality in e-learning is described as the pedagogies differences for learning in the e-learning environment (Remtulla 2008). The hyperreality in e-learning is presenting the truer environment than the one in the traditional environment.

The software and application that are used in creating the environment are equal to the tools in media to create the hyperreality in the broadcasting new program. The quality of e-learning environment as hyperreality considers being more real that reality depend on the fact that pedagogical method that could gather and facilitated more learning outcomes. The learning environment is changing from the traditional reality where professor and student have to be in one room together at the same time.

The new transformation is the hyperreality where the students could share the same content just like in the classroom, but in the totally different place at the same time. The reality as such considers being more than real to people. This point will be proved by the empirical data in the next section.

The contiguity hyperreality with simulacra is closely existed. They are trying to observe the reality presented in the post modern era and the perception from the people. This representation in hyperreality is another different point than in simulacrum. Simulacrum is the idea where the representation alternates the reality however in hyperreality the link between the signified and the signifiers are lost and people couldn't really find something as an original to begin with.

5.5. The orders of Simulacra

Simulacra as a sign, image, or symbol to be the representation of something else has its own orders apart for the phase of representation discussed earlier. The order of simulacra is proposed by Baudrillard in book classic book in 1983 then he discussed the term again in his "Symbolic Exchange and Death" in 1992. This orders are described the law of value as well as the historical perspective of the representation.

The orders consist of three entities. The first order is Counterfeit. The first order is carrying the meanings within the natural value of thing. The representation and the original are

moving to the opposite direction. However counterfeit still need an original to survive. The original in this case still have the relationship with the representation as the model. The aim is to bring back the original existence of the ideal image of nature. The representation within the first order is widely used in the classical period. The natural of value law plays a big role in this first order. Some examples for the first order are baroque angels, concrete chairs, theater and fashion (Mann 2010)

The second order is production. The production value of thing is the important focus in this second order. The representation in this stage doesn't need the original because thing can be imitated in the large extent. This is where the production process taken place. This representation was applied mostly at the time of industrial revolution. The market law of value plays a big role in this second role. The example in this for this order is cars, fridge. The original or prototypes for the product are not obvious anymore on the large duplication is produced over and over again.

The third order is the simulation. This order is when the code governs the whole phase of representation of a being. The structural law of value plays a big role in this last order. This s the value of the present time we live in. The simulation is all around us without the reality appear in front of us. All simulations replace the original and sometimes just the simulation of reality without the reality. The virtual reality is the example for this order of simulacra.

This order is the way to interpret the world as the simulation and simulacra collide with reality. The three orders mentioned earlier then could be used to compare, classify and order exchange between the representation and the reality.

We could now use the order of simulacrum to analysis e-learning representation. The world of internet and virtual learning environment is the area of analysis. The character of the world might fit in the last order where all the relationships between the signs blur. Student couldn't distinguish anymore the differences between talking in the chat room to classmates and talking side by side in the classroom.

The first and the second order don't serve the application of e-learning as a representation of learning environment. The last order of simulacrum is the time when all characteristic of the traditional learning environment could be practiced in e-learning environment via the tools and

functions. E-learning in the specific details like full online course has no original or prototype. The e-learning course is the simulacra as well as the reality or it is just the simulation of reality.

6. EMPIRICAL STUDY

Analysis of impact and existence of reality are also conducted as an empirical study. The sample chosen was the university students share the same experiences in the same e-learning course that offer as a full online course. Two full online courses using two different software (Moodle and Blackboard Academic Suite) are chosen to be the target of the research.

The analysis of impact and existence from the empirical data will follow the same methodology of the studies by Arbaugh (2000) and Gilmore and Warren (2007).

6.1. Survey design and execution.

The most important variable to pinpoint in this data gathering is the student experiences. The questions in the survey and interviews revolve around the knowledge students have after the experiences in e-learning environment.

The second important variable is the describing existences of reality in the students' point of view. Some questions in the second part of the questionnaire and interviews center upon the existences of "reality" based on Baudrillard's theory in the e-learning environment.

The involvement to the online survey as well as interview is voluntarily. Questionnaires used were anonymous via online survey tool although some demographic descriptive information has gathered along the survey.

Total questions in the questionnaire are 65 questions. It consists of four parts. The first part is the demographic questions where the students being asked about the personal characteristics including sex, current university degree, language spoken, university location and computer education and skills. The first part is managed to profile the respondent as student experiencing e-learning environment and also to get to know the organization they are in. This first part takes up the smaller portion of the questionnaire. The first part consists of 7 questions.

The second part of the question is motivational aspects. It consists of 5 questions. They are gathered to get the idea of the motivation behind the enrolling in the e-learning course. The third part of the questionnaire is learning experience. It contains 19 questions. Communication between member, collaboration of work, goal achievement, and technological knowledge of student are some of the field being researched in this section. The last part is the using resources. This part consists of 30 questions. The last past focuses on the actual tools and features in e-learning.

The poor responds rates which reached only in less than 30% are a justification to consider this empirical data as a sample without trying to generalize the whole result into conclusion. Instead the conclusion drew much more from the overview of the learning environment and the critical analysis based on literatures review.

The questionnaire has been piloted to the respondent and has gone through some stages of revision. Questionnaire is written in English to get the universal understanding from the students because the students come from different countries. The execution of the survey started from contacting the host university for cooperation. The responds from them were poor. The next step was contacting individual email address and posted the survey details on the student forum for specific target audience. These improvisations help a bit the socialization of the survey.

The reason of inexpensive survey without any financial grant and the wide scope coverage of survey as a chosen data collection method didn't result in high rate respond. The nature of web-based survey tools is also a reason of the poor rate respond. The marketing type of survey has been affecting the academic side of the survey as a valid data collection method especially the web-based survey tool. Invitation for survey participation has been filtered by default email spam management. Invitation email containing keywords such as online survey by default considered to be a spam to some web-based email provider. This filtered system of the email account also contributes to the poor responds rate.

The research method is qualitative via data collection of survey. In this section we will look at the actual question and gather the student realistic experiences on these courses. The demography data related questions gather some key info for students' participant. The question

about the university where they are studying at the moment is important to get the understanding of the respondent feedback of certain questions.

The aim of the research to find out the student experiences in relation realistic experiences in e-learning environment. This aim is in line with the research questions and is elaborated specifically in the empirical studies using questioner and interview data collection method. In order to answer the research question the questioner is organized to target specific aspect of the realistic experiences in the e-learning environment.

The questioner is arranged into some structural form to gather specific picture of student realistic experience in e-learning environment. The questionnaire gathered student responses by using open and close ended questions to get a wider interpretation. The total population of the two course researched is 70 students using two different course management system. They are observed through the answers in the survey.

The analysis of the questions is going to be based in the literature review and the e-learning environment perspective. The motivational aspect and student experience aspect are the two parts dividing the whole questionnaire to aim the research questions.

6.2. Motivational Aspect

The questions in this section are gathered for the purpose of getting the initial reason from the student. The student motivation in the area of enrolling to the actual course is one part. The other part is in the area of practical software and application in the environment. The second part is more related with the characteristic of a specific e-learning environment to see whether or not the reality is the same or different compare to traditional learning environment.

This section of the questionnaire is the body part (Details are in the Appendix 2). Most of the students (75%) enrolled in e-learning courses not because it is offer as an obligatory course. This particular e-learning course is not obligatory to the students however the interest is still high. The motivation to enroll didn't come from the outside instead it is internal motivation. This should be a positive remark to contribute to a positive realistic experience. Internal motivation is

a kind of strength to try to find a better outcome and trying harder with determination (Khalil, 2010: 7). The outcome in this case is related with the outcome in the e-learning course.

A fair number of students (70%) saw think e-learning format as a deciding factor. The fact that this course is delivered in full online course inviting a certain amount of interest to the participants. The experiences of someone with the interest are different with students who don't have any interest in the method.

The motivational aspect of the questionnaire found that e-learning method is not a novel method to the respondent. The method might have been integrated in the university life where they studying. The profile of this research respondent comes from the higher education institutes around Europe. The facility and infrastructure in the university these days equipped with the embryo of e-learning method. Respondents have been familiar with the idea of information computer technology. This fact makes the tendencies of the methods will use a similar approach as the daily university learning and teaching process for some student.

Learning outcomes in the e-learning course vary in realization. Respondent reveal the motivation that they want to increase their learning outcome by enrolling to this e-learning course (75%). The literature review discussed earlier shown that is no direct relation between the acquisition of the (Wan, Wang, Haggerty2008). Profile of the respondent tells us that the student has above average computer skill. In relation with the improvement of the learning profile, someone with less advance computer skills has to think twice to enroll to this type of course.

Communication section of the e-learning is unlike the one in the traditional learning environment. Face to face communication has always been attached to classroom learning environment. However e-learning environment use the application of video conferencing facility and has gone beyond the limitation of this communication. Respond from the respondents on the communication facilitation as a deciding factor for enrolling in the e-learning course reveals that the communication side of e-learning is not important. It is not a deciding factor for the respondent (53.33%). Facilitation to communication more to other members is not what the student looks for when deciding to enroll in the program.

The software development looks at improving this communication side of e-learning environment. "Real time" chatting forum was introduced. It followed by the synchronous

communication where student could create the room for private chatting or inviting other to join. Both Blackboard Academic Suite and Moodle provide the communication tools to facilitate communication process among members.

The communication part of the question links to the nature of the communication in the e-learning environment. The interaction between tutor and student is more engaging and creative due to the evaporation of intimacy and diminished hierarchy in the e-learning environment (Gilmore and Warren.2007). The motive behind this particular question is actually for the reason of the different nature of communication in the two diverse environments. The result from the research didn't reveal a positive link to the theory.

E-learning methodology offers time constrain solution. Student doesn't have to be worried of the time anymore where he doesn't have to be worried about the day or night when trying to communicate with the other member in the e-learning environment. The time of student and professor is no longer an obstacle. A student resides in Mexico is enrolling to one of the course as a sample research. She attended one online seminar at home before she went to sleep.

The time solution is also a point in the motivational aspect. The result is 68.75% response ratio says the e-learning course will save their time. Students are awareness of the fact that the access to content material in the e-learning environment will be more flexible before their enrolment to the course. The awareness that they won't attending class at anytime seems promising. However some e-learning course sometimes more demanding than that traditional. It doesn't sound interesting when student hears the maximum hours of study for one course are 150 hours.

Student in the different time zone could communicate and attends online seminar and conference with the other member of the e-learning community. One other concrete example of time saving and flexibility is the feature in Moodle where tutor could organize online test within a framework of time. During allocated time usually a week time, student could choose to do it in her own convenience time 24 hour a day without has to leave home to go to campus. The time is limited on the traditional learning environment while in e-learning the class time is 24 hours 7 days a week. This is one of aspects in the simulacra of e-learning. The class time disappears, the

architectural constraint disappears and the new constellation of environment surfaces as a pure simulacra.

The motivational aspect touches on the socialization of the course to potential student. The advertisement of the course only affects 25% respondents. The courses I researched is managed by a unit in University. Course integration to university system including the socialization is the responsibility of the unit.

6.3. Learning experience

This section explore deeper on communication, and specific knowledge of the environment and special terms used in the area. Student learning experience and perception of the environment are also asked.

The first question on the section is around the communication area in the environment. The ability to communicate with tutors, students, and administrator are acknowledge by 100% of respondents. The communication has never been a problem despite the disappearance of face to face meeting or class-time discussion. Other members are considered to be partner in learning as well as partner in communication. The opportunity to communicate in the course via features and virtual chatting section exists.

Communication is regarded as important to both Blackboard Academic Suite and Moodle. The e-learning environment points out the significance of communication and it is revealed form the result of this question. The result of this question is also in line with McIlrath and Huitt (1995) point of view about the positive relation of good communication and intermediate learning outcomes.

This communication part has positive link to the theory from Gilmore and Warren. The interaction between members, in the case of Gilmore and Warren study is only student and teacher, is energetic, creative and positive.

The collaboration of work in e-learning is a part of learning experience for any member in e-learning environment. Group or individual works affect the overall goals and aim of e-

learning course. The next question in the section asks about the interdependence of one's work in relation to the other member. The result is 86.67% of the respondent replied that it affects the other member. The case of the group work might be more relevant in the impact of inactive member. The inactive participation of one member could impact other in the forum of discussion in relation with for example individual task.

This particular question relates to the third category of Gilmore and Warren. The Pride and shame is the category where student has different perception about them in the e-learning environment compare to traditional learning environment. In case of inactive student in the environment the feeling of shame only shown when mutually share the expression of contrition. The shame feeling from inactive student couldn't be expressed. The awareness of reparation is also shown from the result of the research that student believe to be inactive means affecting others' performance in the course.

The goal of the course has been set by the provider of the e-learning course from the beginning development of the course. However according to the sample research to a question about the common goal that all member share. 68.75% respondent says that all members don't share common goal. The course could set the goal from the beginning however student could set their own goal within the interaction with the learning environment.

The specific term might not be familiar to the student whether or not they have experience on the e-learning. The term VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) is not such a big deal for some students to grasp as long as they could finish the learning task at hand. I set this particular question as an open question so that respondent could express the knowledge on the VLE. Open question is also useful in the explanatory stage of research (Neuman 2007:179). The responds vary from nothing at all to the advance answer of the term. The understanding of the term once again helps the perception of the profile of the sample research.

The answer sample from the respondent,"VLE comes in the form of an online-based platform to supplement courses n studying, learning and discussing on whatever themes there are." Other respond compares VLE with the Google Wave, and VLE is very static, low usability and the design lower the student interest to VLE. VLE is also reflected on by one of the respondent opening more possibility to learn together with people from other areas/countries.

The possibility to post messages helps to even learn with people living in other time zones, is one of the respond revealed from the result. VLE perceived as well as a new method of learning that enables people from different countries to communicate and saves time with e-tools via internet. VLE is also recognized as a interactive and flexible learning with resources for instance lectures, notes, forums, reading list is readily accessible. The mobility to campus or classroom is gone with the introduction of VLE.

Students' exposure to VLE differs from one to another. The research resulted the actual enrolment to the course is the initial introduction to VLE (53.85%). Book and classmate are not the source of the information to VLE. The followed up question of the VLE software shows a quite the same respond that only the VLE software that they been offered is the one they familiar with. The most popular one is Moodle because the respondent use the two systems either Moodle of Blackboard Academic Suite.

Students' background knowledge of the system is not advance. Students are only user of the system. The course has been set to be delivered in what system either Moodle or Blackboard Academic Suite. Student only enrolls and completing the task.

Majority of respondents' (53.85%) experiences with the VLE is only recent. The experiences are shown in the next question although this section of questionnaire is also shown student experiences with the VLE.

Sharing and learning are two different ideas in the learning space. The respondents agree that sharing some external resources in the environment at the same time he also learn something (46.15%). The sharing of knowledge is possible through many available tools. Blackboard Academic Suite provides add file or send file tools in Digital Dropbox, The Electric Blackboard is the tool to post any text message as well as links for all members in the environment. Moodle also provides the same tools for example in forum student could freely share additional resources for all members.

When student shares information of learning material, the content of the material is also evaluated by the particular student. The material benefits the receiver and the sender as well. Respondents don't feel that sharing information means evaluating the sender as well.

Student learning experience involves communication between members. Blackboard Academic Suite as well as Moodle provides email attachment as a way to communicate. Moodle makes all the forum posts available to copy to personal email. Notification page about regular task needs to be completed can also send to your email by setting up your profile in "Message setting". The result from the respondent reveals that students use email attachment. This is the way to share information to other members in the environment. 81.25% of the respondents say the use this way of communication in the environment. Email attachment is the easiest way of sharing information to other member in the environment. Sharing information between members via email attachment doesn't need to use course management system; it can be outside the system.

The collaboration of work among members in the environment use the advancement of the feature provide by the software. The features, tools and functions are only the "machine". The actor is the student. Sharing knowledge is the essence of collaboration. The actor could share high quality information and knowledge to the other. The practice in the environment involve posting irrelevant information to the forum, comment in the discussion with limited consideration and inappropriate message on the group brainstorming etc. The result from the research reveals that most of the respondents select the information before their share it (93.75%). This particular question relates to the intimacy from Gilmore and Warren. The interaction of the students in the environment is unique because there is no authority that checks the validity of the information that student shares. The course delivered by Moodle has the ethical agreement that student had to sign and agree upon. However the selective procedure of a piece of information before sharing it within the environment is another thing to consider. This is what Gilmore et al classify as the creative interactive between members.

The respond to the statement of sharing to other benefiting oneself only revealed 62.50% students. The idea of learning through sharing hasn't been familiar in the environment.

6.4. Using resources

The last section of the questionnaire is asking about the content area of the environment. The content management is the first part of the development of Moodle. Adding the syllabus to

the system is the first thing for the e-learning course. Resources such as learning material, reading list, assignment, etc are the essential part of the environment.

The importance of the resources reveals from the research result. 81.25% respondents say it is very important part of the e-learning environment. E-learning environment is not the same with traditional learning environment where all the resources must be accessible all the time in the virtual world for all members.

However the amounts of time students spend in the learning environment different for one to another, 43.75% of respondent say that they access the resources in the e-learning environment every day. Students are expected to complete some assignments and tasks on a specific time however the amount of time to study on the available resources is up to the students. 31.25% of respondent say they access the resources only when they have got free time. 18.75% of respondent only access the resources when I am working on assignments. This fact might be link with the discipline side of the environment. Professor never knows which student is sleeping during his presentation in e-learning environment. One of the courses observed release an official information that the course needs maximum 150 working hours and minimum 2 times a week access to internet.

The access to the resources is ideally expected as soon as possible (Cole, Foster 2007:52). This suggestion from the expert help the enrollment management easier as well as help the students organize and planning their time.

Resources tools in Moodle for example allow the moderator to combine assignment with resources and presenting it as a case study and facilitate student to submit their answer. Resources are not only related with learning material but also resources to help members in the environment troubleshoot when they cannot solve a problem on their own.

Moodle could manage resources only for teacher. Lecture notes for teacher could be hid for some time and then share after the teacher feel necessary. Teacher in Moodle is also possible to add media content to the resources.

Resources are also set to fit the course material. The amount of the resources is not limited to internal resources. External resources such as web resources could be easily added to

the content. Rich resources certainly help student for the study. The boundary between "enough" and "too much" depend on the moderator. Too much resources means long reading list and external web resource in a limited course time on the other side the not enough information makes moderator and professor replying unanswered questions from students.

The result from the research reveals the resources in the environment are sufficient for the course (56%). The requirement of the courses observed only asking for the English language comprehension, internet access and computer skill. The actual course material posted by tutor or professor could be too high or to complicated for some students. The result from the research says 50% of the respondents think that the resources are not above the ability level.

The subject at hand influences the management of the resources. The resources must cover the subject sufficiently. The result for the research shows 62.50 % say that they agree the resources in the e-learning course they experience cover the subject comprehensively.

Respondents in this research feel that the resources available in the course environment in the form of custom-made more than external resources (50%). The reading material, presentation, and audio material from professor are mostly custom-made. Some external resources are also available.

The nature of resources that last more than a paper syllabus handed out in the classroom is useful for the students. Learning material, lecture notes, Pdf file from the online seminar are accessible from the beginning of the course until the end of the course. The moderator of the course sometimes continues the course to the year after, resources from the previous year still accessible. Respondents feel of this nature of the resources. 93.75% of respondents say the available resources are reusable. The material in the resources might be applicable for the next study purposes on the same topic.

Resources vary from text file, audio and video file. Multimedia resources are also available according to respondents in the environment.62.50% of respondents say the availability of multimedia resources in the environment. Multimedia in Moodle for example,"…… is a way of engaging student make the subject more interesting….and …integrated, discussed, and assessed through Moodle" (Fernandes 2009:9).

The quality for the resources depends on the knowledge and skills of the moderator. The quality of the multimedia is recognized to be high quality by the respondent (69.23%). Attaching a simple audio file to the platform is a simple skill but adding multimedia to multiple choices in Moodle quizzes and lessons is something more complicated or creating exercises with adding video conference materials are something too advances for some beginner.

The amount of resources depends on the student needs and the course goal. Student need to studying the resources in order to complete the assignment and task within the environment. 87.50% of respondent agree that the extensive resources in the environment meet student's needs. Traditional learning environment has the professor ready to explain during class time on specific student's needs. In e-learning environment, student is looking for the explanation in the resources as well as in the forum.

The idea of user friendly interface is also something to be considered for e-learning environment. The learning environment needs to be recognized and well occupied. The traditional learning environment is easily to locate and understand. The e-learning environment with all the functions and tools are sometimes too much to handle for some beginners. Student support needs to be available also for students in case of confusion when exploring the resources. However respondents say they didn't need student support to access resources (87.50%).

Student support in this case might be a simple troubleshooting word-file with clear step by step to download presentation from other students. The other types of support are contact and tutor's assistance where students could contact and ask questions to get a clarification on a specific access problem.

In Moodle platform, contact and tutor's assistance is a part of course background material. This material is an invitation for student to consult any problems. The result from the respondent reveals that 81.25% of respondents aware of the online help to direct learners to learning resources.

Ideal purpose of the resources that has been posted is to be used in the learning process. Student needs to take all resources into consideration if he wants to pass the course successfully. 68.75% of respondents take advantage from all the resources available.

The technical interface in the e-learning environment sometimes needs some time to get use to. The new platform for some students could be a new things and different from other interface in the web site. Moodle and Blackboard Academic Suites have different settings, button, link and web pages. The whole learning process in the e-learning environment needs to be as easy as sitting in the classroom. A good sign from the respondent, 57.14% of them admit they didn't get confused when using multimedia resources. This is probably because the profile of the respondents as said earlier.

The information overload attaches to the flow of information this day using electronic media. Internet, digital media, television etc are some of the media within the premises. The e-learning environment uses electronic media and tools to deliver learning material. The resources are there in the environment to help the student to learn. 40% of respondents didn't feel overloaded when using multimedia resources. This is a good sign for the moderator of the course for further development of the course.

Other than custom-made resource from internal tutors and professors, external resources sometimes fill the content of e-learning environment. The web external sources, external link to a document, and link to an academic journal online are some of the flexibility of internet resources. 56.25% of respondents enjoy the flexibility of internet resources. The flexibility means the adaptation of the sources compare to the textbook resources in the library.

The nature of internet where information share and store in a huge quantity brings the idea of internet resources to be more adequate that what the student needs. The responds from respondents show only 31.25% of respondents enjoy the abundance of internet resources. Internet resources which available in the environment should always guided by tutors or professors so that it won't be too wide in perspective. The internet could make wild suggestions in supply a particular subject of a course. Example of a journal of communication is still too wide for student to grasp. It has to be a specific journal to read and study.

The learning process within the e-learning environment takes place in a virtual area. Thus the important aspect of it is the student involvement and participation (Arbaugh . 2000:14) because tutor and professor don't have them in front of them. This makes the different to traditional environment. Student could participate and involve well in the e-learning environment

if the instruction are clear and well-develop. 100% of respondent the instructional resources are important to assist in the learning. This question affects the student participant and involvement in the environment. The instructional resources on how to will help student to know how to participate and getting involve in the learning process.

The idea of active learning is also related with student participation and involvement. One of the approaches to set an active learning environment is through peer instruction (Mazur 1997). This researched course using Blackboard Academic Suite managed an "asking for help" forum. In this forum all the instructions and problems are discussion within the students without the involvement of tutor or professor.

New exposure to learning environment especially e-learning environment need some time. Respondents respond differently in relations to a question on the time spent to get familiar with the e-learning environment. One respondent needs an hour or two while other spent two weeks in the environment just to learning the basic tools and functions they need to use later on.

Respondent from the two courses research responded that the environment use an innovative application 56.25%. This result shows that half of the respondents think that the environment is almost the same with the learning environment that they have been in before. It might suggest on the idea that the system uses the same application not the innovative one.

An e-learning course has many principles that make it differs from traditional course (Cole, Foster 2007:214). One of the principle that would make the course as a high quality course is collaboration. One of the strategic ways to support this collaboration is by using group. This one is also related with an active learning. Moodle provide quite number of tools for this collaboration (forum, wikis, etc). Respondents (73.33%) admit that the environment initiate the collaboration among member (student-student, student tutor, student-administrator). Students are not alone in the environment even though they are in front of the computer on their own.

The collaboration is also related with the working together not only for a specific task but also for the final goal. 69.23% of respondents think all members are working together for the completion of the course.

In the environment graphics, sound, and video could be used to create a world where student learn. It is different from learning from textbook, lecture in the classroom or even video. It is a pity that only 33.33% of respondents say that the learning environment they were in provides a multimedia simulation. The multimedia has an advantage "…to enhances higher-order learning outcomes" (Standen & Herrington 1997).

This idea of multimedia simulation is a little too overwhelming for respondent. Only 33.33% of respondents think that it helps to interact better within the environment. The other consideration within the area is the understanding of how to make use of this type of resources. 58.33% of respondent in e-learning say that the guideline of the multimedia simulation is not easy to follow.

Students in e-learning environment need to learn in the basic way. Seminar for example, we can conduct it in class and now the two course system managements provide a feature that makes possible the organization of online seminar. The requirement of the e-learning course that I research is need to learn the online seminar material before the seminar presentation.

This practice has been implemented in the courses. However the participants from the student are not very higher. Only 56.25% of respondent have participated in an online seminar with an invited expert. However respondent believe that participation in an online seminar helps to get better understanding of the subject (76.92%).

Some of the organizational management of time is an issue. The nature of the e-learning course as a distant education combines and collaborate students from different time zone. 76.92% of respondents feel convenience with the time concern in online seminars. The logic behind it is with notebook in the coffee shop student still can participate in an online seminar compare to a real on site seminar. This management of time could be organized wisely before time to get the higher participation rate from students. Some software or web-based organizing tool help in this type of organizing, for example Doodle.

The cost efficiency is also a consideration for organizing an online seminar compare to onsite seminar where a site could take up time, money and effort from the organizer. The other concern of an online seminar in e-learning environment is the fact that all of the seminar material has posted and will still be posted after and before the seminar being held.

Archiving last event and material is a system where all resources should be available to student at all time. The reason is because there is no class meeting to go to next time for clarification. The availability of material of online seminar beforehand could be a deciding factor for not attending the seminar. However 78.57% of respondents say the content of the online seminar is not only a repetition of the posted material in the environment.

It is a good sign that something more to expect in the online seminar instead just reading the material or the presentation out of resources page in the environment. This also links with the next question that about the participation in an online seminar with exam. Only 66.67 of respondents feel the online seminar makes them confidence to be successful in the exam.

The last question on the questionnaire is about the tools usage. The quality principles of the learning environment especially e-learning environment are based on the quality principles (Cole and Foster 2007:214). The tools in Moodle are organized and developed to facilitate for the quality principles. Some tools in Moodle or Blackboard Academic Suite are there to be explored and used however only 28.57% of respondent think all members use all tools provide in the environment.

The logic behind the usage of all tools might not be necessary. Some students prefer communicate to other student via email so the chat room is never used. Some students prefer digest version of updated messages to their private email so they are never touched course time plan and overview.

The tools might have been easier to use than other. One click usage of writing a message in discussion board is quite easier than going through procedure to send email within the environment under the communication thread.

7. CONCLUSION AND IDEAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

7.1. Conclusion.

The aim of this study is to find out the existences of reality in e-learning environment of a full online course and the implication to student learning. Based on our finding, a number of conclusions could be drawn.

The conclusion is drawn with the consideration of the scope of the research to specify the finding of the research. The courses researched are full online courses that mean the courses only delivery within e-learning delivery method. The universities organizing these courses are conventional universities that mean they offering most of the course in traditional manner. The respondents are university student from undergraduate to post graduate levels.

First, it was shown that the reality in e-learning is not the same like reality in the traditional environment. Bearing in mind Baudrillard notion of reality spreading across many terms and poles (virtual reality, hyperreality, simulation and implosion), the specific target of this research is only within the reality and simulacra.

Reality in e-learning environment is related with the comparison to what kind reality exists in the traditional environment. Baudrillard mentioned that reality is simulacrum of the symbolic (1981). This definition is elaborated by the orders of simulacra and phases of the image.

Reality in e-learning could be also describe and pinpoint by the orders of simulacra and the phases of image. The e-learning courses as a model are full e-learning courses. This fact is important to target a specific analysis of the existences of the reality in e-learning. It is also unique because e-learning course which combines with face to face meeting will result in different kind of reality.

The orders of simulacra from Baudrillard make the historical perspective of value of sign as well as the significant development of sign value. The first order is production. E-learning in this order is the condition where e-learning as a support system to traditional learning

environment. The motive of e-learning in this order is to copy anything   that traditional learning environment has. The nature of the simulacra in this order is to restore the ideal image of nature.

The elaboration of this first order is the condition of classroom will be reflected trough some multimedia simulation in the e-learning environment for example to copy the ideal classroom condition where students and teachers are in the same "place". The synchronous communication in Blackboard Academic Suite communication board and discussion board is one of the examples copying the act of face to face communication. The underline idea of reality in this order is the actual original. The natural image of classroom condition and face to face communication still underlie the multimedia simulation and the synchronous communication.

The second order of simulacra is production. E-learning in this order is the condition when e-learning become a copies of mass production. The production of the e-learning environment from one university to the other could be an indication that e-learning environment value is the same like car, clothes or books in the market. The value of e-learning using for example Moodle is being copied throughout higher education institutions, colleges, and schools to deliver courses to student.

The third order of simulacra is simulation. This is the actual order of the present time. E-learning in this order is the reality of the simulation. This is the actual e-learning course that I research. The course has no original. The model or code of learning methodology of e-learning is the characteristic.

Second, e-learning as simulacra could be illustrated with the phase of the image. There are four phases. The first phase is the e-learning reflects the basic reality. The basic reality is the traditional classroom reality. The second phase is e-learning masks and perverts a basic reality. In the second phase the bad representation of classroom environment on e-learning surfaces. The third phase is when the image covers the absence of reality. E-learning in this stage covers the absence of traditional learning environment, for example in combine online course with face to face course. The last phase is the pure simulacra. E-learning is in this phase when the full course e-learning without the original course underling the course. E-learning is the disappearance of face to face learning environment (Remtulla 2008). The phase of representation forms last stage

to formulation of the pure simulacra. The reality in the post modern world is," …. becomes undecidable" (Baudrillard 1998: 128).

Third, Baudrillard's simulacrum has the contiguity of reality with virtual reality and hyperreality. The fact that virtual reality is "….to be perfectly homogenized, digitized and "operationalized"."(Baudrillard 2003:39). The perfect methods of e-learning are not enough to be considered as hyperreality. It has to be proven and tested and cannot be in disagreement. E-learning environment offers more interactive feature for students in the environment for example CLEV-R (Monahan, McArdle and Bertolotto 2006:1343) could be categorize as virtual reality.

Hyperreality according to Baudrillard is the condition of more concentrated and "real" than the actual reality. E-learning as hyperreality is when the whole process of the teaching and learning is more "real" than the classical pedagogy (Remtulla 2007). The e-learning as hyperreality is the methodology of pedagogy which deliver the ideal method for every purpose, for any target audiences and suitable for any course subject. E-learning becomes hyperreality when it can clear out from the any meaning from the traditional learning environment.

Finally, e-learning as simulacrum is the reality in the case of full online course. It is the reality that shows the disappearance of face to face learning environment. The characteristic of e-learning as something without the original is also in the third order of simulacra as a simulation. E-learning is a pure simulacrum when the distinct feature available without any possibility to be carried out in the real classroom environment. It has to disconnect to any classroom technologies.

7.2. Ideas for further research

One of the advantages of this study is that we focus on the full online courses in the universities which offer other courses in traditional format. Some limitation of the research is the fact that responds from sample is poor. This poor respond rate needs to be explored more to gain a good solid responds from the sample size in different population. This limitation is a reason for the empirical data of this research is a small example of opinion from student who experienced reality in e-learning environment using Moodle and Blackboard academic Suite. The limitation of this research is also impossible to generalize across educational institutions or across the learning environment.

The Baudrillard's theory of Simulacra is used to observe cultural phenomenon in post modern era. Internet is a tool in the modern day to connect people from difference place and time zone. The further ideas for research should be within the area of socio cultural side of internet in this case e-learning. The scope of e-learning in this research is the existence observation of reality and simulacra. The further research should look at the relationship to virtual reality or to hyperreality.

The other course management systems are potential as a research despite the popularity of Moodle as course management system. Another open source course management systems are Dokeos, ILIAS and Sakai. They need to be observed further in the perspective of reality and other socio cultural related issue.

The further research should look at Baudrillard's phase of image in more specific e-learning tool or module. Even though his idea is not far different from the traditional scientific or philosophic idea of representation (Mattessich 2003:457), his notion of pure simulacra might have surfaced in a contemporary cultural product not only in information computer technology type of product.

The other idea is researching around the notion of synchronous communication in e-learning environment. Baudrillard criticizes on the artificiality of the postmodern life including the communication we have via internet. The e-learning environment is using the same principle

in communication where they have been some significant development such video conferencing or Google wave. This development contributes to the communication aspect in the e-learning environment. The further research should to the direction of socio cultural side of e-learning not to the technological side.

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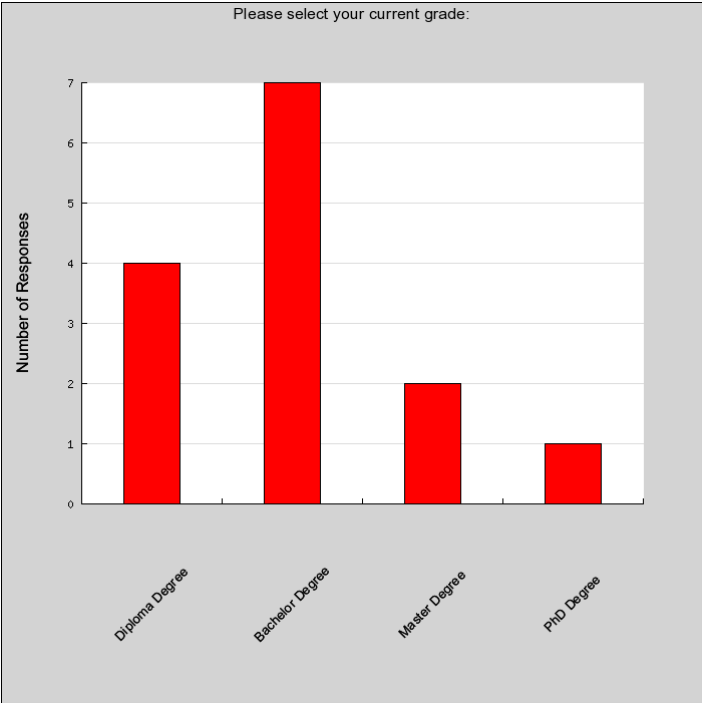
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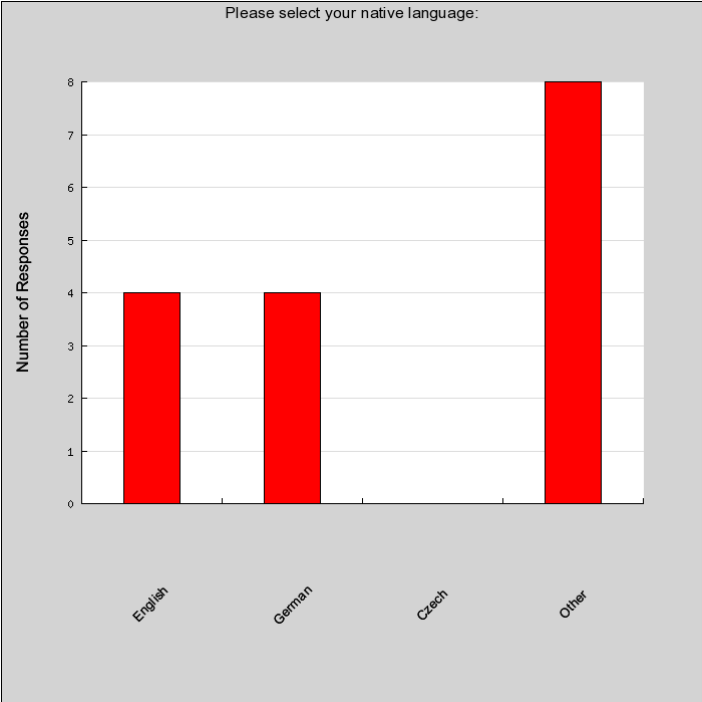
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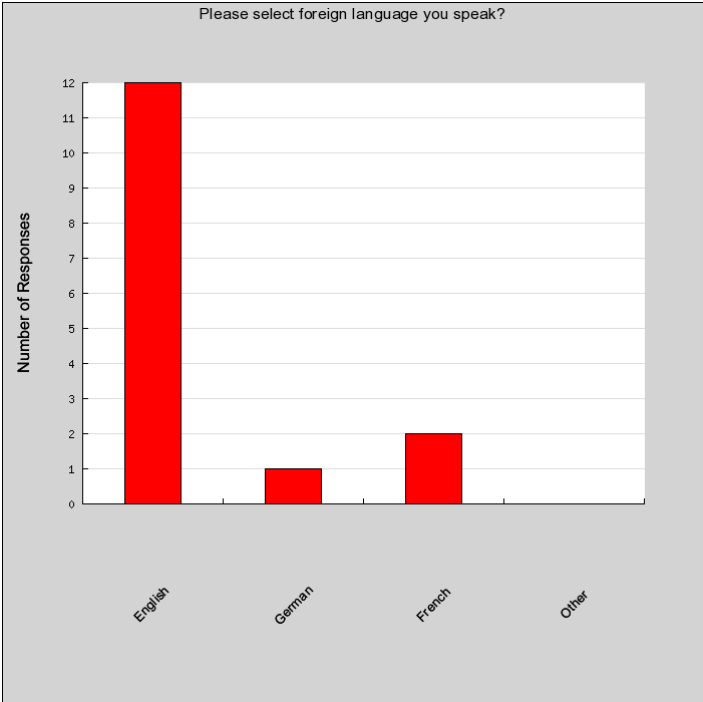
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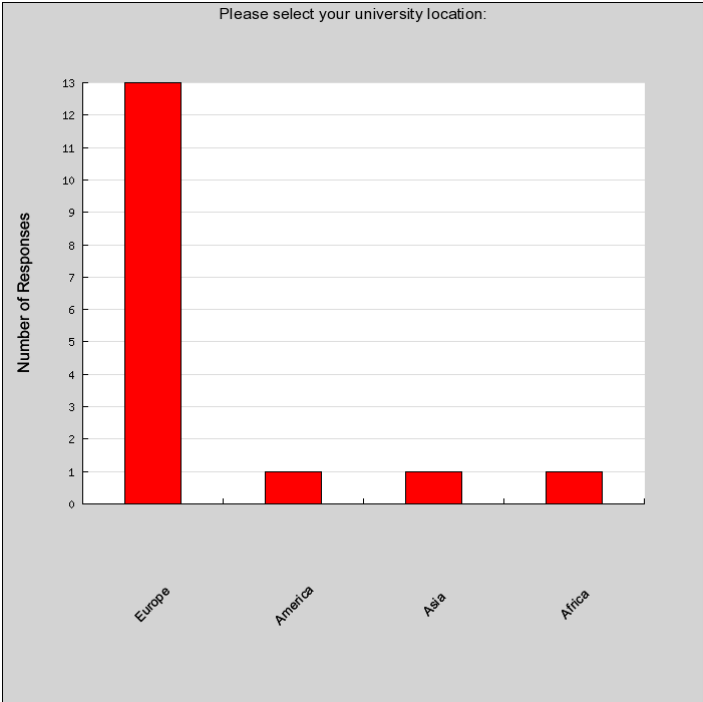
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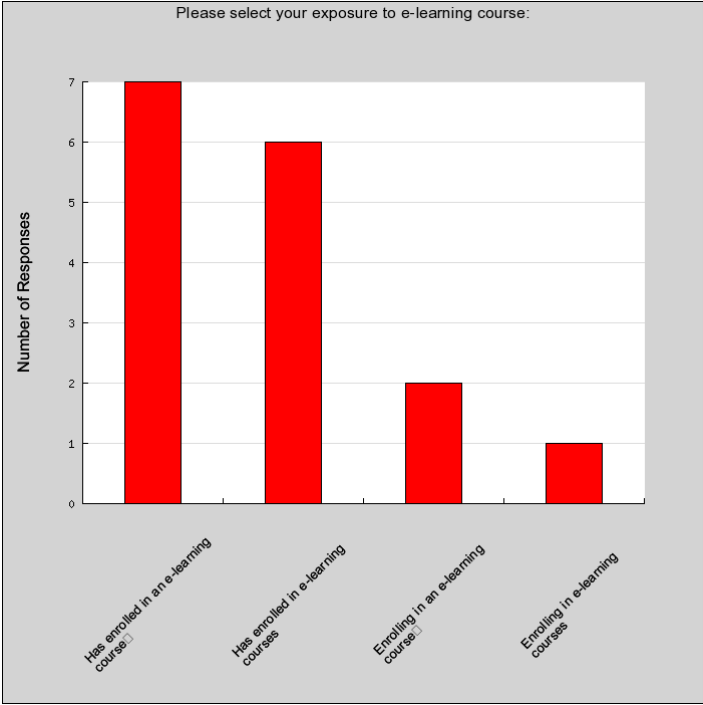
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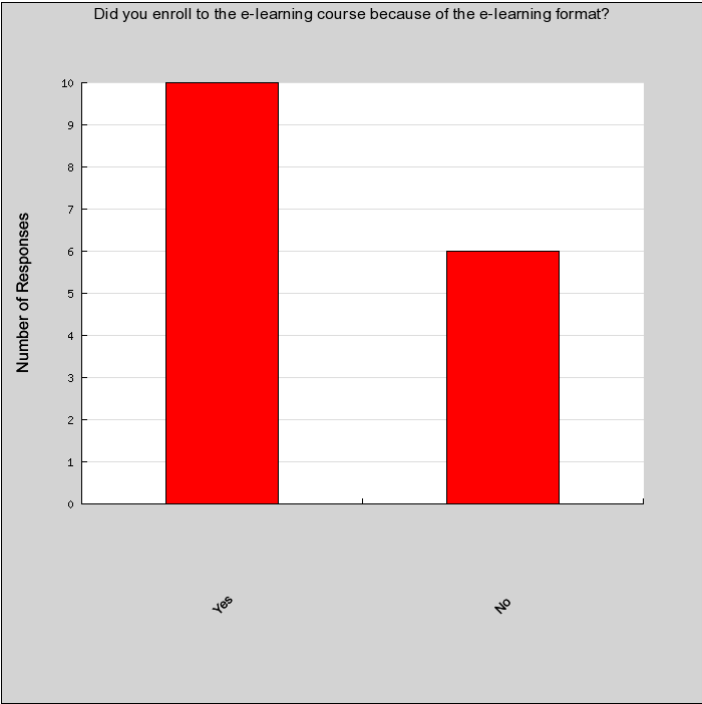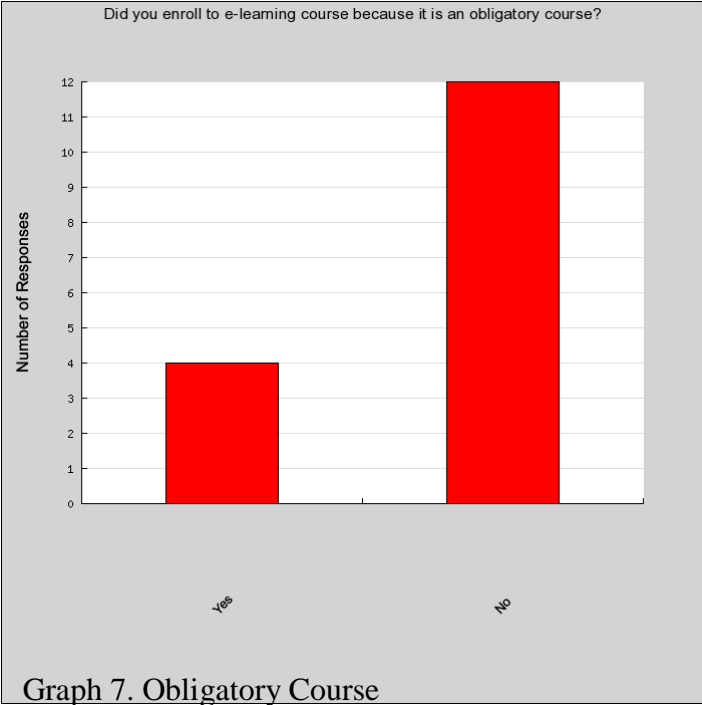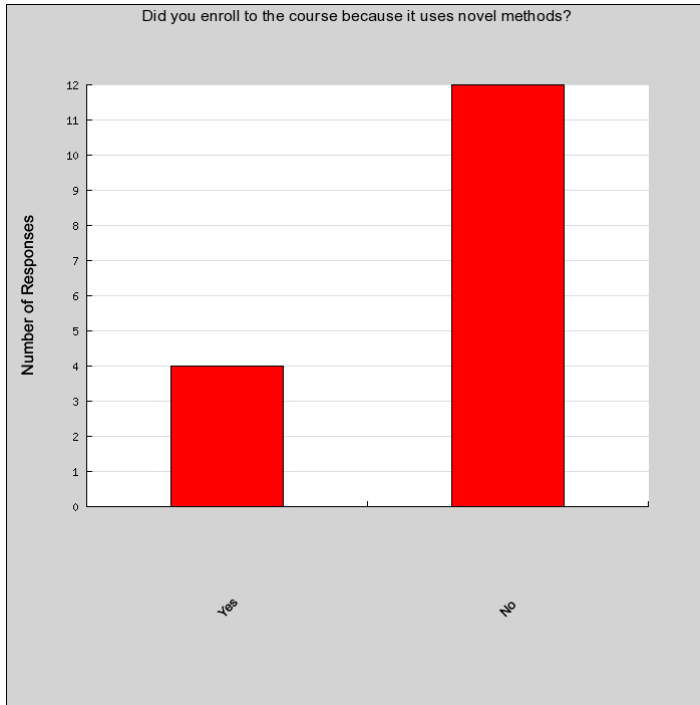
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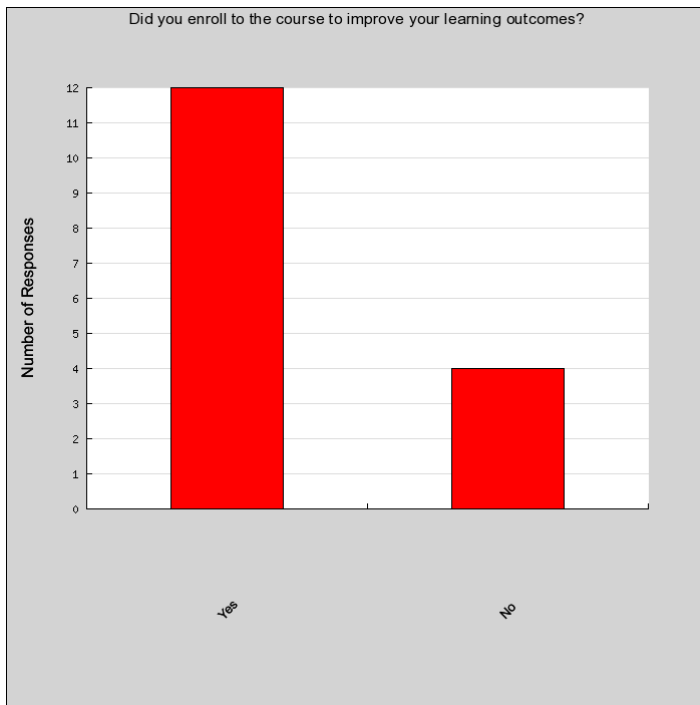
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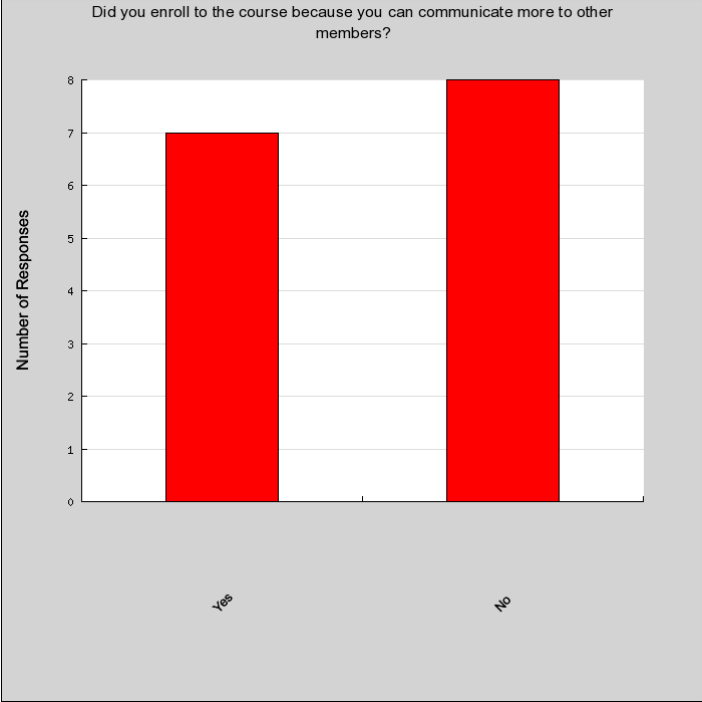
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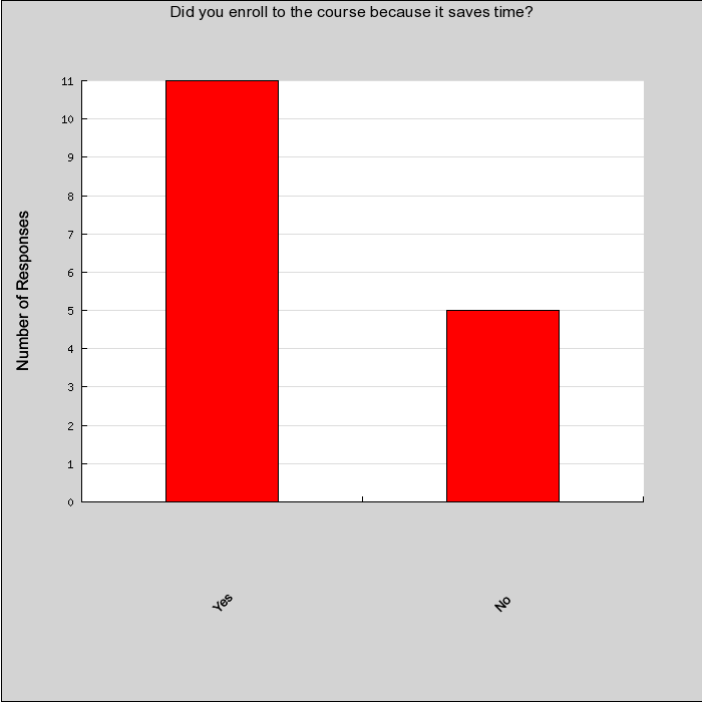
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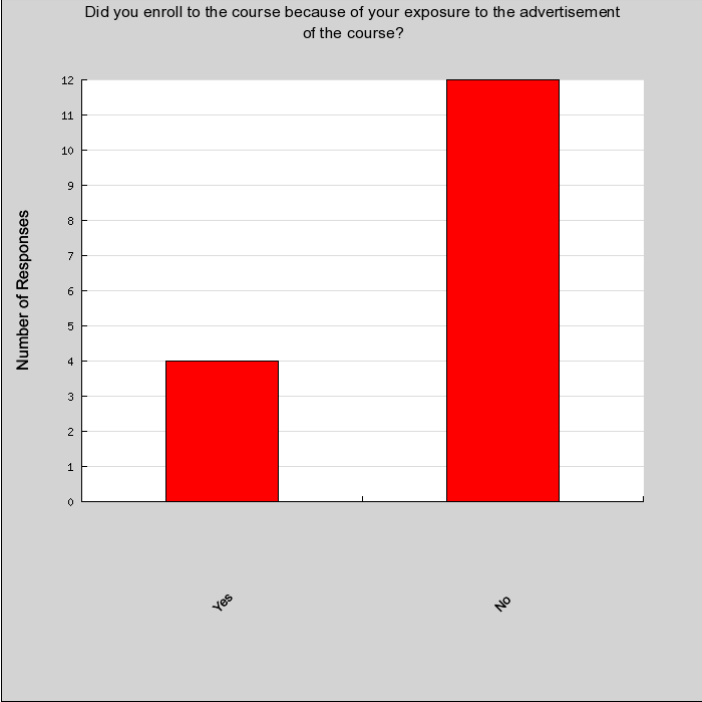
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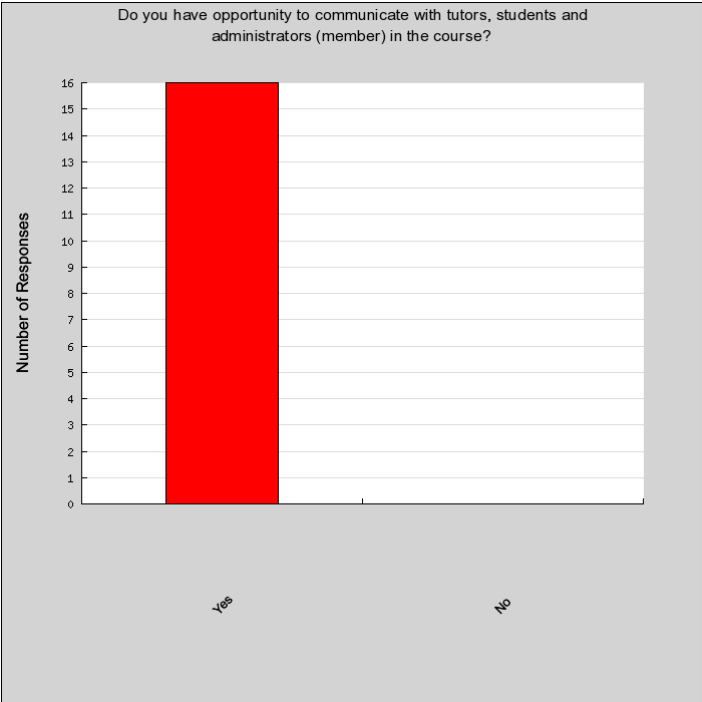
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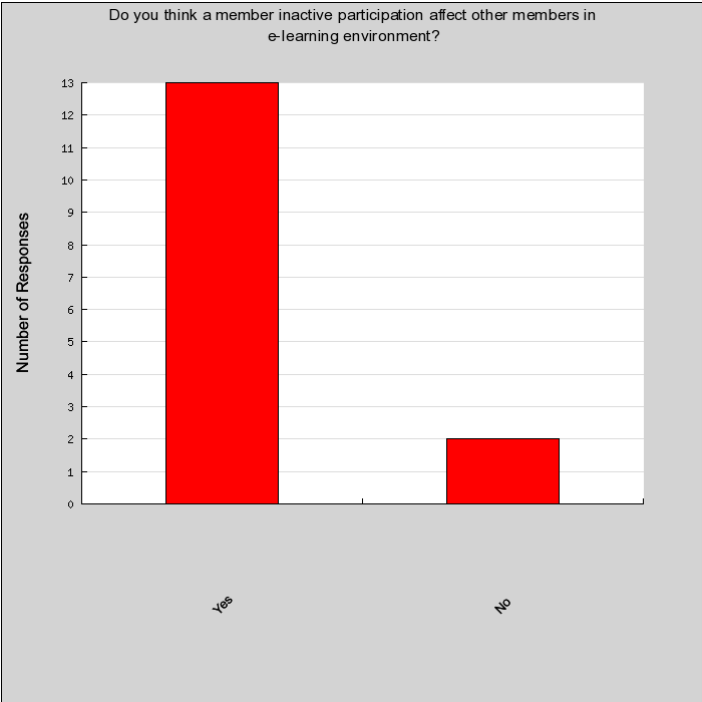
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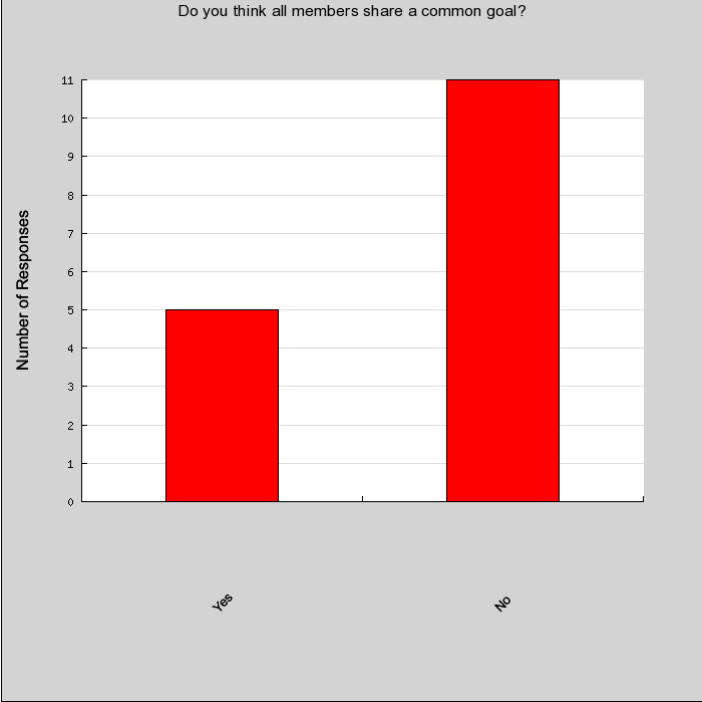
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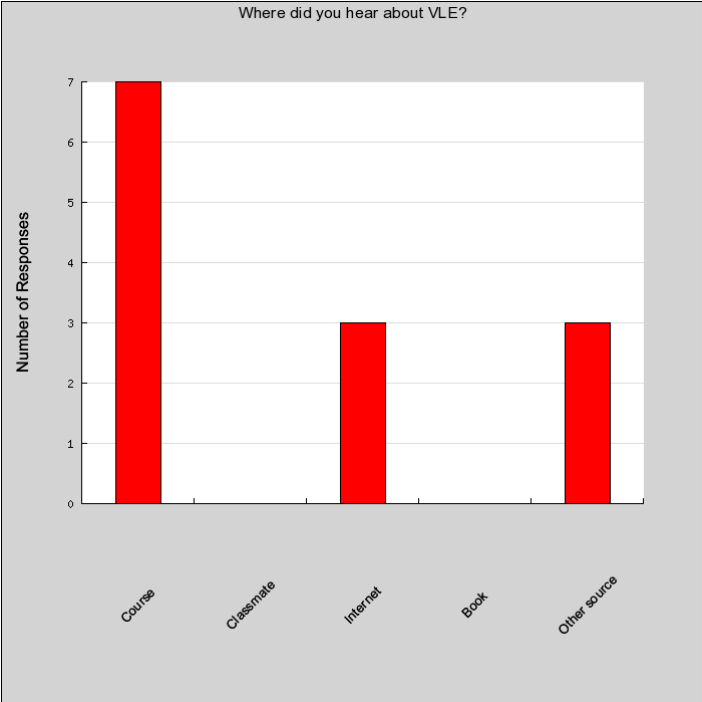
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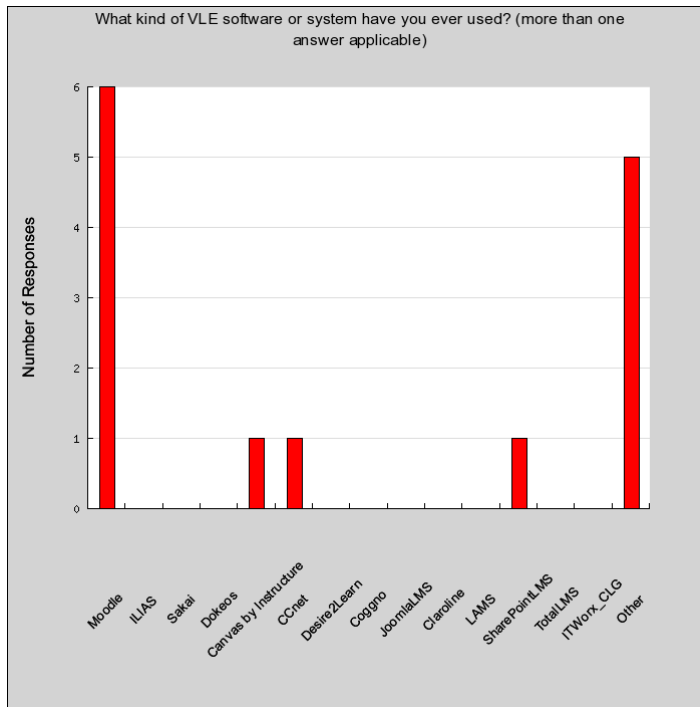
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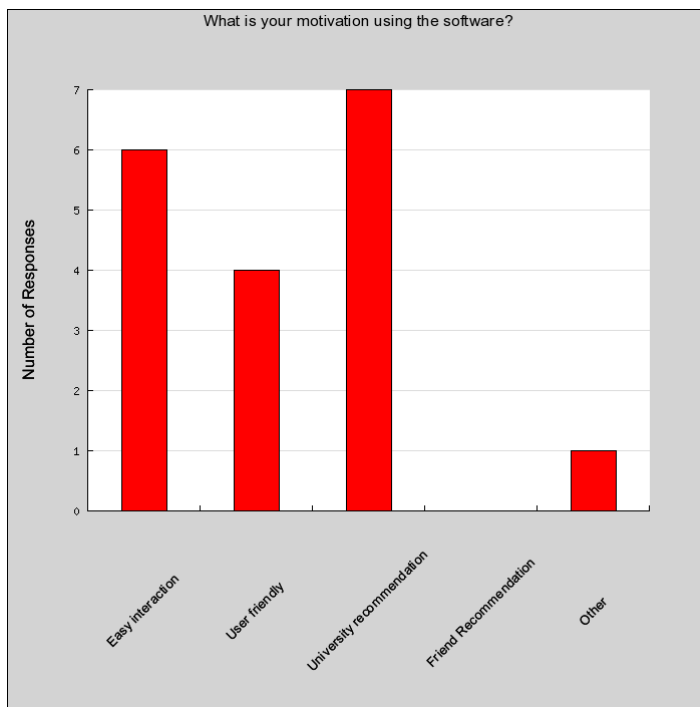
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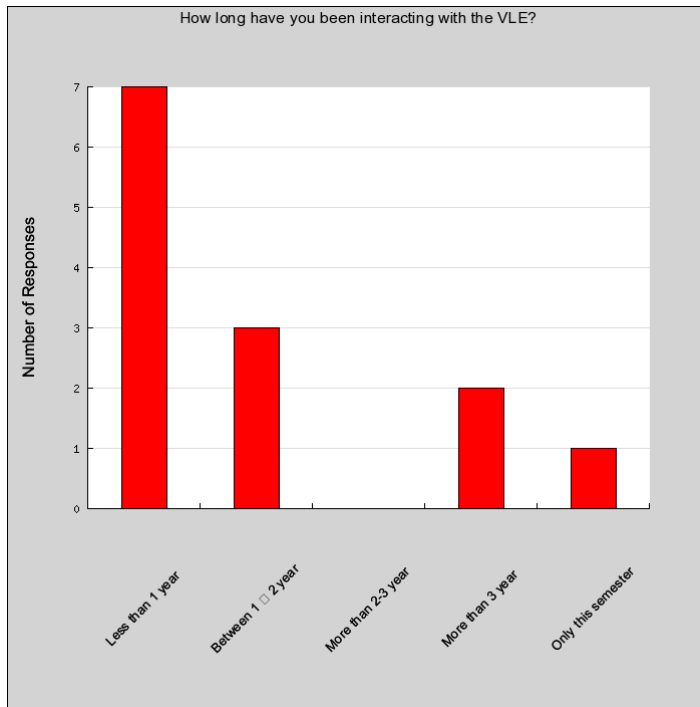
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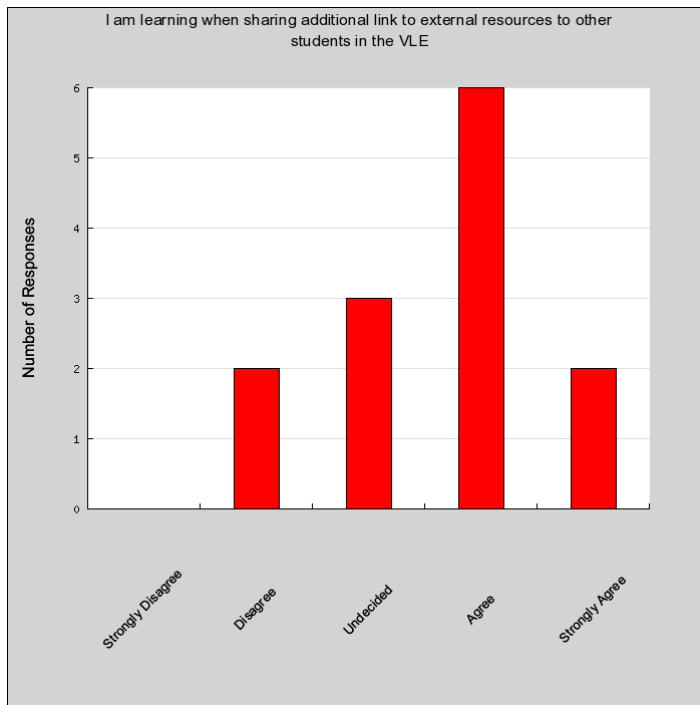
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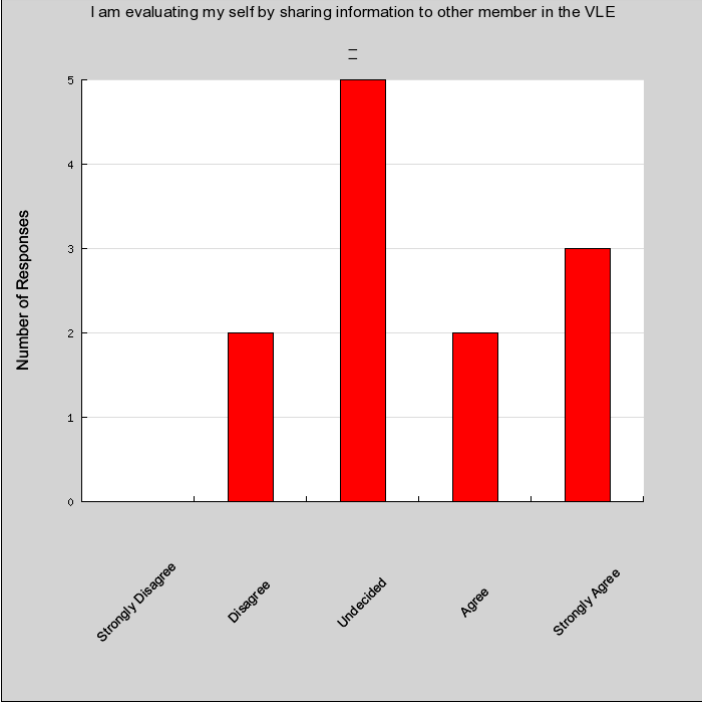
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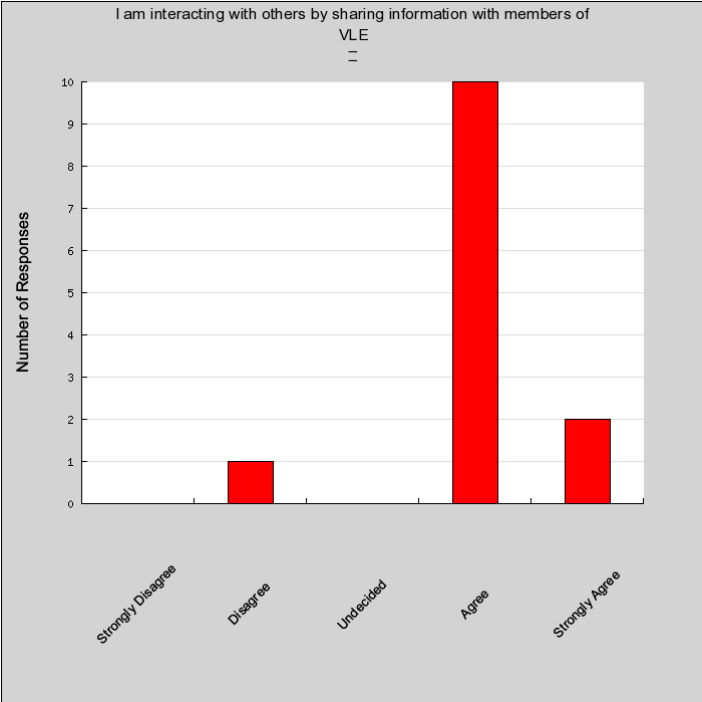
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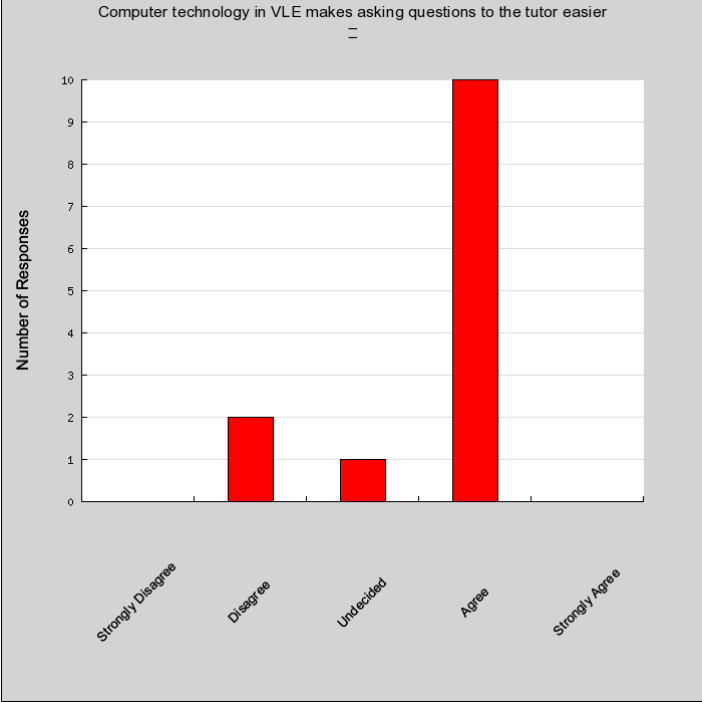
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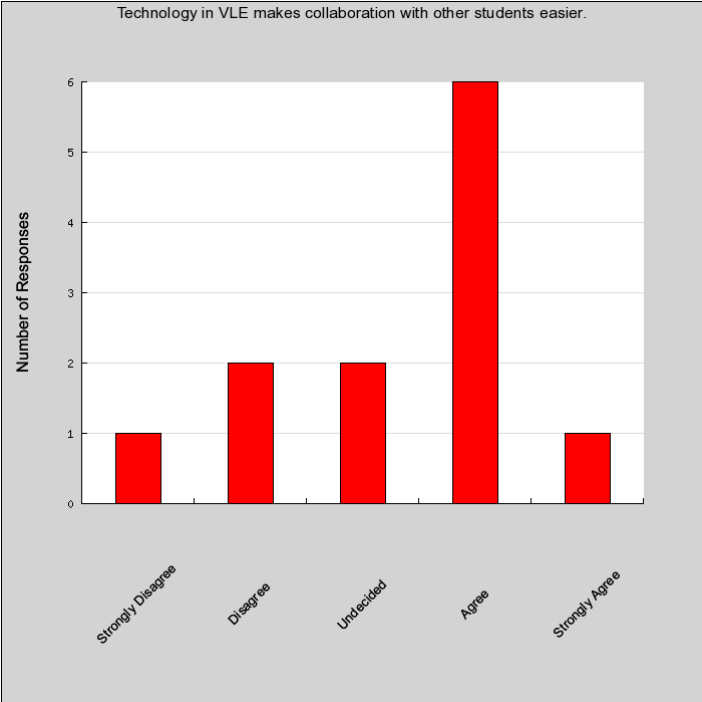
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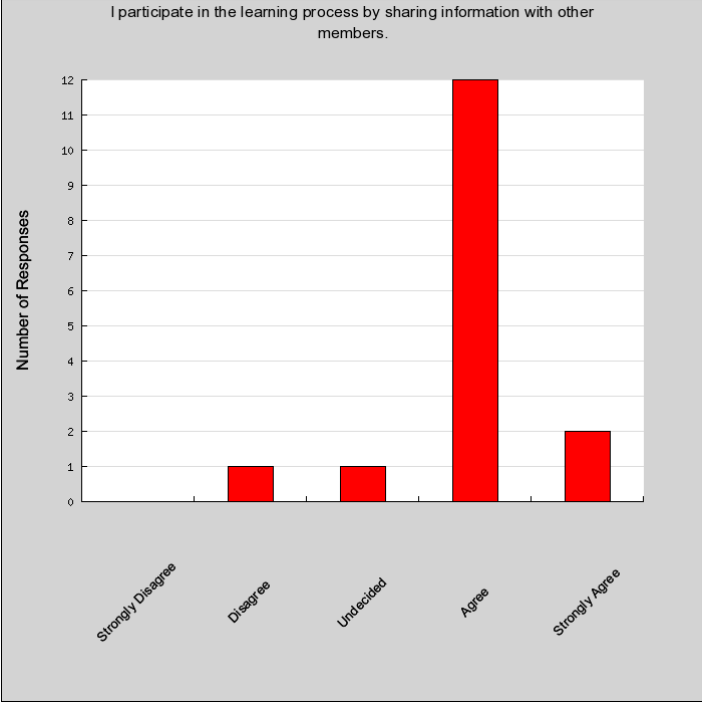
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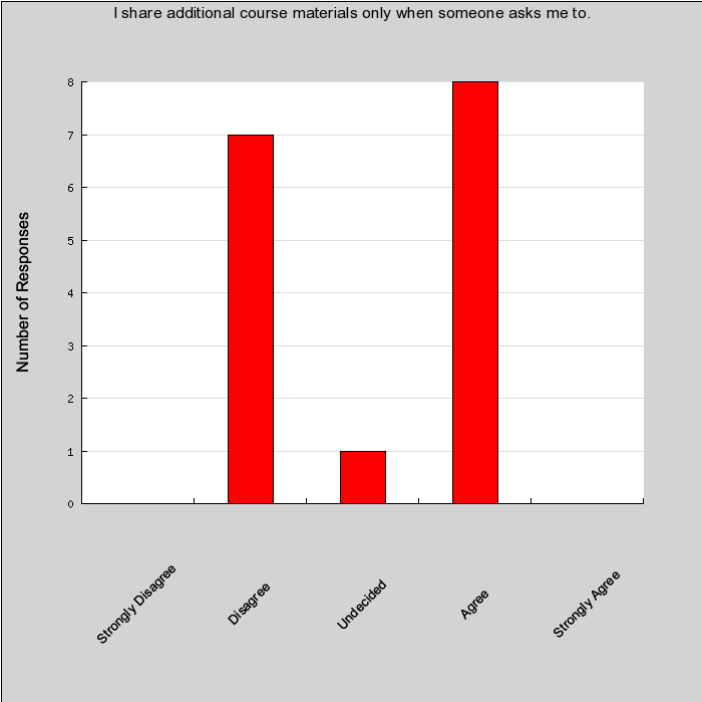
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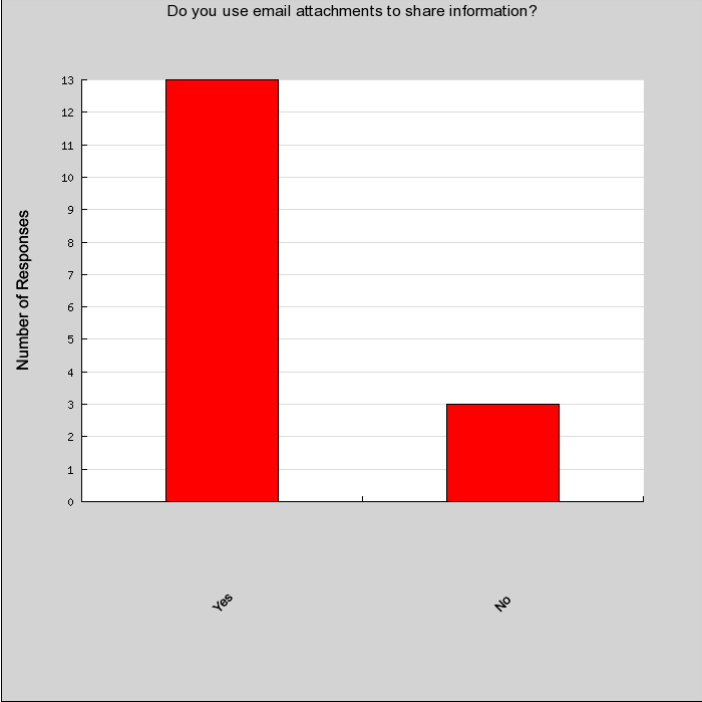
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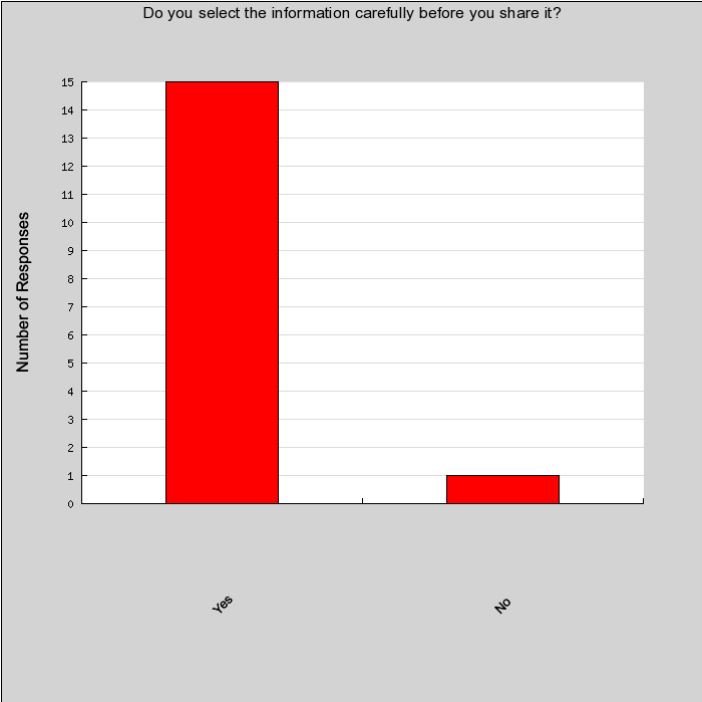
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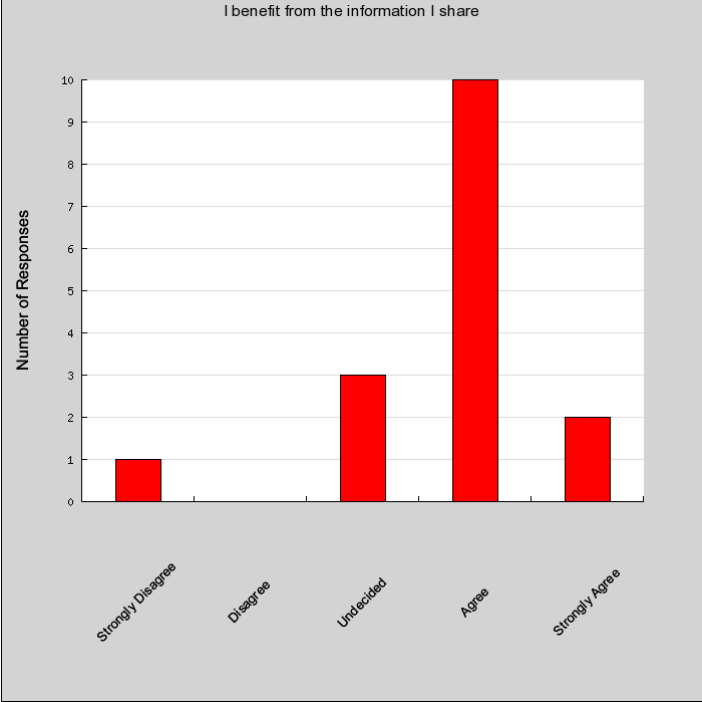
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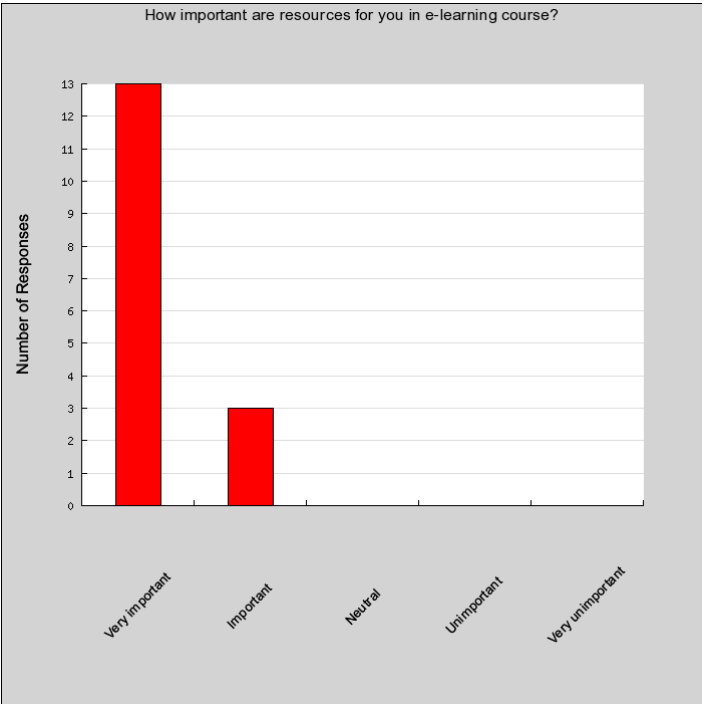
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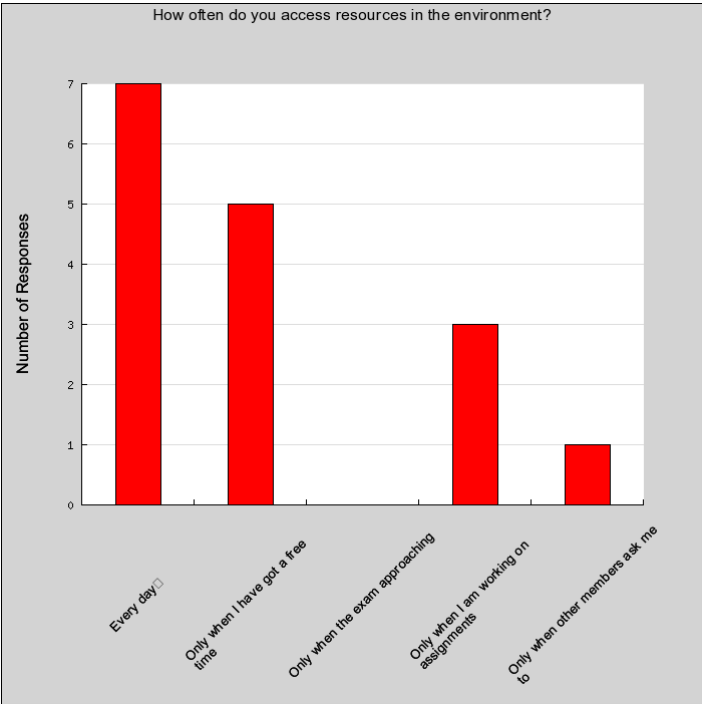
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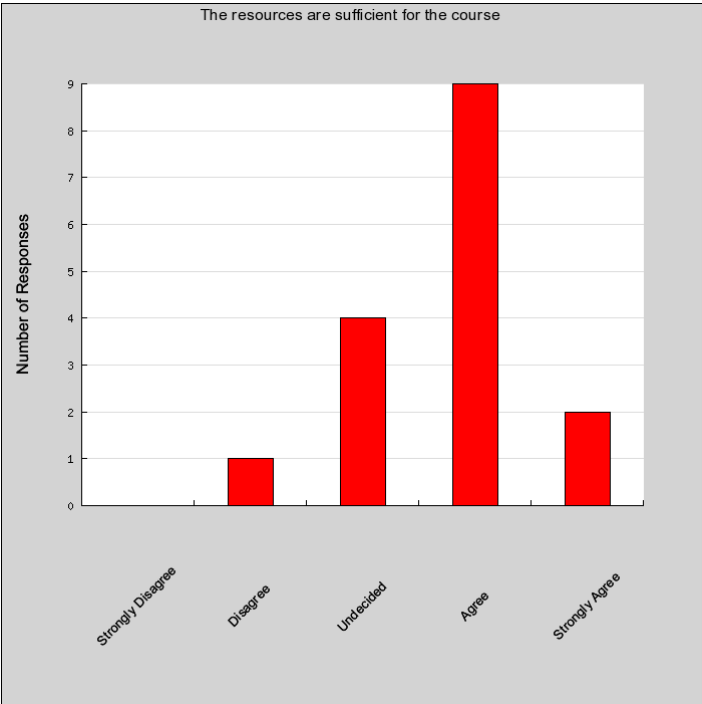
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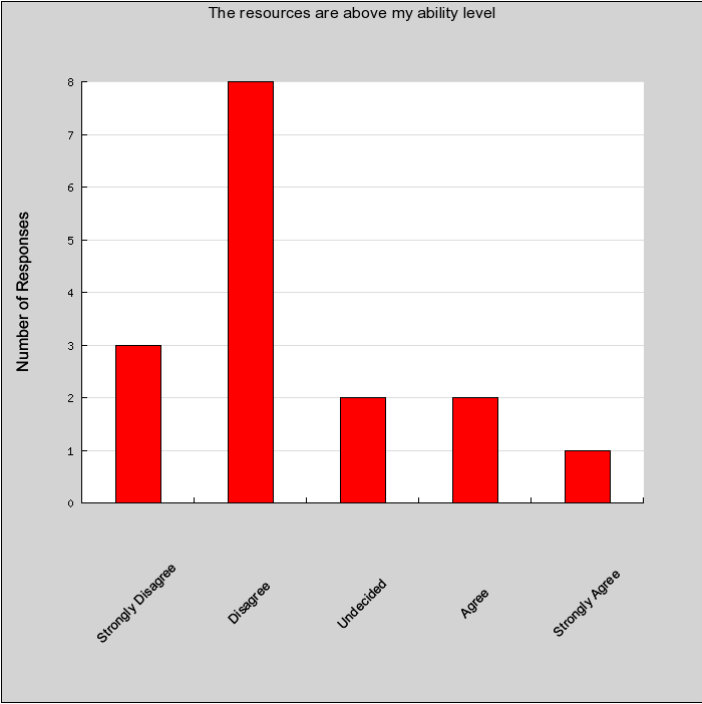
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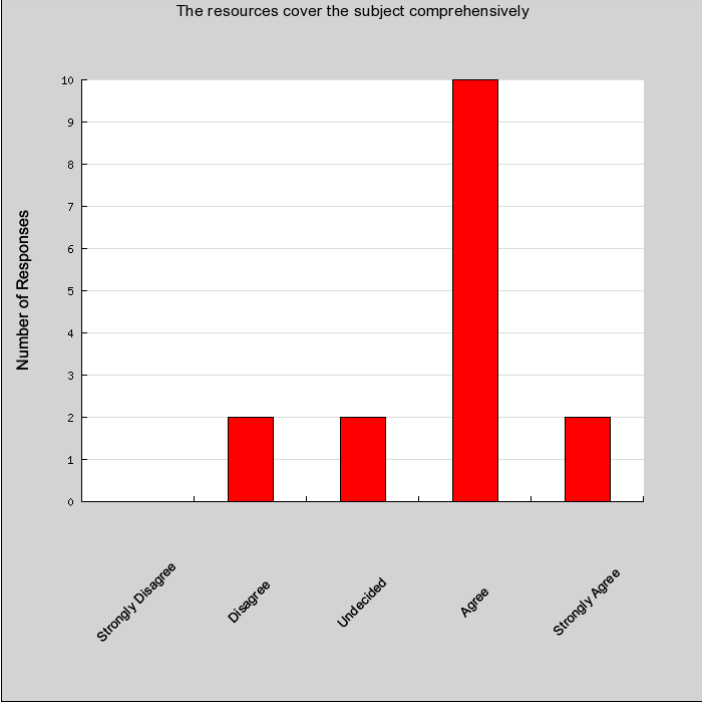
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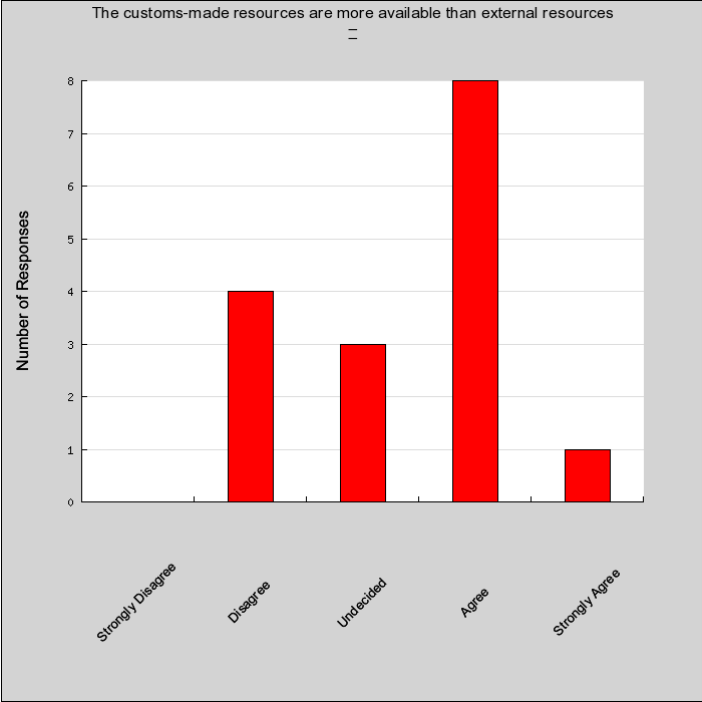
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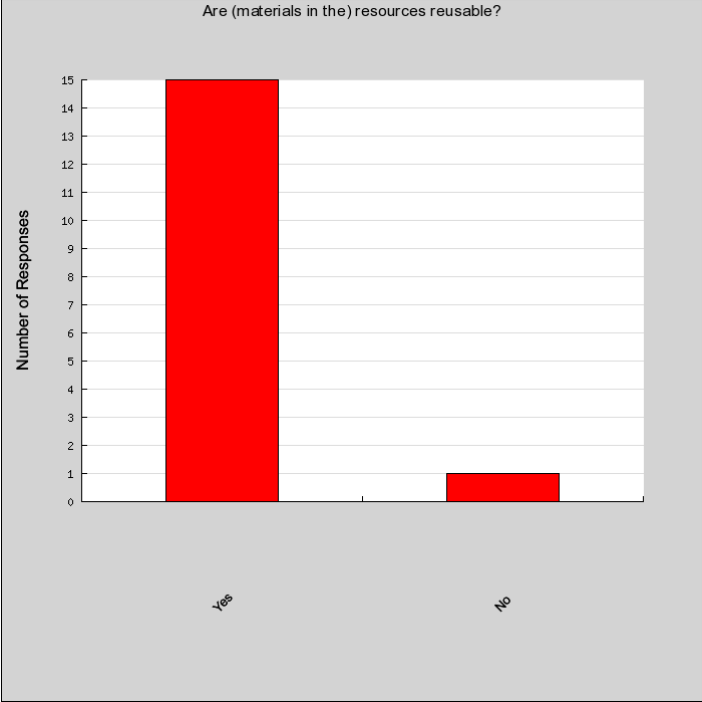
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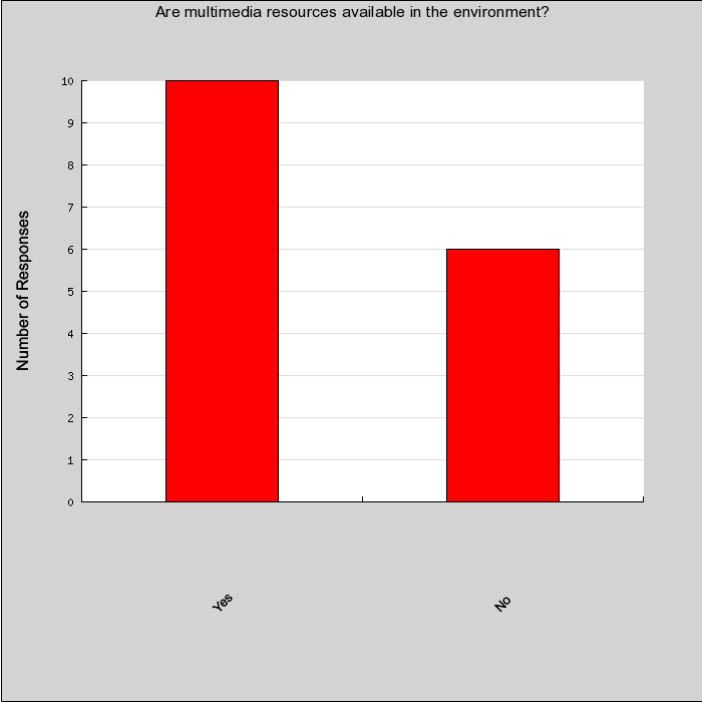
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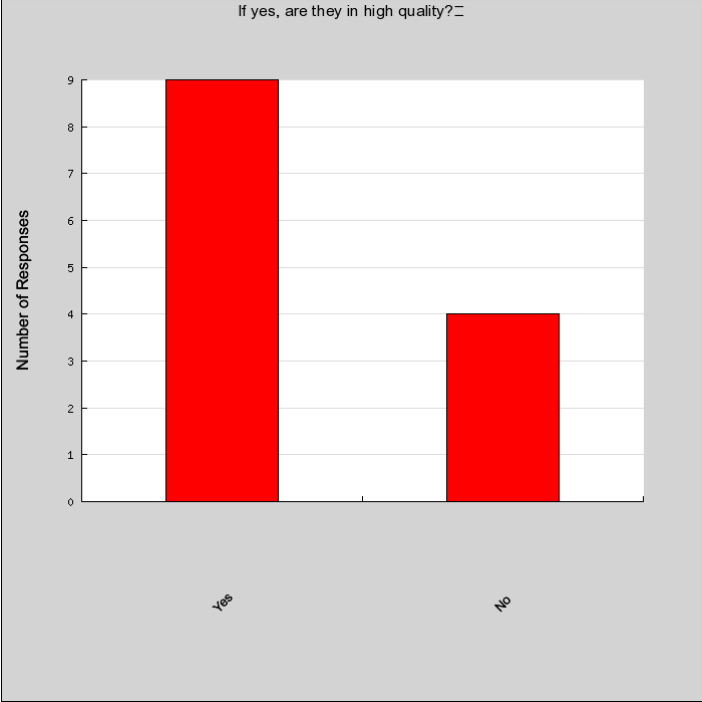
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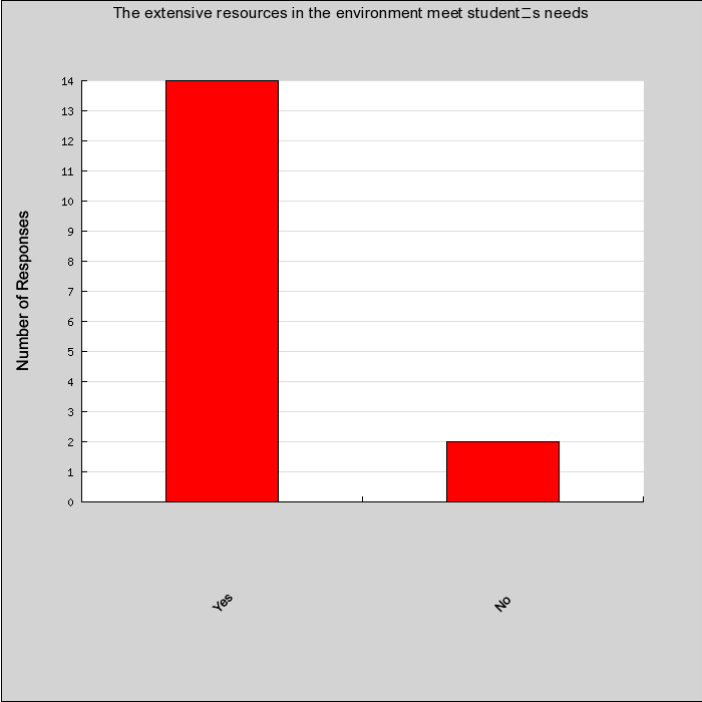
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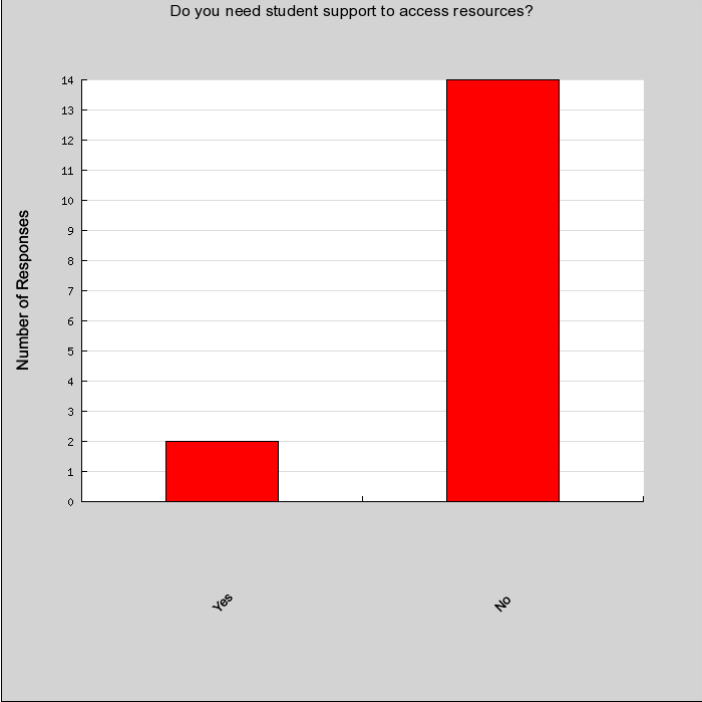
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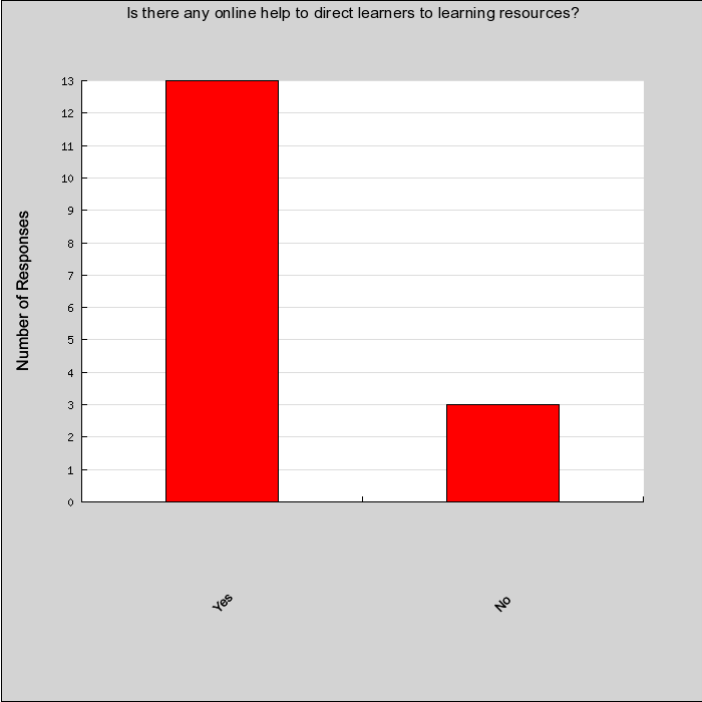
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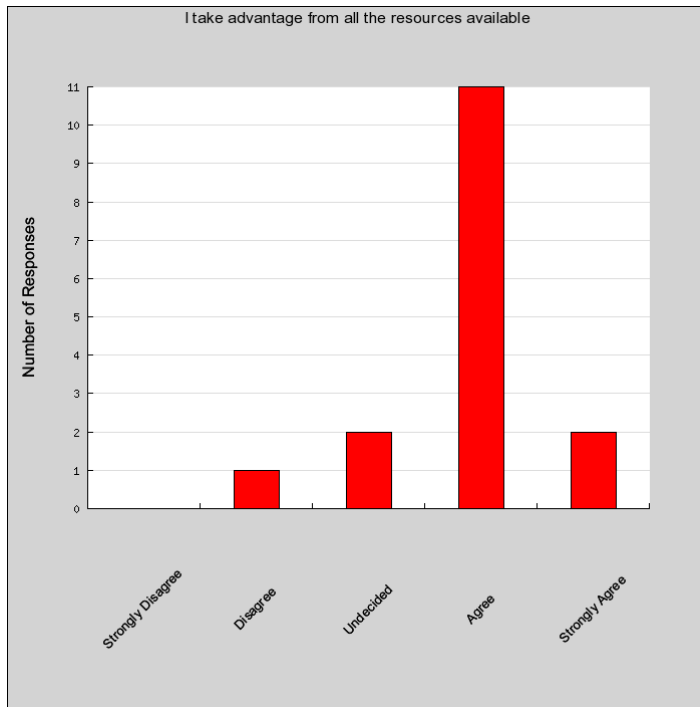
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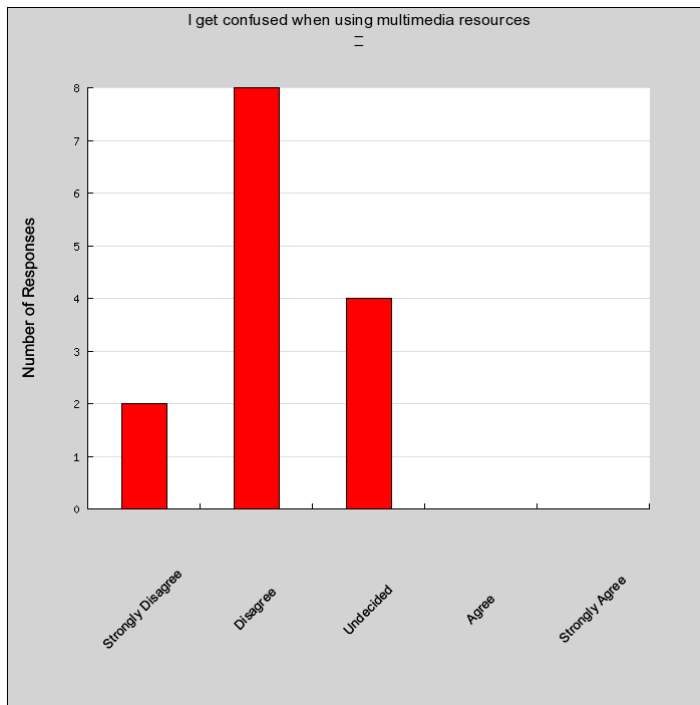
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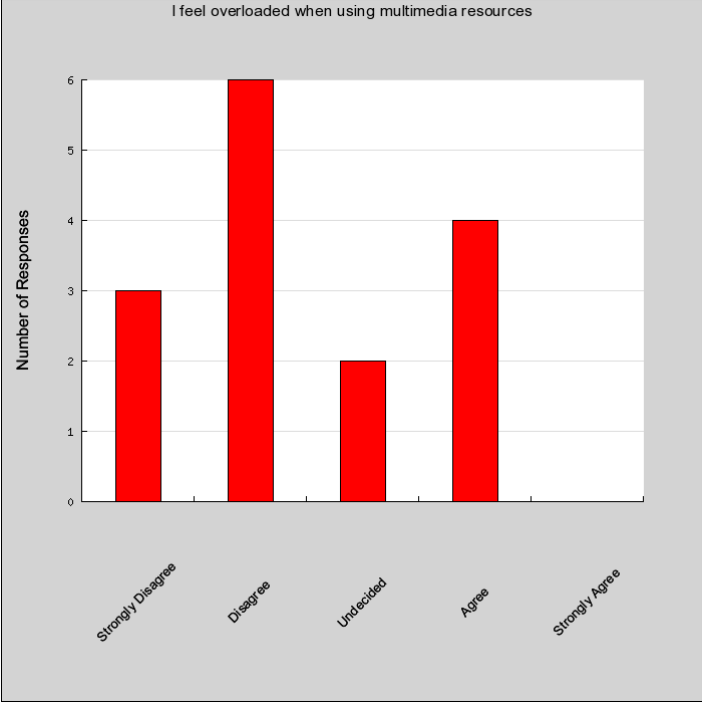
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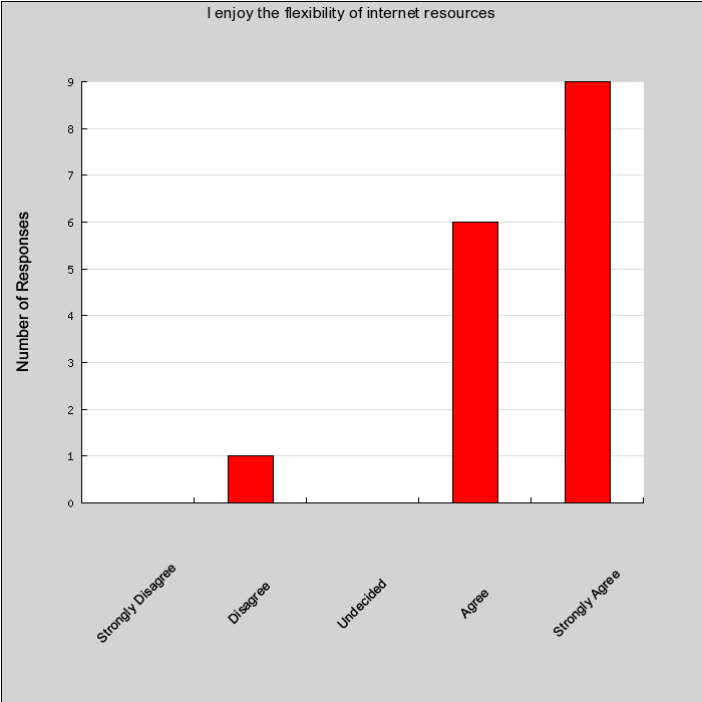
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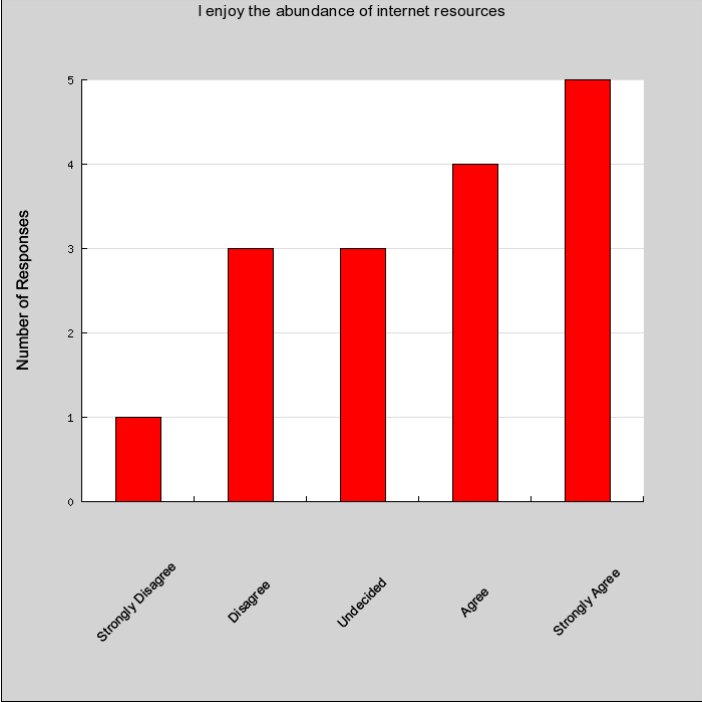
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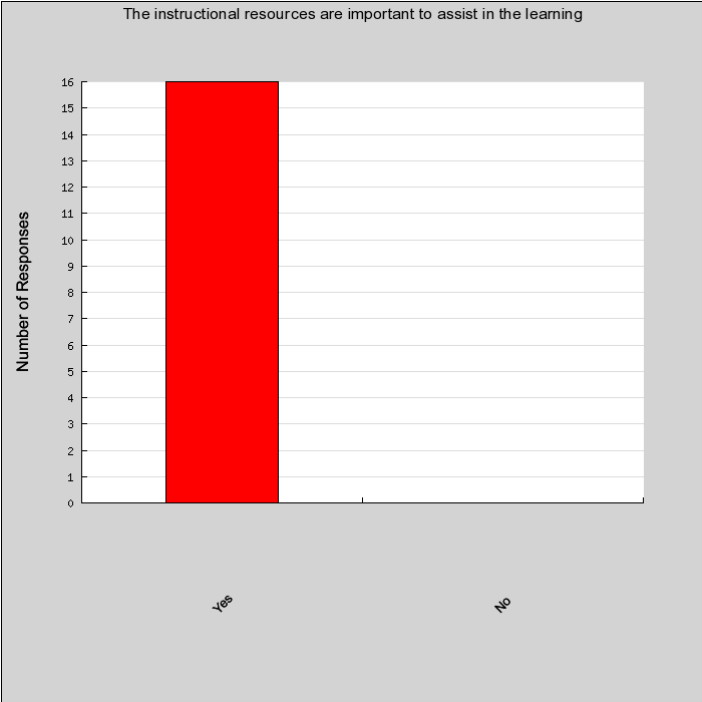
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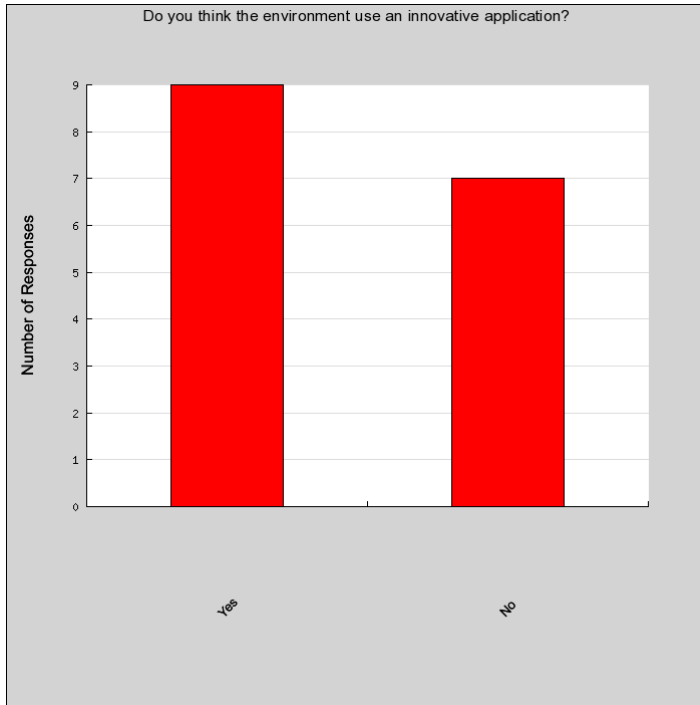
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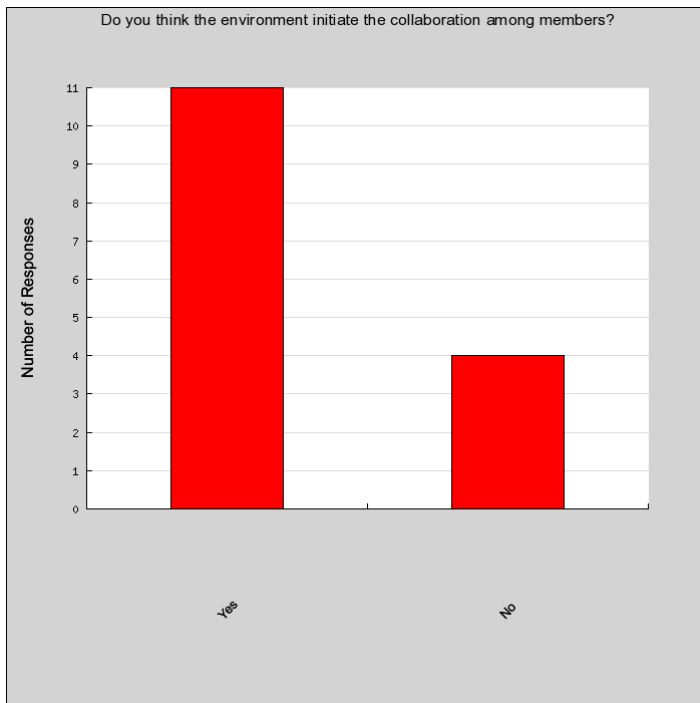
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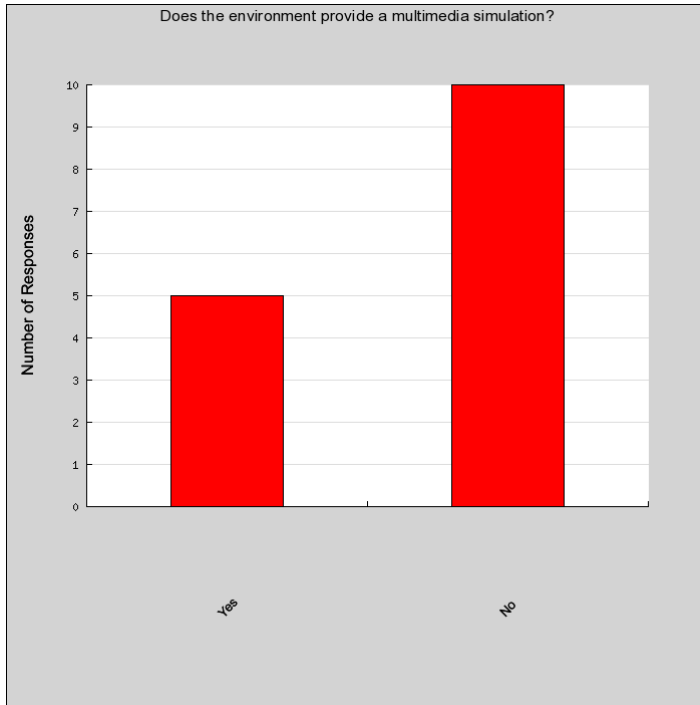
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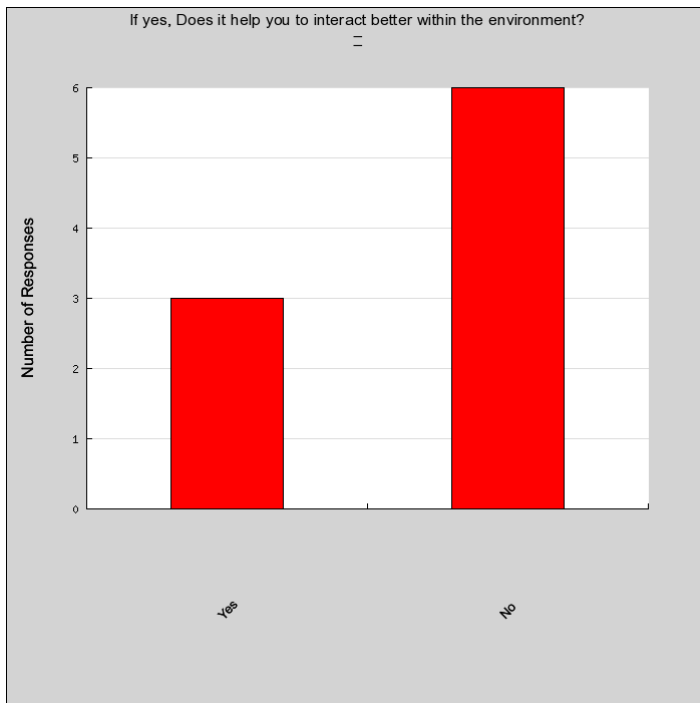
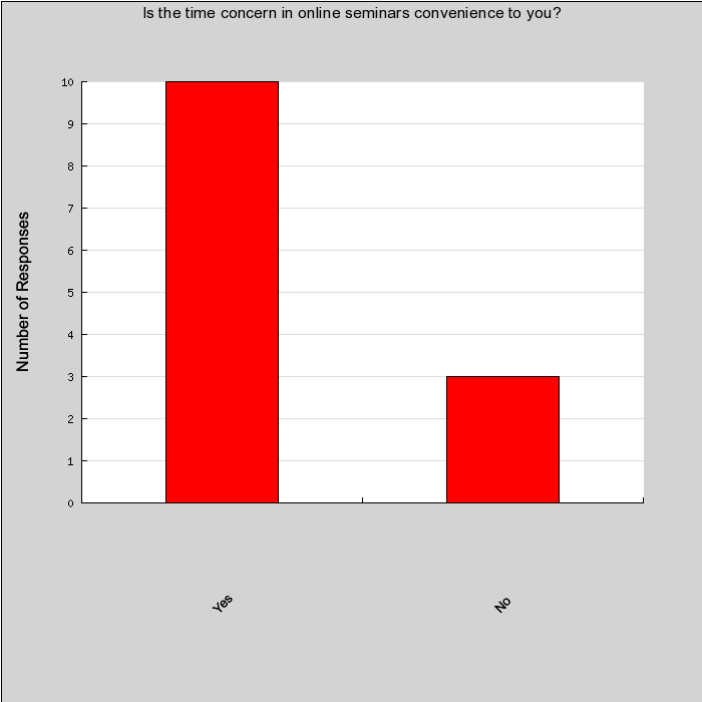Graph 51. Interact better within the environment
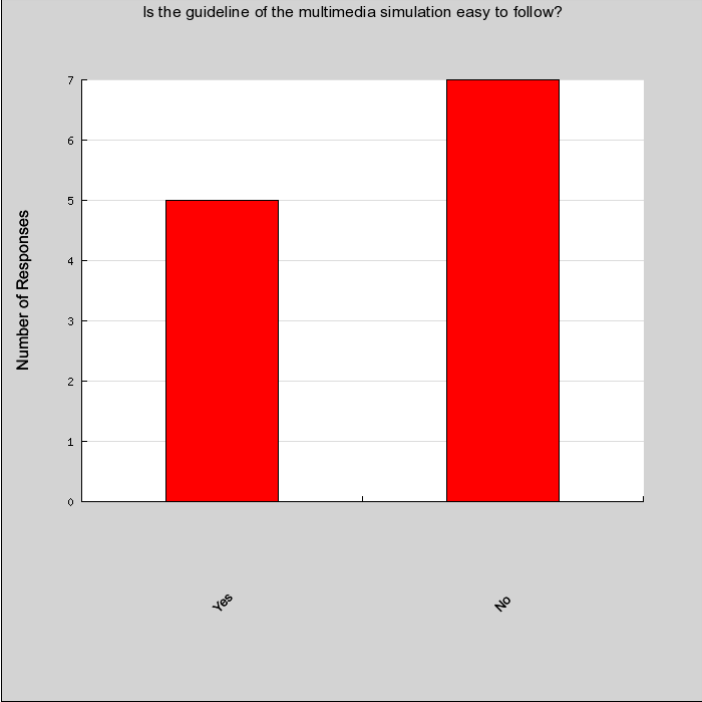
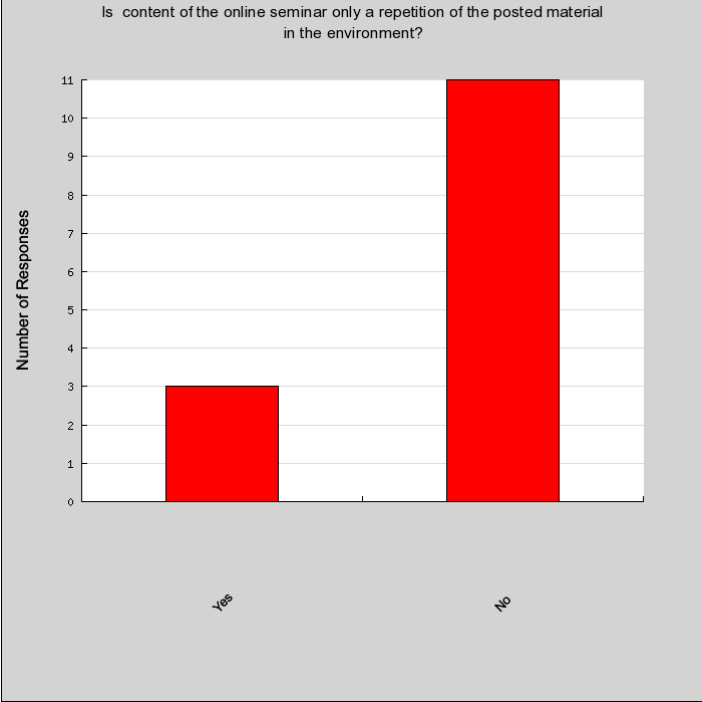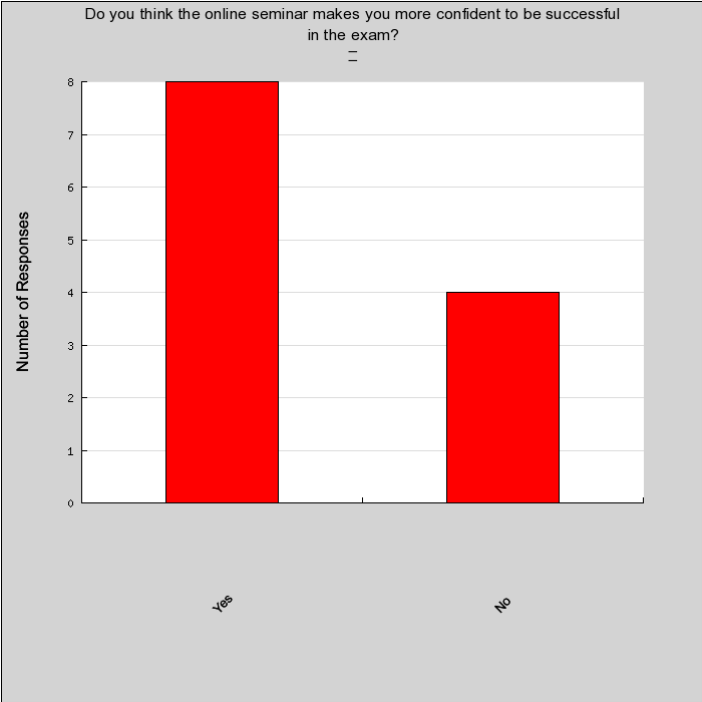Graph 52. Multimedia guideline
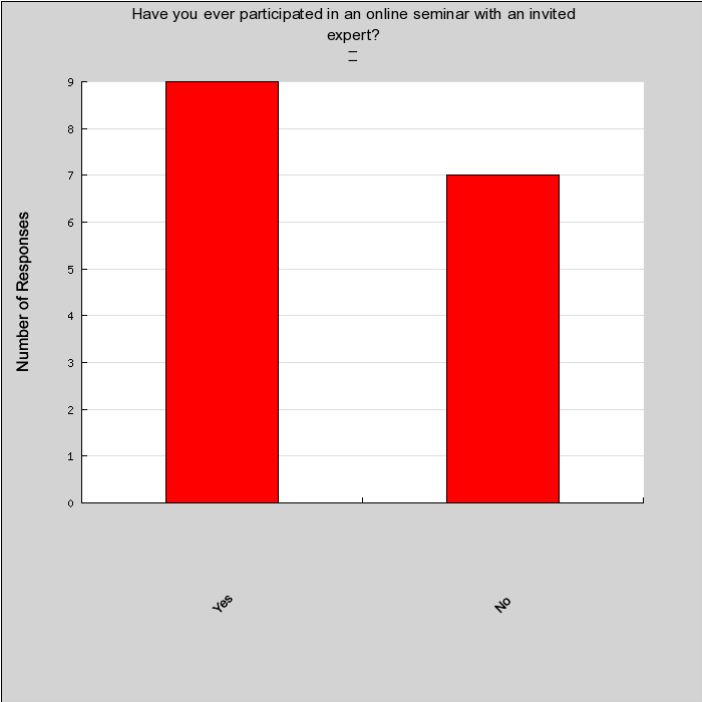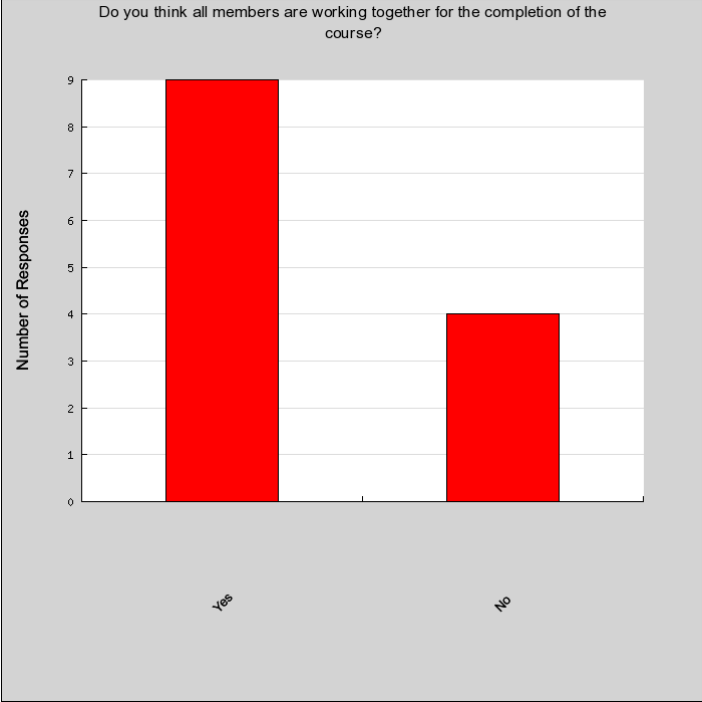

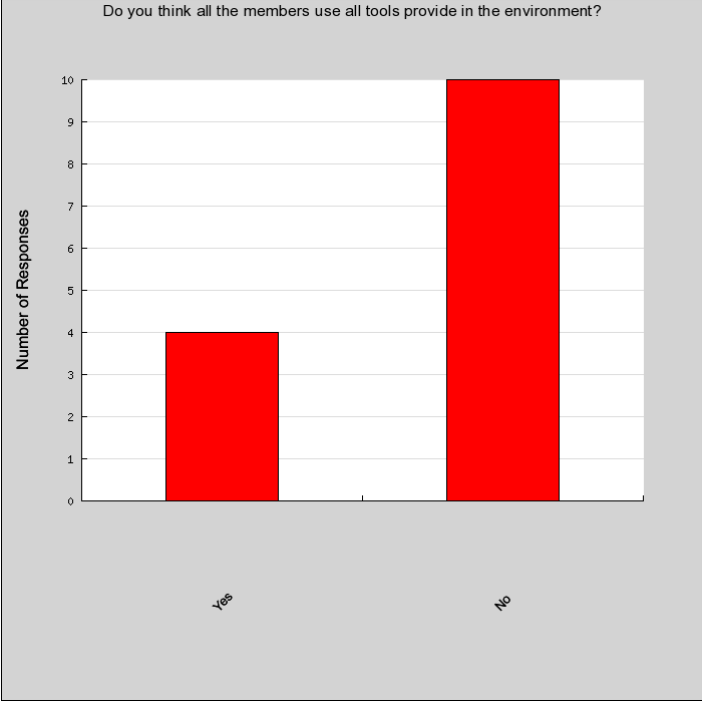Graph 53. Online Seminar
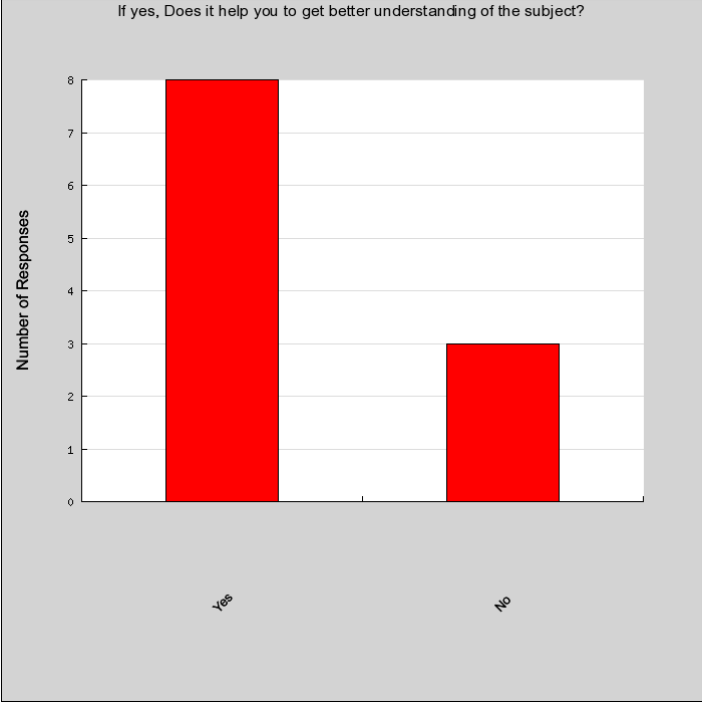
Graph 54. Better Understanding

Graph 55. Time Concern

Graph 56. Content of online seminar

Graph 57. Online Seminar make Confident

Do you think all members are working together for the completion of the course?

Graph 58. Working Together

Do you think all the members use all tools provide in the environment?

Graph 59. Use all tools

Appendix 5. Questionnaire.

Reality and Simulacra in E-learning:

Case of Realistic Experiences in Higher Education Online Learning

Questionnaire:

Please enter your email address: ……

1. Please select your gender:

Male☐   Female☐   Intergender☐   Transgender☐

2. Please select your current grade:

Diploma student☐   Bachelor student☐   Master student☐   PhD student☐

3. Please select your native language:

English☐   German☐   Czech☐   Other☐

4. Please select foreign language you speak?

English☐   German☐   French☐   Other☐

5. Please select your university location:

Europe☐   America☐   Asia☐   Africa☐

6. Please select your computer skills level:

    Average☐   Above average☐   High☐   Computer expert☐

7. Please select your exposure to e-learning course:

    Has enrolled in an e-learning course   ☐

    Has enrolled in e-learning courses   ☐

    Enrolling in an e-learning course   ☐

    Enrolling in e-learning courses   ☐

<u>Motivational Aspect</u>

8. Did you enroll to the course because it is an obligatory course?

    Yes☐   No☐

9. Did you enroll to the e-learning course because of the e-learning format?

    Yes☐   No☐

10. Did you enroll to the course because it uses novel methods?

    Yes☐   No☐

11. Did you enroll to the course to improve your learning outcomes?

    Yes☐   No☐

12. Did you enroll to the course because you can communicate more?

    Yes☐   No☐

13. Did you enroll to the course because it saves time?

    Yes☐   No☐

14. Did you enroll to the course because of your exposure to the advertisement of the course?

      Yes☐   No☐

Learning Experiences

15. Do you have opportunity to communicate with tutors, students and administrators (member) in the course?

      Yes☐   No☐

16. Do you think a member inactive participation affect others'?

      Yes☐   No☐

17. Do you think all members share a common goal?

      Yes☐   No☐

18. What do you know about Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)?

………………………………

19. Where did you hear about VLE?

      Course   ☐

      Classmate   ☐

      Internet   ☐

      Book   ☐

      Another source   ☐

20. What kind of VLE software or system have you ever used? (more than one answer applicable)

Moodle ☐

ILIAS ☐

Sakai ☐

Dokeos ☐

Canvas by Instructure ☐

CCnet ☐

Desire2Learn ☐

Coggno ☐

JoomlaLMS ☐

Claroline ☐

LAMS ☐

SharePointLMS ☐

TotalLMS ☐

ITWorx_CLG ☐

None of the above ☐

21. If you have used more than one, which one do you prefer?

   …………

22. What is your motivation using the software?

   Easy interaction ☐

   User friendly ☐

   University recommendation ☐

   Friend Recommendation ☐

   Other (please fill in)……………………

23. How long have you been interacting with the Virtual Learning Environment

Less than 1 year   ☐

Between 1 – 2 year   ☐

More than 2-3 year   ☐

More than 3 year   ☐

Only this semester   ☐

24. I am learning when sharing additional link to external resources to other students in the virtual learning environment (VLE)?

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

25. I am evaluating myself by sharing information to other member in the VLE

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

26. I am interacting with others by sharing information with members of VLE?

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

27. Computer technology in VLE makes asking questions to the tutor easier

    Strongly disagree   ☐

    Disagree   ☐

    Neutral   ☐

    Agree   ☐

    Strongly agree   ☐

28. Technology in VLE makes collaboration with other students easier.

    Strongly disagree   ☐

    Disagree   ☐

    Neutral   ☐

    Agree   ☐

    Strongly agree   ☐

29. Technology in VLE makes communication with the administrator easier.

    Strongly disagree   ☐

    Disagree   ☐

    Neutral   ☐

    Agree   ☐

    Strongly agree   ☐

30. I participate in the learning process by sharing information with other members.

    Strongly disagree   ☐

    Disagree   ☐

    Neutral   ☐

    Agree   ☐

    Strongly agree   ☐

31. I share additional course materials only when someone asks me to.

       Strongly disagree   ☐

       Disagree   ☐

       Neutral   ☐

       Agree   ☐

       Strongly agree   ☐

32. Do you use email attachments to share information?

       Yes ☐   No ☐

33. Do you select the information carefully before you share it?

       Yes ☐   No ☐

34. I benefit from the information I share

       Strongly disagree   ☐

       Disagree   ☐

       Neutral   ☐

       Agree   ☐

       Strongly agree   ☐

Using Resources

35. How important are resources for you in e-learning course?

       Very Important   ☐

       Unimportant   ☐

       Neutral   ☐

Important ☐

Very Important ☐

36. How often do you access resources in the environment?

Every day ☐

Only when I have got a free time ☐

Only when the exam approaching ☐

Only when I am working on assignments ☐

37. The resources are sufficient for the course

Strongly disagree ☐

Disagree ☐

Neutral ☐

Agree ☐

Strongly agree ☐

38. The resources are above my ability level

Strongly disagree ☐

Disagree ☐

Neutral ☐

Agree ☐

Strongly agree ☐

39. The resources cover the subject comprehensively

Strongly disagree ☐

Disagree ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

40. The customs-made resources are more available than external resources

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

41. Are (materials in the) resources reusable?

Yes☐   No☐

42. Are multimedia resources available in the environment?

Yes☐   No☐

43. If yes, are they in high quality?

Yes☐   No☐

44. The extensive resources in the environment meet student's needs

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

45. Do you need student support to access resources?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

46. Is there any online help to direct learners to learning resources?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

47. I take advantage from all the resources available.

    Strongly disagree   ☐

    Disagree   ☐

    Neutral   ☐

    Agree   ☐

    Strongly agree   ☐

48. I get confused when using multimedia resources

    Strongly disagree   ☐

    Disagree   ☐

    Neutral   ☐

    Agree   ☐

    Strongly agree   ☐

49. I feel overloaded when using multimedia resources

    Strongly disagree   ☐

    Disagree   ☐

    Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

50. I enjoy the flexibility of internet resources

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

51. I enjoy the abundance of internet resources

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

52. The instructional resources are important to assist in the learning

Strongly disagree   ☐

Disagree   ☐

Neutral   ☐

Agree   ☐

Strongly agree   ☐

53. How long do you take to get familiar with the environment?

……………………

54. Do you think the environment use an innovative application?

Yes☐   No☐

55. Do you think the environment initiate the collaboration among members?

Yes☐   No☐

56. Does the environment provide a multimedia simulation?

Yes☐   No☐

57. If yes, Does it help you to interact better within the environment?

Yes☐   No☐

58. Is the guideline of the multimedia simulation easy to follow?

Yes☐   No☐

59. Have you ever participated in an online seminar with an invited expert?

Yes☐   No☐

60. If yes, Does it help you to get better understanding of the subject?

Yes☐   No☐

61. Is the time concern in online seminars convenience to you?

Yes☐   No☐

62. Is content of the online seminar only a repetition of the posted material in the environment?

Yes☐   No☐

63. Do you think the online seminar make you more confident to be successful in the exam?

    Yes☐   No☐

64. Do you think all members are working together for the completion of the course?

    Yes☐   No☐

65. Do you use all the tools provided in the environment?

    Yes☐   No☐

This survey is a voluntarily basis and anonymous.

Thank you for your participation and hope you are successful in your further study.

Organizer:

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