JOURNAL OF TERTIARY
EDUCATION AND LEARNING (JTEL)

ISSN: 2994-4015 (ONLINE)

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 3 (2023)

PUBLISHED BY
E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA

Journal of Tertiary Education and Learning (JTEL)
Previous Title: Journal of Student and Education (JSE)

Volume 1 Issue 3, Year 2023
ISSN: 2994-4015 (Online)
DOI: https://doi.org/10.54536/jtel.v1i3.2147
https://journals.e-palli.com/home/index.php/jtel

An Analysis of Students Preferred Mode of Communication on a Pre-Degree Language Course Moodle Page at the University of the South Pacific

Komal Karishma[1*], Krishna Raghuwaiya[1]

Article Information

Received: October 01, 2023
Accepted: October 29, 2023
Published: November 03, 2023

Keywords

Communication, Elearning, Interaction, LMS, Moodle

ABSTRACT

This study explored the modes of communication Blended and Print mode students preferred to communicate with the instructor and other students in a compulsory pre-degree English course. The modes of communication for the LLFXX students on their course (LLFXX) Moodle page were via BBB, Chat, Class News, Discussion Forum, Email, and Zoom. 80 Blended and 29 Print mode students from the main campus of the university were investigated for this study. These students filled in a questionnaire outlining their preference for the mode of communication between them, their instructors, and the other students on the LLFXX Moodle page. Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test in SPSS was employed to look for any correlation between the student's age and gender and their choice of mode of communication on the LLFXX Moodle page. It was found that there is no correlation between students' age and gender and their preferred mode of communication with the instructor or other students on the LLFXX Moodle page. Future research could involve students from the regional campuses.

INTRODUCTION

A fundamental element of the teaching and learning process is interaction. It is crucial for the learners to interact with their learning resources, their surroundings, other learners, and the instructor. This principle of interaction applies to all modes (traditional or virtual) of teaching.

However, it is evident that learners are very selective of what they interact with. Their response to interacting with the learning materials is very different when compared with assessment activities or the feedback from assessment activities. Some learners may not prioritise interacting with their learning environment while others might avoid interaction with other learners or the instructor.

This is also evident in learners' interaction in the virtual classes (Online and Blended mode). Learner interaction varies with the different forms of interaction: learner to instructor, learner to other learners, learner to content, learner to the learning environment, learner to assessment, learner with feedback, and learner with the institution (The University of the South Pacific, Flexible Learning Policy, 2017), but also with how they wish to interact.

The Rationale of the Study

Some research has been done on Moodle and its implementation. However, it is crucial to know if students' age and gender have any influence on the means of communication they choose on Moodle (BBB, Chat, Class News, Discussion Forum, Email, and Zoom) to interact with the instructor and the other students.

Since there is no research done to explore the modes, students prefer to use to interact with their instructor and the other learners on Moodle, therefore, the following research questions framed this study:

Q1. Which modes do learners prefer to use to communicate with the instructor and the other learners on the LLFXX Moodle page?

Q2. Do learners' age and gender determine their modes of communication with the instructor and the other learners on the LLFXX Moodle page?

Q3. Is there a correlation between learners' age and gender and their preferred mode of communication on the LLFXX Moodle page?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Moodle is a very popular form of LMS at secondary and tertiary levels (Baig, 2017; Holbl & Welzer, 2010). Moodle platform helps arrange e-learning, and conduct lessons in electronic classrooms, take online tasks allowed for the monitoring of the students' progress in all the educational activities (Pektas & Demirkan, 2011; Kerimbayev, Nurym, Akramova, & Abdykarimova, 2020). New features are continuously developed in Moodle (Holbl & Welzer, 2010; Aliyu & Arasanmi, 2019). The research establishes the importance of the increased levels of communication by highlighting the effects on student learning and connections to others (Heinrich, Thomas, & Kahu, 2022). It is easy to use, cost-effective, and flexible (Baig, 2017).

Through Moodle's usage, certain issues have been uncovered including usage and usefulness of communication capabilities (Holbl & Welzer, 2010). Educators and students benefit from using strong chat tools with improved information and knowledge exchange (Heinrich, Thomas, & Kahu, 2022). In contrast, forums, chats, blogs, wikis, and other similar elements are in high percentage unused by the students (Holbl & Welzer, 2010).

Demographic factors (gender, age, and occupation)

[1] University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands
[*] Corresponding author's e-mail: komal.karishma@usp.ac.fj

impact students' attitudes toward online learning (Peytcheva-Forsyth, Yovkova, & Aleksieva, 2018). Female students found certain activities in an e-course easier than their male university colleagues (Aristovnik, Tomazevic, Kerzic, & Umek, 2017). Gender, age, and experience influence performance expectancy, behaviour, and system wage among tertiary students' (Aliyu & Arasanmi, 2019). Males have more positive attitudes towards technology applications (Pektas & Demirkan, 2011).

The success of LMS is determined by different factors that should be considered to create an effective and successful learning environment (Alkhateeb & Abdalla, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

A mixed research method was employed for this study. Students enrolled in LLFXX (a mandatory English course for the Foundation program) at the University of the South Pacific were studied for this research.

Participants

Students enrolled in the Laucala Campus in Fiji were studied for this research. 80 Blended mode students and 29 Print mode students participated in the study. The Blended mode students were based at the main campus (Laucala) while the Print mode students were based in Suva at a secondary school. This school offers the Pre-degree program of the USP through its franchise.

Study Program

The Foundation program is equivalent to Year 13 and is part of the Pre-degree program of the USP. LLFXX is a mandatory English language course for the Foundation program and is offered through Print and Blended mode to all the students in the region and beyond.

Data

The research information was given to all students enrolled for LLFXX at the Laucala campus. The students who wanted to participate in the research were given a form to fill out for their consent and they were enrolled in the researcher's Sandbox page on Moodle.

This research employed the mixed research method to collect data.

The University of the South Pacific

The University of the South Pacific (USP) is in the South Pacific and it has students from its 12 member countries and beyond. Face-to-face, Print, Online, and Blended modes are employed to facilitate teaching. With the implementation of Moodle in all courses in 2008 (Whelan & Bhartu, 2007), a new dimension of teaching and learning has been explored. Moodle is a mandatory component of every course and has become a crucial part of the teaching and learning process at the USP. Figure 1 shows that with the use of satellite, Moodle is connected to all the campuses in the region from Laucala (the main campus in Fiji).

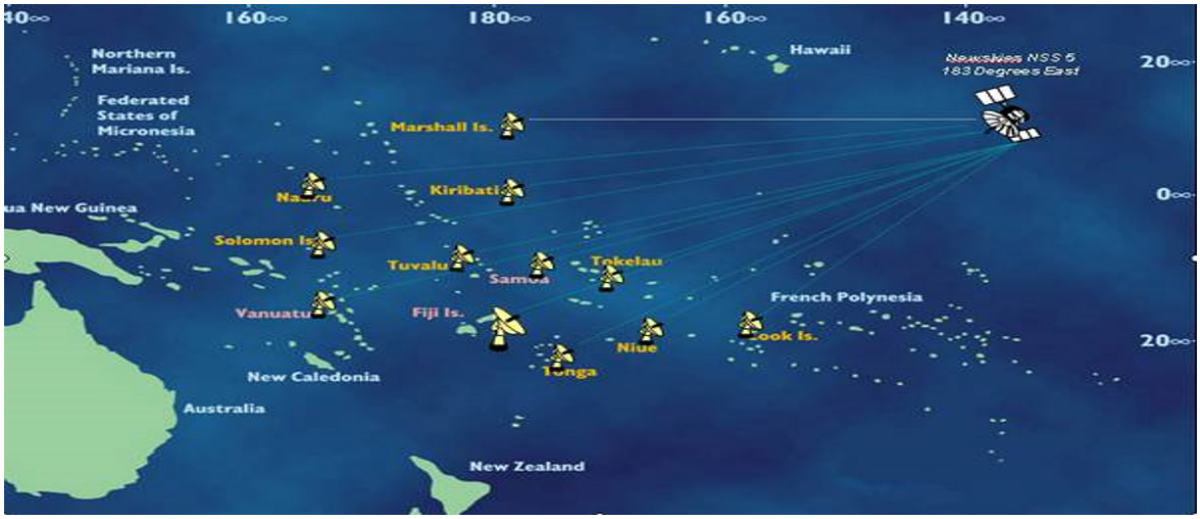

Figure 1: USP connectivity: Moodle (The University of the South Pacific, The University Strategic Plan, 2015)

Instruments

A questionnaire was uploaded on the researcher's Moodle Sandbox page. Those students who signed the consent for participation in the research were enrolled in the researcher's Sandbox page on Moodle. A total of 109 (80 Blended and 29 Print) students were enrolled in it. Students selected options on their demographic details and preferred means of communication on Moodle with their instructor and other students. At the end of the semester, data from the responses of these 109 students was extracted from Moodle.

Data Analysis

The data that was extracted from the 109 students' responses from the questionnaire was divided into two main themes: 'learners preferred means to communicate with their instructor on Moodle' and 'learners preferred means to communicate with other students on Moodle'. These two main themes were further categorised into sub-themes which were derived from students' demographic details.

The data were presented under these themes and sub-

themes using a bar chart. Later the data was tested with Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test using the SPSS software to find correlations within the sub-themes. The following hypothesis guided this research:

Ho There is no correlation between the demographic factors and students' preferred mode of communication with the instructor and other students (null hypothesis).

Ha There is a correlation between the demographic factors and students' preferred mode of communication with the instructor and other factors (alternate hypothesis).

RESULTS

The student's age and gender with their preferred mode of communication with the learner and other students are presented as non-verbal text using Excel and analysed using Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test in the SPSS software.

Age Distribution of LLFXX Students

LLFXX students were classified under three age groups (17 to 20 years, 21 to 30 years and 30 and above) as shown in Figure 2.

The majority of the Blended (86%) and Print (79%) mode students were between the age of 17 to 20 years. While 13% of Blended and 21% of Print mode students were between the ages of 21 to 30 years. Only one Blended mode student was 30 and above.

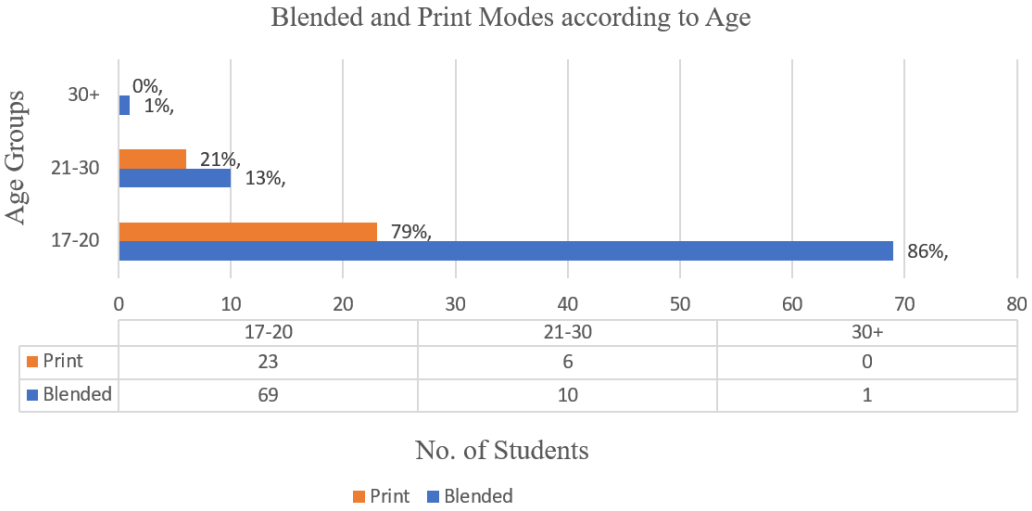

Figure 2: Age Distribution of LLFXX Students

Preferred Mode of Communication with Instructor according to Student Age Group

Figures 3 and 4 show that students preferred mode of communication with their instructor according to their age.

Blended

Figure 3 illustrates Blended students preferred mode of communication with their instructor according to the three age groups (as was shown in Figure 2). The most preferred form of communication for Blended mode students to communicate with their instructor was Email for all age groups (58% for 17 to 20 years, 10% for 21 to 30 years and 1% for 30 and above). The second most preferred mode for Blended students aged between 17 to 20 years was Chat (23%). Both Class News and Zoom were preferred by 3% of students (17 to 20 years). While

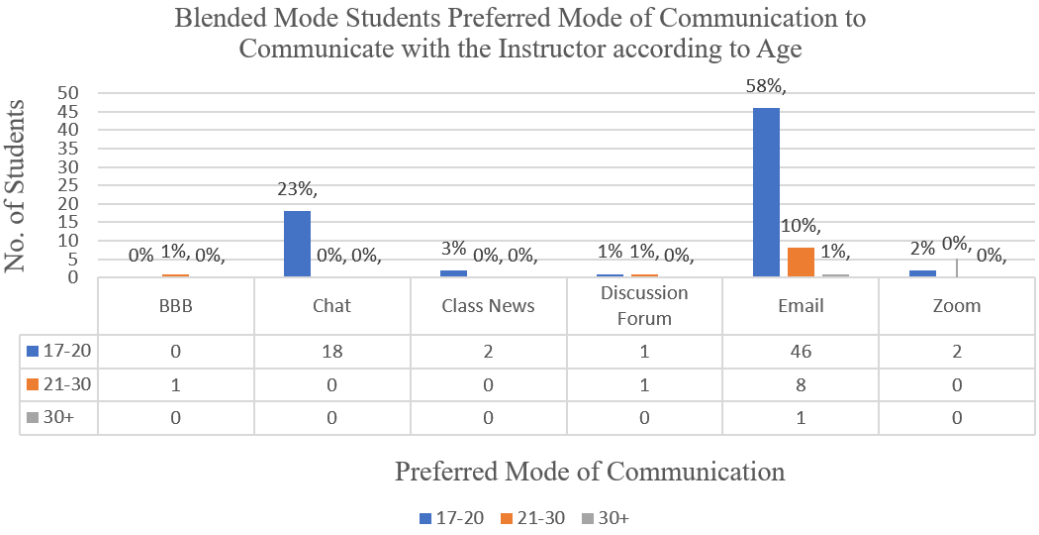

Figure 3: Blended Mode Students Preferred Mode of Communication with the Instructor according to Age

only 1% preferred the Discussion Forum, there was no preference for Zoom for students between 17 to 20 years. 1% of the students between the ages of 21 and 30 years preferred BBB and Discussion Forum. The other modes did not have any preference.

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 1 shows the correlation of the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the age of Blended mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the students' age. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.519$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 1: Blended Students' Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students' Age and their Instructor

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between age and instructor	0.519	Statistically insignificant

Print

Figure 4 shows that Print mode students preferred mode of communication with their instructor. Email was the most preferred mode of communication for the students 21 to 30 years, while 3% preferred Chat, Class News, and Discussion Forum. For the students between the ages of 17 to 20 years, the most preferred mode was Chat and Email (28%). Class News was 14% and Zoom was 10%. There was no preference for BBB by the Print mode students.

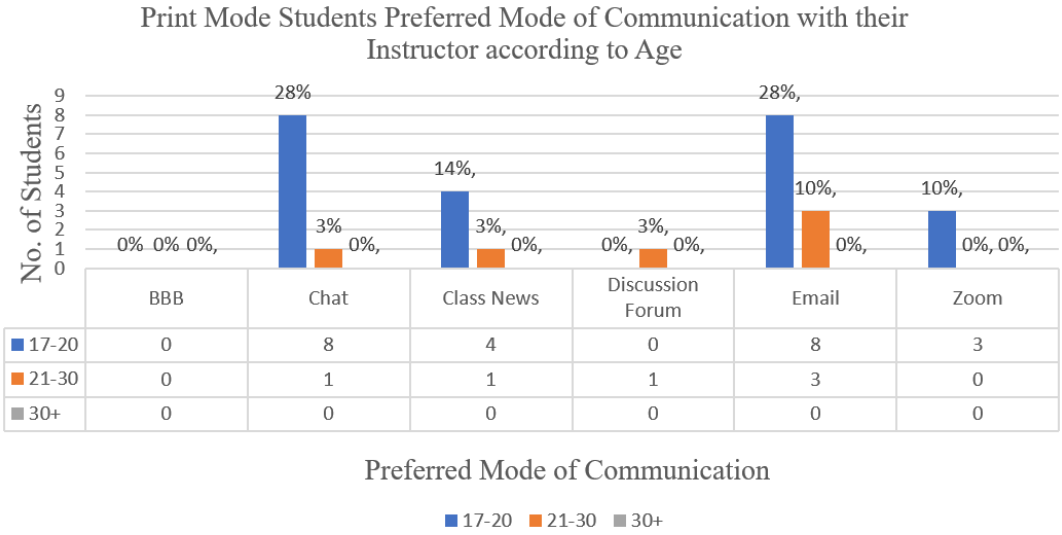

Figure 4: Print Mode Students Preferred Mode of Communication with the Instructor according to Age

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 2 shows the correlation of the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and age of Print mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the students' age. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.784$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 2: Print Students' Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students' Age and their Instructor

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between age and instructor	0.784	Statistically insignificant

Preferred Mode of Communication with Other Students according to Student Age Group

Figures 5 and 6 show students preferred mode of communication with other students according to their age.

Blended

Figure 5 shows that BBB (0%) and Class News (0%) were not preferred by students from any age group to communicate with other students. Chat was the most preferred mode of communication with other students for students between the ages of 17 to 20 (60%) and for those between the ages of 21 to 30 years (9%). The second most preferred form of communication for Blended mode students is Email with 15% of students between ages 17 to 20 and 4% of students between the ages of 21 to 30 endorsing it as a mode of communication with other students. Discussion Forum (6%) and Zoom (4%) were the other modes chosen by the students between 17 to 20 years. The least preferred method for students between the ages of 21 to 30 years was the Discussion Forum. The only student above 30 years chose Email (1%) as a means of communicating with other students. In summary, 55 students in total preferred to use Chat to communicate with other students.

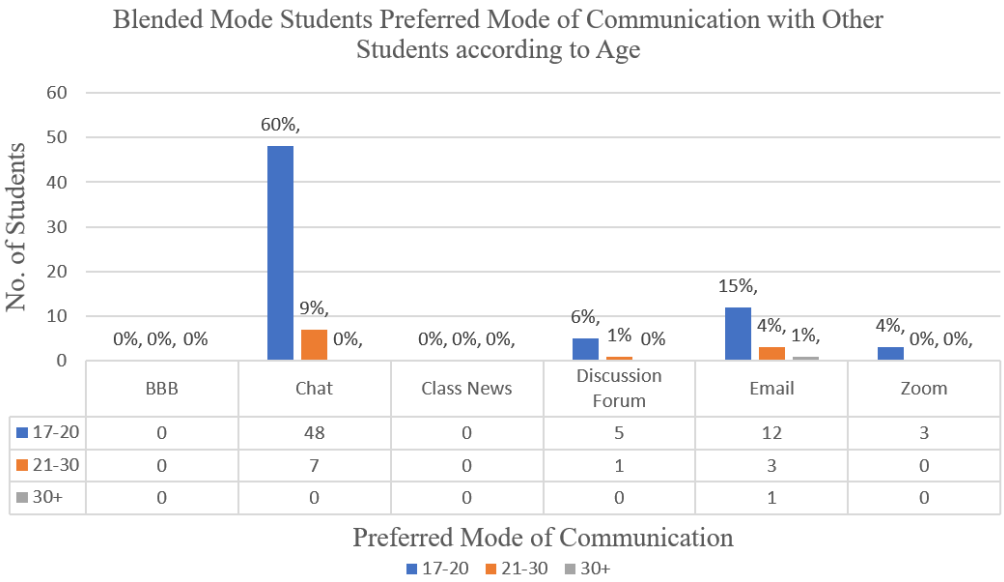

Figure 5: Blended Mode Students Preferred Mode of Communication with Other Students according to Age

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 3 shows the correlation of the preferred mode of communication between the other students and the age of Blended mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the other students and the students' age. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.687$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 3: Blended Students Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students Age and the Other Students

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between age and other students	0.687	Statistically insignificant

Print

Figure 6 illustrates Print mode students' choice of communication with other students according to their age. Print mode students did not prefer BBB and Class News to communicate with other students. Chat was the most preferred for students between 17 to 20 years (55%). The second most preferred was Discussion Forum (14%) and then Email (7%) and Zoom (3%) for 17 to 20 years. Those between the ages of 21 to 30 preferred Chat (10%) and Email (10%) to Discussion Forum (7%).

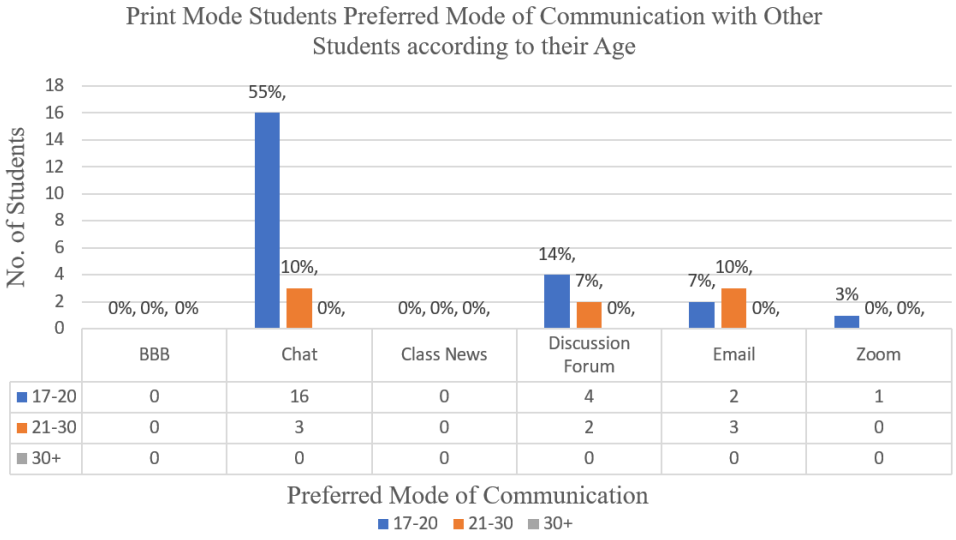

Figure 6: Print Mode Students' Mode of Communication with Other Students according to their Age

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 4 shows the correlation of the preferred mode of communication between the other students and age of Blended mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the other students and the students' age. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.453$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 4: Print Students Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students' Age and the Other Students

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between age and other students	0.453	Statistically insignificant

Gender Distribution of LLFXX Students

The gender of the students is illustrated in Figure 7 for both, Blended and Print mode students. There were more females (79 students) for both, Blended and Print modes, than males (30 students). Blended mode had 71% females and only 29% males. Print mode had 76% females and 24% males.

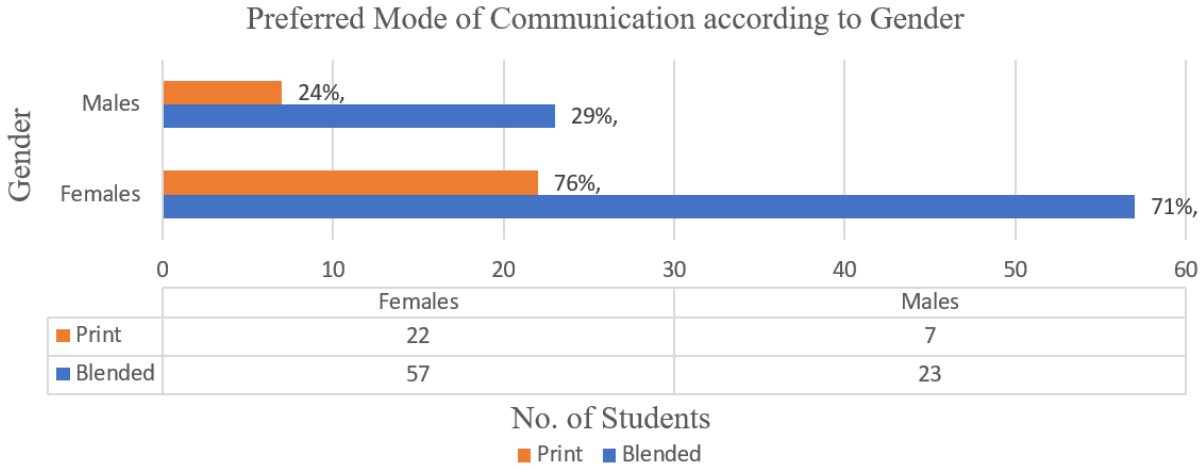

Figure 7: Students Preferred Mode of Communication according to their Gender

Preferred Mode of Communication with Instructor according to Student Gender

Figures 8 and 9 show students preferred mode of communication with their instructor according to their gender.

Blended

Figure 8 depicts the Blended mode students' preferred mode to communicate with their instructor according to their gender. The most preferred mode for both, Blended males (19%) and females (50%) was Email (55 students in total). 5% of Blended mode males preferred Chat while 3% preferred BBB and Discussion Forum to communicate with their instructor. Chat was preferred by 18% of Blended mode females to communicate with their instructor while only 3% preferred Zoom and 1% preferred it by any Blended mode female and Zoom was not preferred by any Blended mode male to communicate with their instructor.

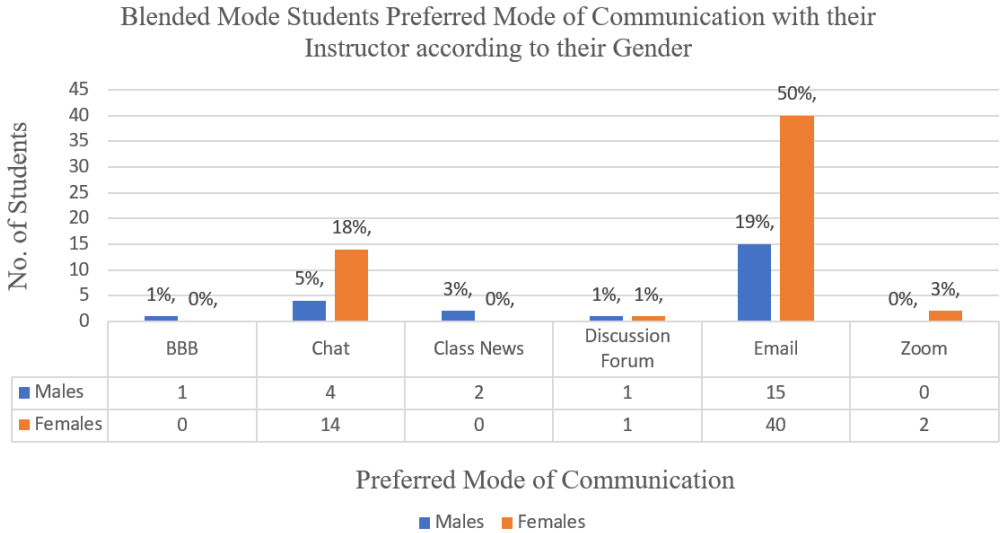

Figure 8: Blended Mode Students Preferred Mode of Communication with their instructor according to their Gender

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 5 shows the correlation of the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the gender of Blended mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the students' gender. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.437$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 5: Blended Students' Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students' Gender and their Instructor

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between gender and instructor	0.437	Statistically insignificant

Print

Figure 9 depicts the preference of Print mode students to communicate with their instructor according to their gender. The most preferred mode of communication for males to communicate with the instructor was Chat (21%). 10% of males preferred Emails and 3% preferred Class News. BBB, Discussion Forum, and Zoom was not preferred by Print mode male students to communicate with their instructor (0%). 28% of the female Print mode students chose Email to communicate with their instructor. 14% chose Class News and 10% chose Chat and Zoom. Only 3% Print mode females chose the Discussion Forum to communicate with their instructor. Males and females did not prefer BBB. In summary, Email was the most preferred mode of communication for Print mode students (11) to communicate with their instructor.

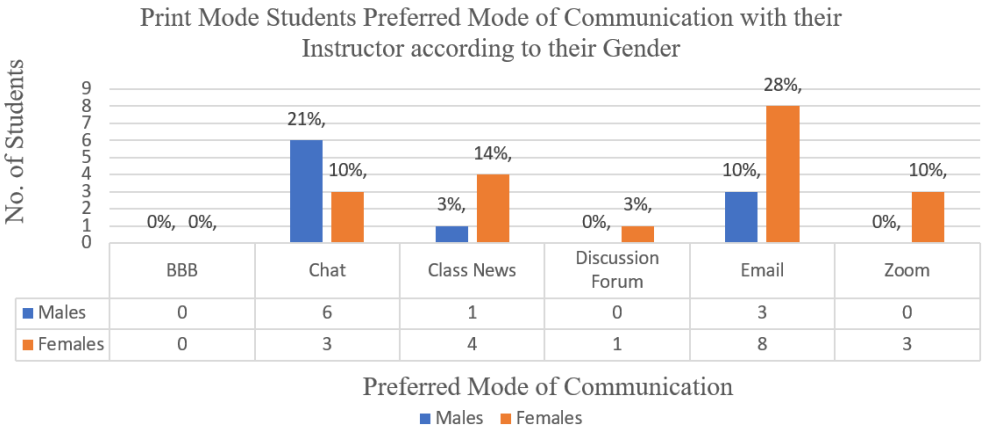

Figure 9: Print Mode Students Preferred Mode of Communication with their Instructor according to their Gender

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 6 shows the correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the gender of Print mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the students' gender. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.433$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 6: Print Students' Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students' Gender and their Instructor

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between gender and instructor	0.433	Statistically insignificant

Preferred Mode of Communication with Other Students according to Student Gender

Figures 10 and 11 show students' preferred mode of communication with other students according to their gender.

Blended

Figure 10 shows the choice of Blended mode students to communicate with other students according to their gender. 21% of Blended mode males preferred Chat to

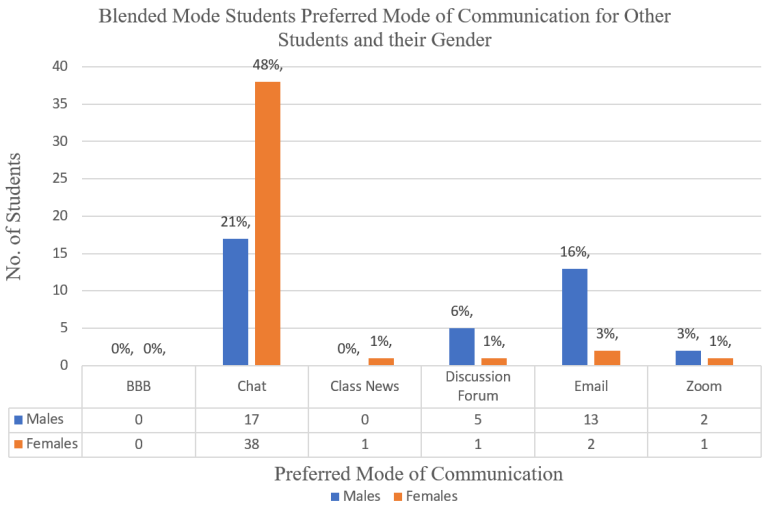

Figure 10: Blended Mode Students Preferred Mode of Communication with the Other Students according to their Gender

communicate with other students. The second highest preference for males studying via Blended mode was Email (16%). Discussion Forum was preferred by 6% and Zoom was preferred by 3% Blended mode males. Class News and BBB were not preferred by any Blended mode males (0%). BBB was also not preferred by Blended mode females (0%). Class News (1%), Discussion Forum (1%) and Zoom (1%) were the least preferred mode of communication for females studying through Blended mode to communicate with other students. Email was by 3% but Chat was preferred by 48% of Blended mode females.

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 7 shows the correlation of the preferred mode of communication between the other students and the gender of the Blended mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the other students and the students' gender. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.588$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 7: Blended Students Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students Gender and the Other Students

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between gender and other students	0.588	Statistically insignificant

Print

Figure 11 depicts the choice of Print mode students to communicate with other students according to their gender. The most preferred mode was Chat (19 students). 18% males and 48% females chose Chat to communicate with other students. BBB and Class News was not preferred by any student (0%). Discussion Forum was chosen by 3% males and 18% females and Email was chosen by 7% males and 3% females. Zoom was preferred by 3% females but was not preferred by any male (0%) as a means of communication with other students.

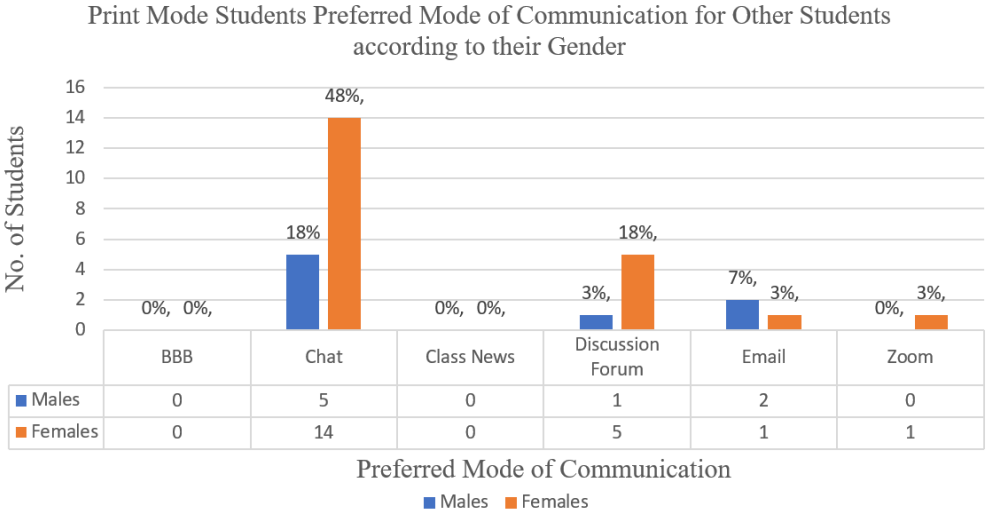

Figure 11: Print Mode Students Preferred Mode of Communication with other Students according to their Gender

Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test

Table 8 shows the correlation of the preferred mode of communication between the other students and the gender of the Blended mode students. The analysis shows that there is no correlation between the preferred mode of communication between the instructor and the students' gender. The result is statistically insignificant ($\alpha > 0.746$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 8: Print Students Preferred Mode of Communication Correlation between Students Gender and the Other Students

Communication	p-value	Correlation
Communication between gender and other students	0.746	Statistically insignificant

Preferred Mode of Communication with Instructor

Figure 12 shows a summary of students preferred mode of communication with their instructor. From the six communication mediums (Zoom, Email, Discussion Forum, Class News, Chat and BBB), both, Blended (71%) and Print (42%) mode students chose Email (70 students) as a medium to communicate with their instructor. The second most preferred mode for Blended mode students (17%) and Print (32%) was Chat. The other modes (Zoom, Discussion Forum, Class News, and BBB) had a Blended mode student preference of 3%. 11% Print mode students preferred to use Class News and Zoom to communicate with the instructor. The least preferred means were BBB and Discussion Forum (3%). While Email (70 students) was the most preferred medium to communicate with the instructor, BBB and Discussion Forum (3 students) were the least preferred mode of communication.

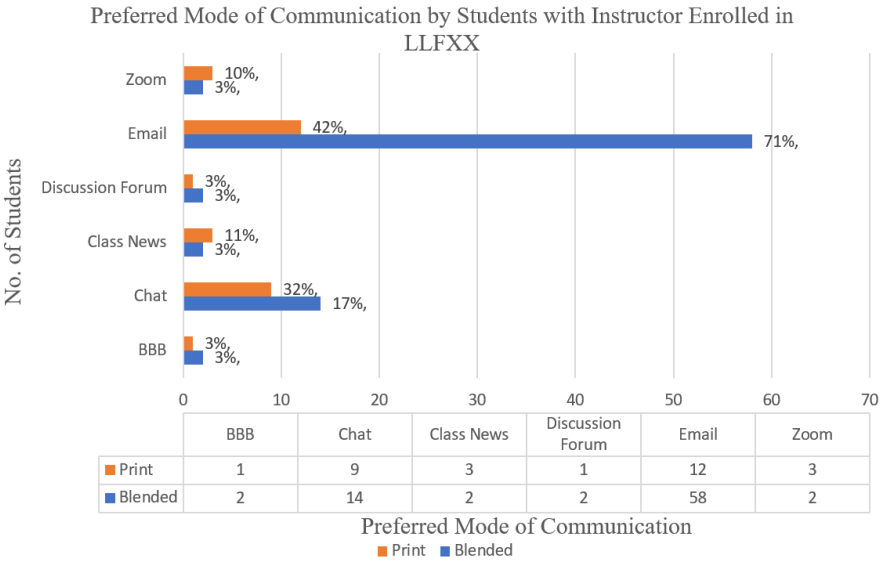

Figure 12: Preferred Mode of Communication by Students with the Instructor

Communicate with Other Students

Figure 13 shows a summary of what mode of communication students preferred the most while communicating with other students. 70% of Blended and 72% of Print students preferred Chat to communicate with other students. BBB was not used by any student (0%). The least used mode of communication was Class News (1 student). For Print mode students Discussion Forum (14%), Email (11%), and Zoom (3%) were the other preferred modes of communication. Email was the second most (19%) preferred mode for the Blended mode students. 6% of Blended mode students chose to use the Discussion Forum and 4% chose Zoom to communicate with other students. The least preferred mode for Blended mode students to communicate with other students was Class News (1%).

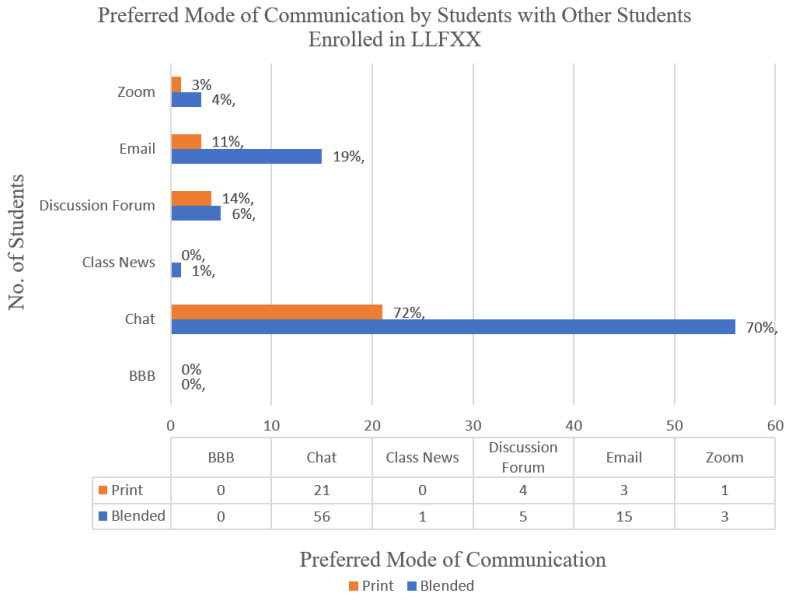

Figure 13: Preferred Mode of Communication by Students with Other Students

DISCUSSION

The study looked at the means of communication LLFXX students preferred to use to communicate with the instructor and the other students. The means of communication were BBB, Chat, Class News, Discussion Forum, Email, and Zoom. It was also investigated if there was a correlation between their age and gender and their choice of mode of communication. Three research questions guided this study.

Firstly, learners preferred mode to communicate with the instructor and the other learners on the LLFXX Moodle page was investigated. Blended (71%) and Print (42%) mode students preferred to use email on the LLFXX Moodle page to communicate with the instructor (Figure 12). Chat was the second most preferred mode of communication. 32% Print mode and 17% Blended mode students chose to communicate via Chat with their instructor. The least preferred mode of Print mode

students were BBB (3%) and Discussion Forum (3%). BBB, Class News, Discussion Forum, and Zoom were preferred by 3% of Blended mode students (Figure 12).

Chat was the most preferred mode to communicate with the other students on the LLFXX Moodle page (Figure 13). 70% of Blended mode students and 72% of Print mode students chose Chat to communicate with the other students on the LLFXX Moodle page. The least preferred form was BBB (0%) for Blended mode students and BBB (0%) and Class News (0%) for Print mode students.

The second research question studied whether the learners' age and gender determine their mode of communicating with the instructor and the other learners on the LLFXX Moodle page. Most (86%) of the learners enrolled in LLFXX were 17-20 years old (Figure 2). 58% of these (17-20) learners preferred Email to communicate with the instructor (Figure 3). 10% of the 21-30 year Blended mode learners also preferred Emails to communicate with the instructor (Figure 3). Of the 79% of Print mode students, who were 17 – 20 years old (Figure 2), 28% preferred Email and Chat respectively (Figure 4). 10% of Print mode learners (21-30 years) preferred Email (Figure 4) to communicate with the instructor.

60% of 17-20 year learners and 9% of 21-30 year learners preferred to use Chat (Figure 5) to communicate with the other students on the LLFXX Moodle page. BBB was not preferred by any age group (0%) for communication with other learners (Figure 5). 55% of Print mode 17-20 year learners preferred Chat to communicate with the other learners (Figure 6). 10 % of 21-30 year learners enrolled in Print mode preferred Chat and Email respectively (Figure 6). Communication modes like BBB and Class News were not preferred by any Print mode learner (0%).

Email was the most preferred mode of communication by the females (50%) and males (19%) enrolled in the Blended mode in LLFXX (Figure 8) with their instructor. Email was preferred by 40 of the 57 females (Figure 7) and 15 of the 23 males (Figure 7). 0% of males in Blended mode preferred Zoom and (0%) females preferred BBB and Class News to communicate with their instructor. In contrast, 21% of Print mode males preferred Chat and 28% of females preferred Email to communicate with the instructor on the LLFXX Moodle page (Figure 9). The least preferred mode of communication (0%) for the Print mode females was BBB and for males was BBB, Discussion Forum, and Zoom (Figure 9).

To communicate with other students, 48% of females and 21% of males enrolled in LLFXX chose Chat as shown in Figure 10. The least preferred mode (0%) was BBB for females and BBB and Class News for males in Blended mode. 0% of Print mode students (females and males) preferred BBB and Class News to communicate with other students (Figure 11).

The third research question examined if there is a correlation between learners' age and gender and their preferred mode of communication on the LLFXX Moodle page. Spearmen's Rank Correlation Coefficient Test showed that there was statistically insignificant analysis (no correlation) between learners' age and gender and their preferred mode of communication on the LLFXX Moodle page. The p-value was > 0.05 (alternate hypothesis) for the correlation between Blended mode students' preferred mode of communication and their age ($\alpha = 0.519$) and their gender ($\alpha = 0.437$) for their instructor. The Print mode learners had $\alpha = 0.784$ (age) and $\alpha = 0.433$ (gender) as a correlation (alternate hypothesis) between their age and gender and their preferred mode of communication with the instructor. The p value was > 0.05 for students' preferred mode of communication and the other learners, according to their age and gender. $\alpha = 0.687$ (alternate hypothesis) for Blended mode students' correlation between their age and mode of communication for other learners. $\alpha = 0.145$ (alternate hypothesis) for Print mode students' correlation between their age and mode of communication for other learners. Blended mode students have $\alpha = 0.588$ (alternate hypothesis) when a correlation was calculated between their gender and mode of communication for other learners. Print mode students had $\alpha = 0.746$ (alternate hypothesis), showing a statistically insignificant correlation between their gender and mode of communication for other learners.

The results show that for pre-degree students their age and gender do not play a significant role in determining their preference for the mode of communication with the instructor and other learners.

LIMITATIONS

1) The preference of the students to communicate with the instructor and the other students may be decided by other factors like their computer competency. These are not analysed in this study.

2) Students from the other campuses were not investigated in this study. The data from their preference and demographic factors may be enriching for such studies. Thus, future studies should incorporate students from the regional campuses.

CONCLUSION

Communication with the instructor and other students is very crucial in the teaching-learning process, whether the mode of communication is Face-to-face, Blended, Online, or Print mode of teaching. Blended and Print mode students preferred to use email to communicate with their instructor and Chat to communicate with the other students. It was essential to determine if the age and gender of the students affected their mode of communication via BBB, Chat, Class News, Discussion Forum, Email, and Zoom. It was found that the age and gender of the Blended and Print mode students did not determine their mode of communication.

The contribution of this study is that it has emphasised that demographic factors like age and gender do not influence a student's choice to communicate with his/her instructor or other students, even at the pre-degree level, where students are in a transiting phase between high school and tertiary institutes.

REFERENCES

Aliyu, O. A., & Arasanmi, C. (2019). Do demographic characteristics moderate the acceptance and use of Moodle learning system among business students? *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology, 15*, 1-14.

Alkhateeb, M. A., & Abdalla, R. A. (2021). Factors Influencing Student Satisfaction Towards Using Learning Management System. *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education Moodle, 17*(1), 138-153.

Aristovnik, A., Tomazevic, N., Kerzic, D., & Umek, L. (2017). The impact of demographic factors on selected aspects of e-learning in higher education. *International Journal of Information and learning Technology*, 1-11.

Baig, M. A. (2017). A Study of Application of Learning Management System (LMS) Moodle in Communication of Information - A literature Review. 1-8.

Heinrich, E., Thomas, H., & Kahu, E. R. (2022). An exploration of course and cohort communication spaces in Discord, Teams, and Moodle. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 38*(6), 107-120.

Holbl, M., & Welzer, T. (2010). Students' Feedback and Communication Habits using Moodle. Electronics and electrical Engineering: *Technological Sciences, 102*(6), 63-66.

Kerimbayev, N., Nurym, N., Akramova, A., & Abdykarimova, S. (2020). Virtual Educational Environment: interactive communication using LMS Moodle. *Education and Information Technologies*(3).

Pektas, S. T., & Demirkan, H. (2011). Experiences with Moodle as a communication tool for design teamwork: a users' perspective. *METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture, 28*(2), 227-241.

Peytcheva-Forsyth, R., Yovkova, B., & Aleksieva, L. (2018). Factors Affecting students' attitudes towards online learning - The case of Sofia University. AIP Conference Proceedings (pp. 1-8). AIP Publishing.

The University of the South Pacific. (2015). The University Strategic Plan. Suva: The University of the South Pacific.

The University of the South Pacific. (2017). Flexible Learning Policy. 1-7. Suva, Fiji: The University of the South Pacific.

Whelan, R., & Bhartu, D. (2007). Factors in the implementation of a learning management system at a large university. ICT: Providing chices for learners and learning . Proceedings ascilite Singapore 2007. Retrieved from http://www.asclite.org.au/conferences/singapore07/procs/whelan.pdf