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Examination of an E-Blended Learning Training Experience Including Sports Facilities

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study. The aim of the study is to identify particular tactics that enhance the intrinsic motivation and engagement of students in online training activities.

Materials and methods. This article presents the outcomes of a training programme that combined e-learning and blended learning on the Moodle platform. The programme involved 90 sports technicians and utilised a cooperative teaching approach, benchmarking, and the forum as the primary teaching resource.

Results. The findings of the experiment demonstrate the significant influence that the instructor plays in the advancement of training initiatives, alongside the design of the platform and the resources provided. This demonstrates that the forum, enquiries, tasks, and databases receive more visitors compared to the presentations, videos, and complementing articles.

Conclusions. In this experience, it is important to emphasize the significance of the Moodle platform and its resources as effective means of communication and learning for both students and instructors.

Keywords: *Sports Facilities; Examination; Training Experience.*

ARTICLE INFO

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a proliferation of numerous instructional initiatives in the virtual environment, all of which have attempted to resolve the challenges that accompanied traditional teaching and more importantly (Chen et al., 2020), have generated a multitude of expectations. However, studies such as Cebrián's (2003) demonstrate over 80% failure rate in the management of distance courses and over 60% dropout rate among students. According to (Cabero 2006), some of the causes of this certain frustration can be attributed to technocentrism, which prioritises technology over didactics; and on the other hand, to the use of traditional face-to-face teaching principles in the virtual environment. (Bartolomé 2004) identifies specific

factors that may have contributed to the lack of expected success in virtual education (e-learning). Among them are: the tutors' overload and low remuneration, the heavy reliance on graphic materials for learning, and the greater concern of the design and marketing aspects by those in charge, rather than the pedagogical action itself. In addition to the aforementioned, another issue that entails significant uncertainty in virtual training activities is the quantification of the workload and the assessment of the actual learning of the students (Manuri et al., 2023).

It is important that you keep in mind the suggestions put forth by Jay Cross (2005), the originator of the term "e-learning," which states that work-related skills and weaknesses are acquired informally (through chatting, observing, utilising trial-and-error, or simply working with acquaintances). Formal learning contributes only 10% to 20% of our total knowledge accumulation. Psychologist William Glasser (1972) posited that humans acquire knowledge through many channels. Specifically, he suggested that individuals get 10% of their knowledge by reading text and 20% from aural inputs, 30% of the visual content (image) that you perceive, 50% of the visual and audio information that you, perceive is in the form of videos, 70% of the debate (forums), 80% of the activities you participate in and 95% of the information it provides.

Adapting the conventional teaching method to the online setting may have resulted in a student profile that places greater importance on test scores and certification rather than fully capitalizing on the advantages of the training. The bibliographic research undertaken provides general categories and basic recommendations, but it lacks concrete case studies that would effectively illustrate the practical implementation and effectiveness of the strategies.

Several researchers have attempted to identify the stages of development that e-learning has undergone. (Salinas, 2005) has identified three distinct phases in its development: The technological approach is founded on the belief that the qualities of the virtual environment inherently contribute to the quality of education. It emphasizes the importance of material, both in terms of quantity and quality, since it is the content itself that determines the quality of teaching (D'Armas Regnault & Castro, 2023). The methodological approach focuses on students and educational criteria to determine

quality. It emphasizes the effective integration of choices about the instructional function, the virtual environment, and organizational characteristics. In continuation of the preceding stages, (Cabero, 2006) highlights the latest development inside a holistic framework that encompasses all the features introduced in the previous stages.

Further delving into a categorization of the overarching factors that should be considered during the development of web-based courses, we examine the classification conducted by (Berge, Collins, and Dougherty 2000): a) The management of schedules, contacts, and objectives. b) The materials such as texts, readings, and videos. c) The communication and engagement between students and tutors. d) The creation of additional resources by students. e) The tracking and support of students. f) The assessment of the training objectives. As a reaction to e-learning instruction, new mixed models have emerged, such as blended-learning, which combines face-to-face meetings with virtual training. This technique aims to provide improved didactic efficiency. According to Bartolomé (2004), both e-learning and blended learning are educational models that require students to acquire essential skills such as searching for relevant information, developing evaluation criteria for that information, applying and generating new information, collaborating in teams, sharing and preparing information, and making individual and group decisions.

Another noteworthy methodological notion in online education is benchmarking or comparison circles. This term refers to the voluntary collaboration of individuals that enables the sharing of knowledge and experiences. Typically, traditional online teaching on the Moodle platform focuses on a fixed layout of the course materials, resources, and assignments that students need to complete in order to successfully finish the course (Peerapolchaikul et al., 2019). This is why the job is crucial in conventional training as it serves a practical goal of surpassing the course's requirements and obtaining a certificate. Additionally, it serves as a means to examine mandatory parts such as notes and presentations. The following experience demonstrates effective strategies that have fostered active engagement in knowledge construction among students. It is based on the belief that the environment, tutors, resources, and content serve as facilitators for the exchange of experiences and ideas.

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The training program included the simultaneous implementation of two methods: e-learning and blended-learning. The aim of this research is to examine the manner in which students engage with the material, tasks, interactive features, and communication tools on a Moodle platform in a blended learning course.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study participants

Study participants

82 sports facilitators participated in the course, 40 of which did so in the blendlearning modality. The rest of the facilitators plus a student from the Health-Sports program and seven technicians from the Andalusian autonomous community did so in the e-learning modality.

Study Organization

The objective of the experiment was to devise a systematic approach that would enhance engagement among participants, primarily by using the forum as a resource on the Moodle platform. The attributes of this technique are outlined below: A) Introduce an organizational structure that aligns with the potential interests of users and provide a well-defined plan with goals, timeline, and tasks. (Sánchez, 2007) B) The content and structure are straightforward and diverse: The materials provided include presentations, forums, and tools covering 13 distinct subjects pertaining to sports management. Aspects such as quality, marketing, security, and inventiveness are important considerations. C) The structure is dynamic and intuitive. Various multimedia files, gifs, free plugins, and other resources were used. An essential aspect is to emphasize that the participants' first assignment involves incorporating their image, which serves to enhance their familiarity with one another. Similarly, the cover of the template was often altered to allow for the observation of its continual rejuvenation. The themes were presented on slides, with a focus on visual elements rather than words. D) Compliance with the platform: To ensure adherence to the platform, it was determined that the various presentations would be uploaded in slide format and linked to the Scribd website (www.scribd.com). Another factor that contributed to achieving this goal was the availability of databases, such as "In search of the most

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intriguing photo" (including explicit material), which could only be accessed by users on the site. Lastly, a noteworthy aspect was the inclusion of inquiries that allowed participants to see the inquiry results after providing their answers. E) Graphic considerations: The placement of the information was determined based on the typical reading direction of users, which is from the top left corner to the upper right corner. Diverse hues were used to provide a less formal aesthetic for the platform, hence enhancing student engagement. The forum served as an integral part of the project, allowing for the collection of information and experiences via the resource provided by the Moodle platform. F) Email correspondence about interventions: Considering that customers often access their email accounts either directly via the webpage or via an email client, it would be practical for them to get notifications about any changes through these channels. Therefore, a crucial factor for achieving effective involvement was the use of email to transmit contributions in forums, as well as the introduction of new themes or aspects. Indeed, it is common practice to disable this feature while using the Moodle platform for courses in order to prevent the participants' email accounts from being overwhelmed. G) Individualized messages to seldom students: When there was a lack of active involvement, a customized email was sent to notify them of the potential termination of their participation in the training program. H) The tutor is shown as a facilitator who maintains a close relationship with the pupils. Moodle serves as a formal platform for fostering interpersonal connections. However, the aims of the activity may be made more user-friendly by the instructors and students via the use of expressive forms, visible resources, and the chosen interface. Therefore, providing an informal representation of the phrases or the headings of the themes or forums contributed to the accomplishment of this objective. Terms like "colleagues" and "friends" were used to create a user-friendly interface for communication.

RESULTS

When it comes to participation on the platform, we need to distinguish between the regularity of visits (periodic or irregular) and the level of engagement (high or low) via messages and contributions. The top section of this table mostly pertains to internal motivation, while the bottom section (often the majority) is primarily associated with

extrinsic incentive, such as acquiring credentials that are necessary for the firm. These components include the formulation and implementation of various strategies. When dealing with the former, it is crucial to motivate and express gratitude for their engagement. However, when dealing with the latter, it is essential to set specific requirements for participation (such as duration and number of interventions) and to remind them of the consequences of not meeting these objectives, such as disenrollment or not receiving certificates.

The following information provides a breakdown of the number of records in each component, as well as the total participation statistics for students and instructors. In terms of material related to organization and motivation, it constituted 10.77% of the total visitors to the site. The content labeled "Add your photo" and "In search of the most curious photo" account for almost 90% of the block's visitors, surpassing the simply informational organizational material.

8.25% of platform visitors were specifically oriented towards task sheets and assignments designed to facilitate the exchange of professional expertise across different areas. The games suggested by the sports facilitators (Task: Upload your game file) had the highest number of visits in the module, accounting for 22.31%. The statistics may be attributed to the job profile's focus on teaching physical-sports activities to residents. Non-teaching related interaction resources accounted for 20.54% of the total. The data suggests that it is necessary for the participants to have a designated area where they may engage in discussions on issues that are not directly related to the teaching materials. The low utilization rate of the chat feature, which stands at 6.41%, is noteworthy and may likely be attributed to the challenge of locating many users available on the platform simultaneously. The forums so transform into a "timeless chat" and hence become more flexible to accommodate the time constraints of the participants.

The development of a professional organization of sports promoters was prompted by user demand, despite not being initially envisaged. The course teachers granted the sought slots to the Sports Facilitators. The items unrelated to the

educational material attracted 15.85% of the total visitors to the site. Considering the relatively short development period of around 3 months compared to the whole length of the training program (7 months), we can confidently state that the participants found this material very engaging. This research emphasizes the need of instructors being able to anticipate users' problems in order to modify curriculum and resources accordingly. It is evident that 44.59% of the visitors to the virtual platform were specifically for the course-related information. In order to facilitate interactive and collaborative content generation, a total of 13 forums were suggested. These forums proved to be the most popular among course participants, accounting for 82.6% of all visits to course subjects. A total of 16 presentations were used in Scribd and Exelearning formats, accounting for 6.75% of the learning materials and securing the second highest number of visits. Following that, the videos received the highest number of visits, accounting for 4.57% of the total.

The total number of visits and messages is another set of intriguing results. the time of the interventions. The least amount of visits occur in August and September, which also happen to be the months when many sports promoters take their summer holidays. The months with the largest participation, on the other hand, are May, June, and October. These statistics support the facilitators' thoughts expressed in the forums regarding the ideal months for training. However, it's fascinating to observe how the emergence of a topic of extraordinary interest, like the founding of the Association of Sports Promoters, allowed visits to continue at a steady rate for a few months during which in-person sessions were not conducted.

The active participation of tutors and participants is evident. It is intriguing to see the correlation between the engagement of tutors and the level of participation at the start and conclusion of the graph. When the training action commences, there is a noticeable increase in participation, however a decline is observed at the end. Additionally, the students respond positively to this action. This further confirms the pivotal role that the instructors have played as dynamic agents in this endeavor.

The preceding graphs provide a clearer depiction of the correlation between the users' interventions and their interaction with the tutors' contributions. In July, an unprecedented situation arose with the establishment of an Association of Sports Promoters, which did not necessitate direct involvement from the teachers. The results presented demonstrate the impact of tutoring on the amount of student engagement in this particular experience. Additionally, it reveals that when a topic is personally interesting to students (independent of the themes suggested by the tutors), their participation levels increase.

DISCUSSION

The blended learning and e-learning experience, designed for sports facilitators, primarily focuses on the exchange of experiences and knowledge through interactive resources on the platform, such as forums (Afifi et al., 2022)(Wang et al., 2022). Graphic content plays a secondary role in the learning process. The results appear to validate the principles established by (Glasser, 1972), which suggest that the most effective learning for human beings occurs when they are engaged in activities that encompass what is taught, discussed, and applied. Similarly, we might assert that it aligns with the observation made by (Jay Cross, 2005), who emphasizes that the most significant learning occurs in informal settings, through experimentation, making mistakes, and comparing one's experiences with those of others. The success of this experience can be attributed to several factors, including the use of benchmarking technique and the recognition of technology as a key channel for communication. Additionally, the inclusion of graphic content has also played a significant role. These components align with Cabero's principles. The publications are from 2006 and 2004, respectively. Conversely, it can be noted that students who came from different regions or Autonomous Communities had a significantly low level of participation, likely due to their lack of connection with the specific circumstances of sports promoters in Extremadura. Emphasize the significance of tutors' intervention as active agents of the platform, as it was observed that students' response occurred before the tutors' intervention. Additionally, emphasize the forums' importance as the foundation upon which the training centered on the platform. However, it is important to mention the

limited quantity of records that included visual aids such as presentations, articles, or videos. Therefore, it can be concluded that these resources served more as a means to introduce topics rather than as instructional tools in their own right.

Proposals regarding the structuring of e-learning training Based on input from students and sports facilitators, as well as a review of the literature on virtual training, we have identified the following factors that should be considered when organizing a virtual course:– Planning: • The course topic must be relevant to the users' professional interests. • Prior to beginning, students should familiarize themselves with the course program, content, schedule, and opportunities for personal engagement in the virtual environment,... (Sánchez, 2007).

The organization of the materials should follow a progressive approach, adhering to the predetermined timing. Presenting all the contents at once can lead to increased anxiety in pupils and diminish the novelty aspect. The most up-to-date and engaging content should be strategically placed in the upper left corner and header to capture the students' attention.

Motivation: In order to eliminate intermittent student engagement caused by amnesia, it is imperative to avoid inactivity for more than fifteen days and promote participation through emails. When the incentive is driven by external factors, such as the desire to achieve a certificate, the notification of potential deregistration might serve as a catalyst for engagement. It is crucial to establish multiple open thematic forums to provide students with a diverse array of resources for their participation. Understanding the requirements of the students can be achieved by surveys, consultations, or forums, which enable training to be more effectively tailored to the participants' requests.

Another aspect worth noting is the identification of kids who demonstrate initiative and possess the capacity to rally the engagement of their peers. Occasionally, it can serve as a beneficial partner. When students are already familiar with each other and the goal is to encourage contact, a pseudo-informal design of the Moodle platform, using things like gifs or animations, along with regular updates, can create a more comfortable atmosphere. Therefore, advancements in the development of more

interactive and visually appealing templates in Moodle can enhance the user interface with participants and consequently stimulate more engagement (Skouradaki et al., 2016). Email communication with participant contributions can streamline the monitoring of daily changes by students, eliminating the need to access the platform directly. Employing strategies such as soliciting input from reference individuals in forums within a designated timeframe, organizing synchronous chats at specific times, or implementing group challenges can serve as effective means to foster enhanced group cohesion. The tutor's intervention aims to foster a stronger bond between the tutor and the students. This can be achieved by having the tutor participate as if they were another student, sharing their own experiences and addressing the students as "colleagues" or "team members". Additionally, the tutor should ask specific and thought-provoking questions in the forum, avoiding formal and generic inquiries. This approach will encourage greater student engagement.

CONCLUSION

This training experience highlights the significance of implementing pseudo-formal designs on virtual platforms to enhance interaction among students and between students and their tutors. Therefore, the positioning of the content within the platform and the focus on resources that promote increased engagement, such as forums, databases, or consultations, stimulated student involvement and fostered a perception of the virtual platform and its offerings as facilitators of learning rather than as standalone objectives. Similarly, a link was observed between the involvement of the tutors and the involvement of the students, suggesting that the tutors play a significant role in encouraging the students' contributions. Another crucial feature was the development of diverse tactics tailored to the students' profiles and their level of motivation towards the training program. In this experience, it is important to emphasize the significance of the Moodle platform and its resources as effective means of communication and learning for both students and instructors.

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APPENDIX

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