Strengths and Limitations of BLC as an Online Teaching/Learning Platform

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Abstract

Nowadays, thanks to Covid-19 pandemic, teachers have to conduct classes online since physical classes are discouraged by the institutional and state authorities. Daffodil International University is no exception. It has introduced Blended Learning Center (BLC) to help teachers and students to manage their teaching/learning in an effective way. Teachers can share their resources with students, who again share their learning experiences with teachers. Assessment is also done through this platform. Virtual interactions take place through Google Meet, whose link is provided in the platform. It has been a unique experience, both for teachers and students, to use BLC as an online teaching/learning platform. We collected feedback from students to know how they feel about it. In the paper we present the findings, reflecting the perceptions of learners using BLC.

Keywords: BLC, online class, google meet, resource management, online assessment

Introduction

What was earlier an option is now an obligation. Earlier, the situation was different; teachers used to visit their physical classrooms and interact with students face-to-face. But now they are barred from doing that. Restrictions have been imposed. The authorities, state and institution, have locked the classrooms to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. The Covid-19 pandemic, with multiple mutations of the virus, has changed the educational scenario drastically. Physical classrooms have been abandoned while online classrooms have appeared as a reality. Virtual proximity has taken the place of physical proximity. Teachers have adopted the new mode of education, adapting to the new situation. According to Li and Lalani (2020), Covid-19 has changed education forever, with the distinctive rise of e-learning. In Covid-19, education has received the primary shock, with more than a billion learners being affected globally. The enormous impact of Covid-19 on education is evident in the following diagram:

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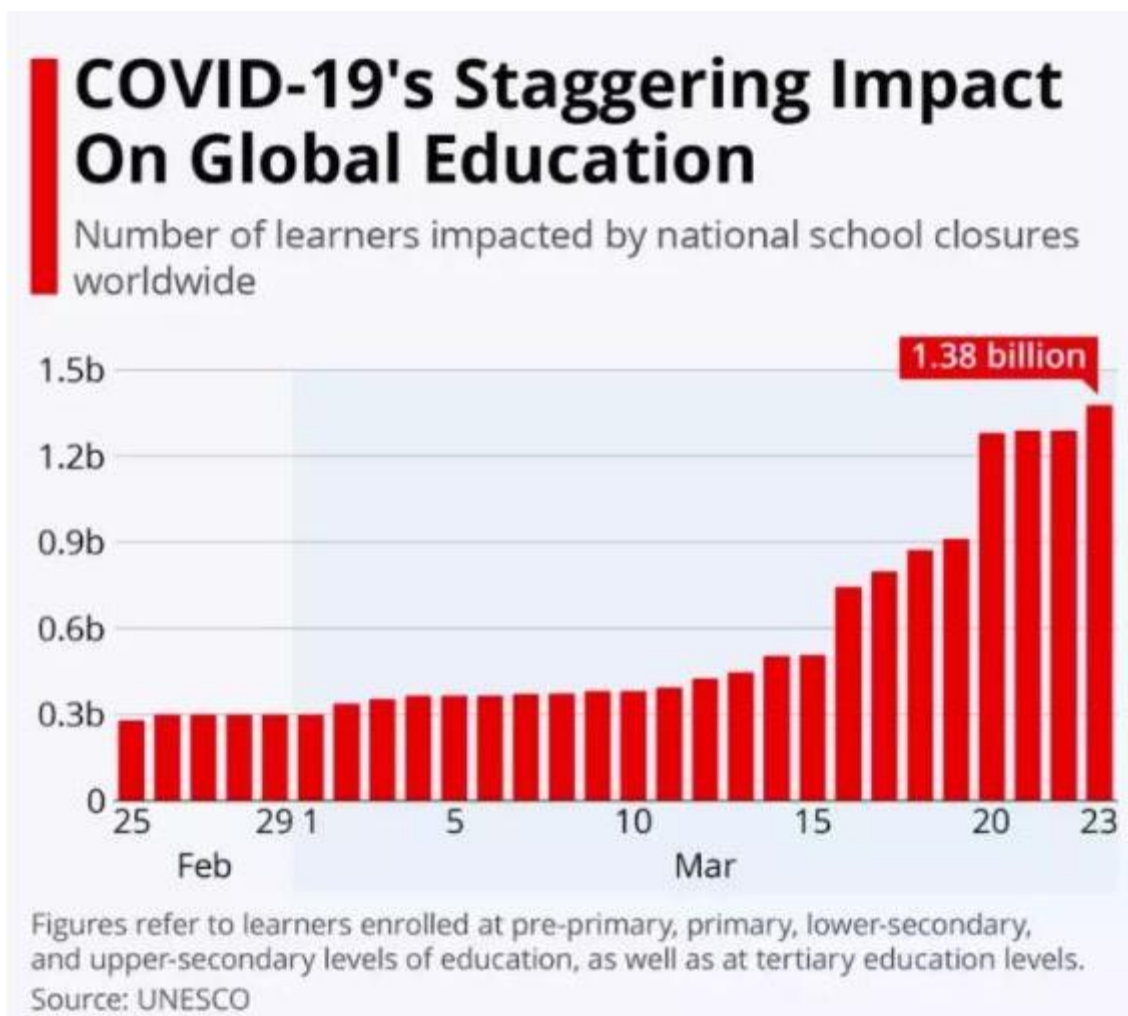
Figure 1. Impact of Covid-19 on global education (from World Economic Forum website)

Daffodil International University, having a reputation of using IT in all its activities, has tried to combat the situation with an array of IT solutions. It has created Blended Learning Center (BLC), customizing Moodle, a learning management system, according to its own needs, and subscribed to Google Meet, a video conferencing software, to facilitate live classes. BLC helps the teachers to upload learning materials and administer tests and exams. Google Meet helps them to engage in live classes, which are recorded and whose links are given in BLC. The students can watch them again and again and grasp the topics in a better way. The university has provided training to teachers and students on how to use BLC skillfully. Teachers and students have now become confident in using BLC for online teaching/learning purposes. In its attempt to integrate technology with education, DIU made a gradual shift from Learning Feedback System (LFS) to Google Classroom (GC) to Blended Learning Center (BLC), in a timespan of about one decade (Barman and Karthikeyan, 2019). As its database reveals, there are a total of 5856 courses in BLC, of which 1674 are operational in Fall 2020 semester. The total number of teachers involved in BLC are 790, of whom 574 are active in Fall 2020. The total number of students involved in BLC are 28737, all active in Fall 2020.
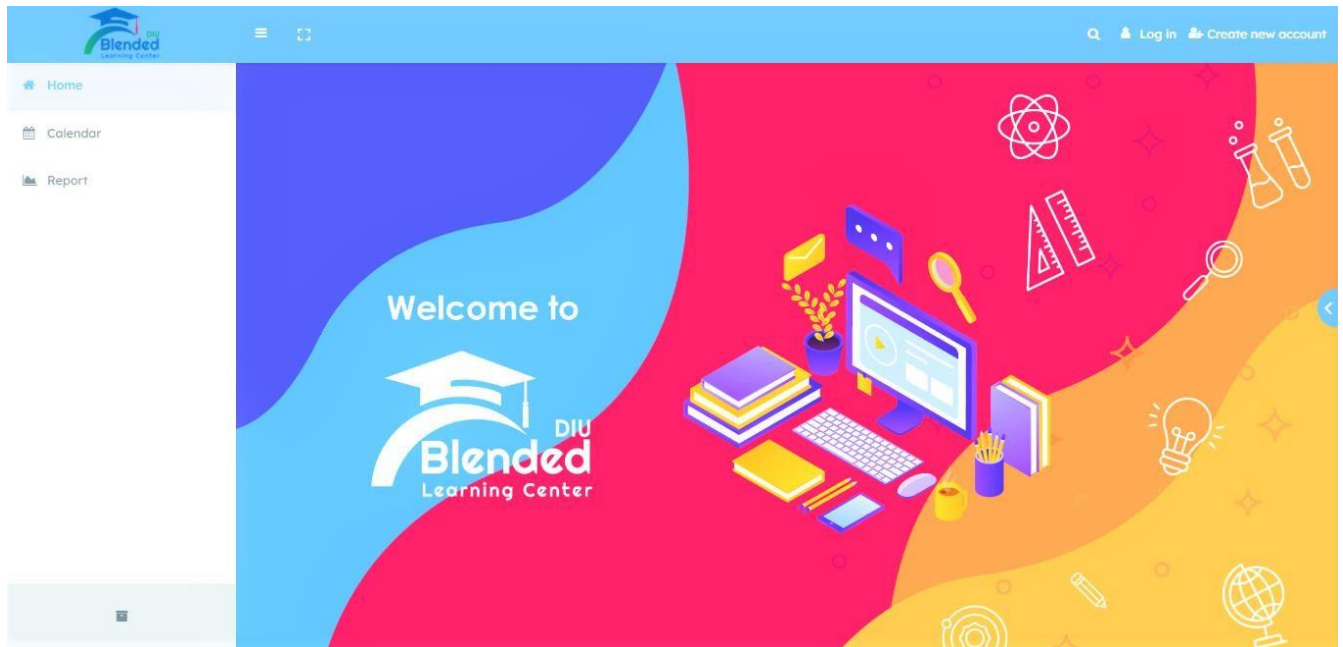
Figure 2. Interface of Blended Learning Center (BLC), Daffodil International University

In the current research initiative, we have tried to understand how teachers dealt with online teaching and how students responded to them. We have particularly focused on students' doings and perceptions with regards to online classes. We prepared a questionnaire and collected data from 383 students of English department. The data have been analyzed with Google form response system and Excel to generate findings. In general, we have found that students are roughly satisfied with online classes and BLC assessment. The strengths and weaknesses of online teaching/learning through BLC would be clear in the research findings.

The Reality of Online Education

Online education is defined as a digitally planned and administered mode of teaching and learning, maintaining a safe social distance. In such classes, students from anywhere can interact with instructors and other fellow students (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Online classes have their own rules; certain measures can make the practitioners successful, with appreciably positive outcomes (Aaron, 2013; Boettcher and Conrad, 2016; Darlene, 2014; Linder and Hayes, 2018). Researchers have found that learners had higher satisfaction levels in online education than in-person learning. This is also echoed by our present research. According to Signal Vine (signalvine.com) report 2020 entitled "The Transition to Online Learning: A Strategic Guide to Supporting the Student Experience", online learning serves an important role in the student experience for three reasons:

1. Online learning creates flexibility to ensure that there is no break in learning when there are unanticipated environmental changes – cyclone, student illness, or a pandemic.
2. It provides students with alternative scheduling opportunities, enabling them to have jobs or internships while also completing credits.
3. It provides them an opportunity to build skills for ongoing learning as they move into their professional careers.

Covid-19 has pushed the entire world towards a difficult reality, a virtual one, where the educational institutions have to struggle to run teaching/learning programs. Initially many

institutions were closed and some remained alive with online modalities. Gradually almost all institutions resorted to new technologies and applications like Google Classroom, Moodle, Zoom and Google Meet. Virtual classrooms became abuzz with the talks of students and teachers. Students submitted their assignments, took tests and made presentations. Teachers taught their lessons and made assessments of students' performance. To speak the truth, online teaching/learning platforms rescued education from total collapse. Altbach and Wit (2020) have given all credit to information technology for its savior role in the ongoing crisis period. They observe that IT specialists at universities around the world have done a remarkable job migrating many courses and programs online. The IT industry is bombarding institutions and their teachers with tools and training modules. At least for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, higher education is being forcibly transformed with the help of IT. The reliability and availability of ICT infrastructure, learning tools and resources in the form of MOOCs, e-books, e-notes, etc. are of utmost importance in such critical situations (Huang et al., 2020).

The Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA) has depicted the condition of education in South Asia in their 2020 report entitled "COVID-19 Pandemic Post Lockdown Disruption Evolving Academic Environment." Professor Abdul Mannan, former Chairman of UGC Bangladesh noted that the crisis broke the traditional concept of classroom teaching and learning, and the private and public universities were making efforts to arrange classes online. Professor Anwar Hossain, Vice Chancellor of Northern University Bangladesh, in a positive note mentioned that the situation engaged students and teachers in online interactions through immediate and instantaneous connectivity under a flexible routine. During a crisis, the responsibilities of educators multiply. Quantity and quality of work have to be maintained. As Affouneh et al (2020) suggest, the educators should not merely focus on the adoption of online learning during the crisis but they should also take account of developing and enhancing the quality of virtual courses generated in such situations.

Online classes necessarily maintain physical and social distance in an agreed way. Teachers and students interact from far, staying in their own space and time reality. According to Moore's theory of transactional distance (1993), the distance in online education is more than just physical space; it has a psychological dimension that includes perceptions and understanding. In one sense, online classes are more intimate than physical classes as all are glued to one screen. Online education has brought far near where close interaction takes place electronically. Live classes are to connect multiple participants, reducing the communication gap between them. Johnston (2010) suggested connecting cognitive, social and teaching domains so that a complete educational experience may be yielded. Martin (2020) advises: instruction, content, motivation, relationships, and mental health are the five important things that an educator must keep in mind while imparting online education.

Covid-19 has perplexed both the teacher and student communities with its subtle mischiefs. Initially they had no clue as to how to tackle the situation. Health is of course the first concern and then education. The problem must be solved from home confinement. Many online education experts appeared on the scene, even before the onslaught of coronavirus, and provided valuable insights and suggestions to the teachers. They have well explained the modalities of online classes, focusing on how they can be most effective.

Lee (2020) presents a list of 14 do's for the teachers to make online learning better. Here are the points: 1. Record your lectures – don't stream them, 2. Show your face during class, 3. Keep videos short, 4. Test out slides before presenting to students, 5. Use existing resources judiciously, 6. Make sure resources are open access, 7. Give specific instructions based on necessity, 8. Provide interactive activities, 9. Set reasonable expectations, 10. Use auto-checking to measure attendance, 11. Use group communication carefully, 12. Let students take control, 13. Don't hide your feelings, and 14. Repeat the style that works.

Darby (2019) formulated 10 essential principles and practices of better online teaching. These are as follows: 1. Engaging students in class activities, 2. Using verbal communication alongside written texts, 3. Understanding the problems and perspectives of students, 4. Organizing course content intuitively, 5. Adding visual appeal, 6. Explaining one's expectations, 7. Scaffolding learning activities, 8. Providing adequate examples, 9. Making class inviting and pleasant, and 10. Committing to continuous improvement.

Meinecke (2020), has divided a session of synchronous online class into three phases and provided tips for making it more effective and dynamic. Her suggestions are as follows: Before: 1. Communicate expectations, 2. Provoke the students' curiosity and interest, 3. Visualize the content (Prepare visual aids). 4. During: 1. Start with an informal chat, 2. Ask students to turn on their cameras, 3. Share the agenda, 4. Use frequent responses, 5. Make polls of students' current state of knowledge, 6. Watch your time, 7. Keep an active pace. After: 1. Making exit polls and obtaining feedback from students.

Professor Ken Bauer favors shorter and more frequent virtual classes rather than longer duration delivery. He says, "Instead of having a couple of completed assignments with a lot of course grade weight, assign more deliverables with smaller weights that help you assess the progress that the students are making. This allows the students to take advantage of your feedback, and they will be able to apply their learning in the following installments." (Quoted in Roman 2020). The suggestion are: 1. Be empathetic, 2. Avoid prolonged synchronous time online, 3. Do not oblige students to use their video cameras. Use inverted learning, 4. Apply positive reinforcement for inverted learning. 5. Plan the class by segments, 6. Design more holistic types of assessment, 7. Use the technologies you have at hand, and 8. It does not matter which video conferencing system that you use.

For Norman (2017), online classes may be challenging as the participants cannot see one another face-to-face and it is difficult for the teacher to understand whether the students are paying attention or not. In order to make online classes interactive and productive, she has provided ten tips: 1. Collect information before class, 2. Tell students what to expect, 3. Make it relevant, then highlight the relevance, 4. Ask participants to come with one burning question about the topic at hand, 5. Make sure your synchronous session offers novel content, insights, or activities, 6. Ask participants to keep their cameras on, 7. Do a quick social check-in at the beginning of class, 8. Pose a question and give participants a moment to write, 9. Ask questions that require students to pick a side, and 10. Use synchronous sessions as consultations. These teaching techniques may be useful both for online and virtual classes. As Ambrose et al (2010) note, while the specifics and contexts differ, the same learning principles and general strategies apply to teaching.

Wexler (2020) thinks that online classes are much more challenging than the traditional face-to-face ones. Particularly the students who are already struggling are more vulnerable. How can the teachers help them all with a sense of justice and equity? To offset the challenges of online classes, she provides seven pieces of advice: 1. Get students into the habit of participating, 2. Focus on content, not comprehension skills, 3. Keep it simple, 4. Connect new content to old and provide examples, 5. Dole out new information in brief doses, 6. Make online learning as interactive as possible, and 7. Balance synchronous and asynchronous learning.

DeBrock, Scagnoli and Taghaboni-Dutta (2020) emphasize the human element in online learning. For creating a compelling, engaging, enjoyable learning environment for students, their advice are as follows: 1. Use your students' exploring, editing and creative skills, 2. Emphasize group projects, 3. Interact with students as they work, 4. Solicit questions, 5. Intersperse student tasks with micro-lectures, and 6. Highlight students' individual experiences.

Dhawan (2020) made a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Challenges (SWOC) analysis of e-learning modes in the time of crisis and found that it is the education technologies which helped to a great extent to tackle the situation. Education could continue because distance learning tools were already available in the market and the educational institutions resorted to them under a kind of compulsion. His findings are expressed in the following diagram:

STRENGHTS
1. Time flexibility
2. Location fexibility
3. Catering to wide audience
4. wide availability of courses & content
5. Immediate feedback

WEAKNESSES
1. Technnical Difficulties
2. Learner's capability & confidence level
3. Time Management
4. Distractions, frustration, anxiety & confusion
5. lack of personal/physical attention

OPPORTUNITIES
1. Scope for Innovation & digital development
2. Designing flexible programs
3. Strengthen skills: problem solving, critical thinking, & adaptability
4. Users can be of any age
5. An innovative pedagogical approach(Radical transformation in all aspects of education)

CHALLENGES
1. Unequal Distribution of ICT Infrastructure
2. Quality of Education
3. Digital Illetracy
4. Digital Divide
5. Technology cost & Obsolscence

Figure 3. SWOC analysis of online learning during crisis

Covid-19 has brought challenges to us but it has also opened the door of opportunities in front of us. We can explore the opportunities and make our education system more robust, fitting for the day of crisis. Nothing can stop education to go ahead. Educators may even now start thinking about the post-Covid classrooms (Stevens, 2020).
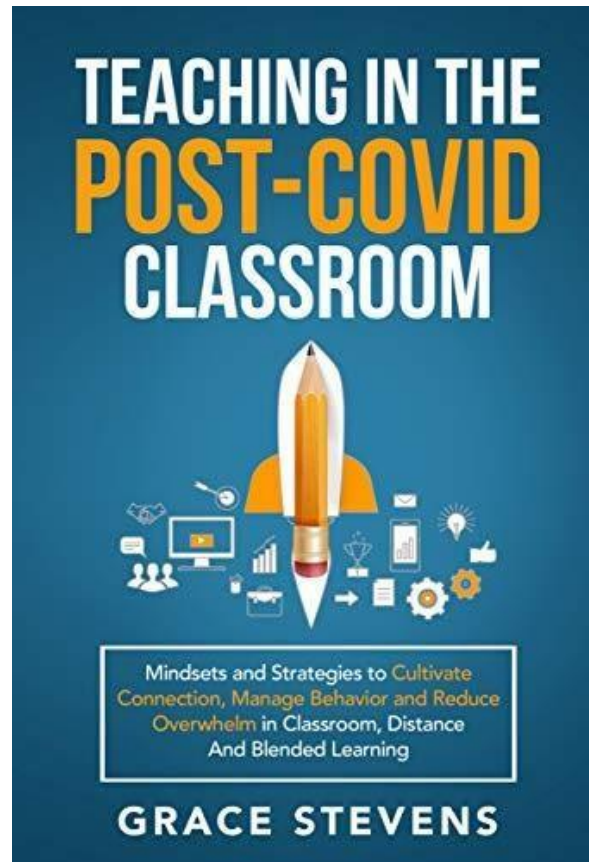
Figure 4. Teaching in the Post-Covid Classroom

Problem Statement

In general, it is assumed that BLC as an Online Teaching/Learning Management Platform should facilitate the overall teaching and learning process of teachers and students. It is also thought that it should promote an effective educational environment and students should benefit from this. But as BLC is a new platform and it is going through constant trial and development, both teachers and students are gradually learning and getting habituated to it. So how much it is workable and what are strengths and limitations of this platform still need to be identified. If we can identify the pros and cons of this platform, we can ensure the best possible education in this critical time. The feedback of students should appear valuable for future endeavors.

The central question has been: what are the strengths and limitations of BLC as an online teaching/learning platform? This research aims to prepare proper suggestions that can ensure the best use of BLC to maximize the learning of students at Daffodil International University.

Research Design and Methodology

Sample
This research was done with randomly selected 383 students from the Department of English at Daffodil International University.

Instrument

To conduct this research, a questionnaire was prepared and disseminated among the students. The questionnaire consists of 14 close ended questions and three open ended questions related to the research topic. The students answered the questions online as it was available in a google form.

Data Collection, Analysis and Findings

The data for the research was collected from 383 students of English Department in DIU. The researchers individually communicated with each of the students and gave them the link of the google form. They explained the purpose of this study and made them understand every question. The students filled up the form and the responses were accumulated in the specified virtual space. The collected data was then analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The analysis of the responses are given item-wise in the following sections.

i) Use of BLC:

The research investigation started with the issue of students' use of BLC. So the first question was: 'Are you using the BLC platform for your online classes?' which was responded by 383 students. The response summary has been shown in the following table and diagram:

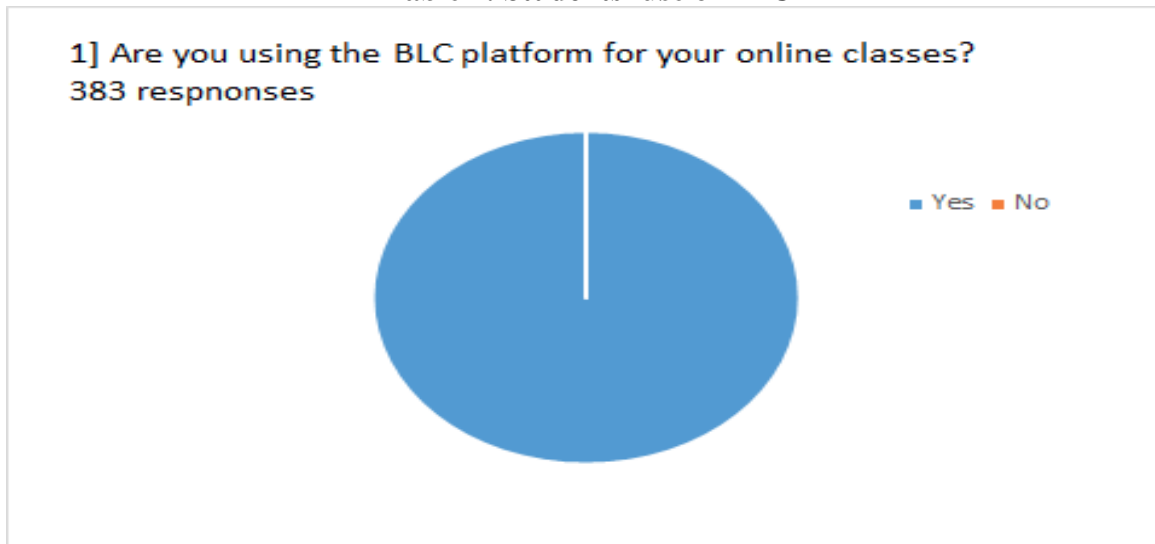| Question	Yes	No
Are you using the BLC platform for your online classes?	100%	0%

Table 1: Students' use of BLC

Diagram 1: Students' use of BLC

We can see that all students answered (100%) 'Yes', and 0% said 'No'. This clearly indicates that all students were using the BLC platform for their online learning. So, they were adapted to the new online learning system for their continuation of study during the pandemic.

ii) Impression about BLC:

Here the question was 'What is your comment/impression about BLC?', for which there were three options of response - Difficult to use, Moderate to use, and Easy to use. The responses were as follows:

Question	Difficult to use	Moderate to use	Easy to use
'What is your comment/impression about BLC?'	20.9 %	43.9%	35.2%

Table 2: Students' impression about BLC
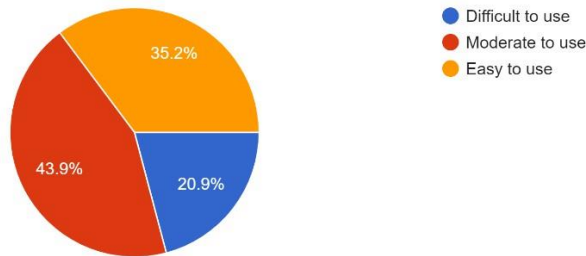
2] What is your comment/impression about BLC?
383 responses

Diagram 2: Impression about BLC

The findings of Table 2 and diagram 2 are closely related to students' use of BLC. Most of the students (43.9%) marked it as moderate to use BLC for their learning purpose. And a very good number of (35.2%) found it to be very easy to use. On the other hand, 20.9% students marked it to be difficult to use. **This indicates that BLC is somewhat a technically handy platform for students and they can use it without that much hassle. But still there are students who will need more time and training to be habituated with the platform.**

iii) Usefulness of BLC:
The third question was: 'Do you feel that BLC is useful for online classes?'

Question	Yes	No	Sometimes
Do you feel that BLC is useful for online classes?	64%	4.1%	31.9%

Table 3: Students' response about the usefulness of BLC

3. Do you feel that BLC is useful for online classes?
383 responses
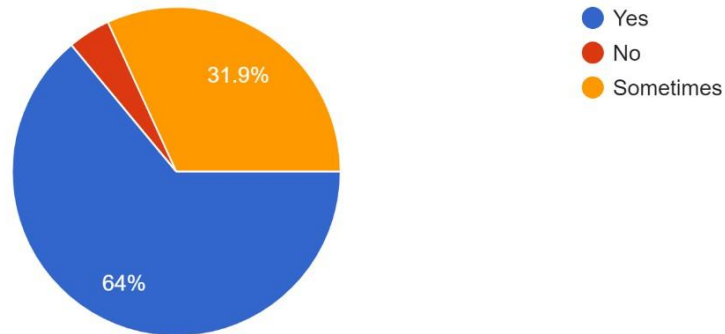

- ● Yes
- ● No
- ● Sometimes

31.9%

64%

Diagram 3: Students' response about the usefulness of BLC

The statistics in Table 3 and diagram 3 show that almost all students (64%+31.9%=95.9%), nearly 96% students found BLC to be useful for their online learning, whereas only 4.1% did not find it to be useful. So the students' perspective was, BLC was helping them greatly to continue their online studies in a positive manner.

iv) Interest in learning through BLC:
The fourth question for the respondents was: 'Do you feel interested in learning through BLC?'

Question	Yes	No	Sometimes
Do you feel interested in learning through BLC?	53.8%	11.7%	34.5%

Table 4: Students' response regarding interest in learning through BLC

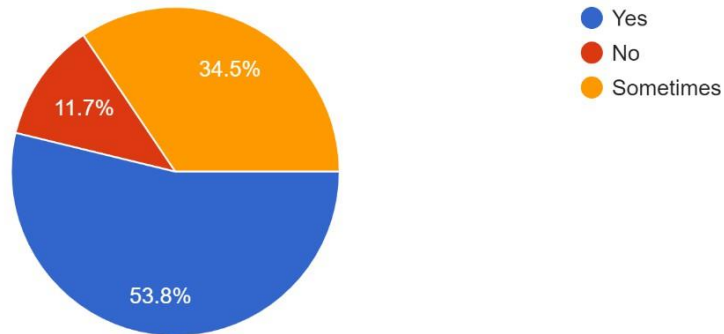4. Do you feel interested in learning through BLC?

383 responses

Diagram 4: Students' response regarding interest in learning through BLC

As above, the researchers found that most of the students (53.8%+34.5%) = 88.3% felt interested in learning through BLC. Only 11.7% did not find BLC interesting for their online learning. These statistics indicate that the materials, arrangements of materials and other features of BLC were interesting to students. They like to use it and learn from using this platform. So, the features of BLC are quite interesting.

v) Students' satisfaction with BLC:
The fifth question posed to the students was: 'Are you satisfied with the 'course materials' given in BLC?'

Question	Highly Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Are you satisfied with the 'course materials' given in BLC?	39.4%	57.4%	3.2%

Table 5: Students' satisfaction with BLC

5. Are you satisfied with the 'course materials' given in BLC?
383 responses

● Highly satisfied
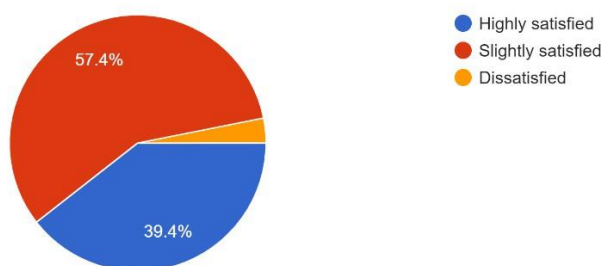● Slightly satisfied
● Dissatisfied

57.4%

39.4%

Diagram 5: Students' satisfaction with BLC

As shown above, most of the students 96.8% (39.4%+57.4%) were more or less satisfied with the course materials given in the BLC. Generally, the course materials in the form of lecture videos, powerpoint slides, word files, and pdf are uploaded by the course teachers in BLC for smooth conduction of classes. Students can access those materials anytime from their home online visiting BLC and get ideas on the class materials even before the live classes. This information is significant because students were satisfied with the class materials which might help them learn better online using this platform.

vi) Types of material:
The sixth question was: 'What kind of material(s) do you find more attractive and effective for online learning? (You can tick more than one option)'.

Question: What kind of material(s) do you find more attractive and effective for online learning? (You can tick more than one options)			
Sl.	Options	Respondents	Percentage
1	Video lectures of course teacher	308	80.4%
2	YouTube videos of other people	133	34.7%
3	Audio materials	118	30.8%
4	Test materials	204	53.3%
5	Powerpoint slides	225	58.7%
6	PDF	225	58.7%
7	Website links	116	32.9%

Table 6: Effective material types

6. What kind of material(s) do you find more attractive and effective for online learning? (You can tick more than one options)
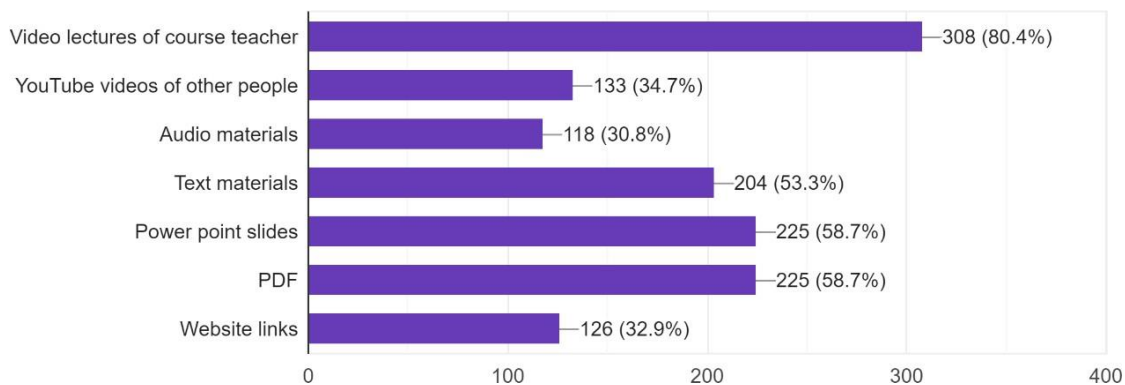
383 responses

Diagram 6: Effective material type

As shown above, most of the students (80.4%) found video lectures of course teachers to be much more attractive and effective for their online learning and PowerPoint slides and PDF materials were also liked by the students as 58.7% gave their response for these two options. Test materials were also liked by students for their study. Whereas audio materials and website links were moderately liked by students. These statistics indicate that there were a variety of materials available in BLC for promoting online learning of students and most of the materials were more or less highly liked by students and these materials were also found effective for their online learning.

vii) Other kinds of useful material:
In the questionnaire, the seventh question was an open ended question where the researchers asked the students to write the 'Other kinds of materials that you like (write here):
180 Students wrote on this point. But almost all the materials that they mentioned were already stated in the options of above mentioned question. There was nothing new here. But some of the students mentioned the following materials as their preferred ones:

Sl.	Other materials liked by some of the students:
1	Recorded live classes
2	Forum posts
3	Group assignments
4	Animated slides or materials

Table7: Other kinds of useful material

This table shows that students also like the recorded live classes that are taken by the course teacher through google meet, where students also participate in discussion and question-answer sessions and participate in different course related activities. They also like forum posts and forum discussion, group discussion and animated class procedure.

viii) Class through Google Meet:
The eighth point of the questionnaire for students was planned to know whether students enjoy their online live class through Google Meet or not. So, the question was framed as 'Do you enjoy live classes through Google Meet?'

Question	Yes	No	Sometimes
Do you enjoy live classes through Google Meet?	71%	25.6%	3.4%

Table 8: Students' response regarding class through Google Meet

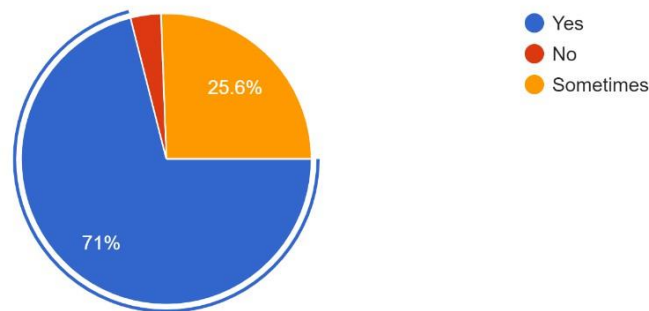8. Do you enjoy live classes through Google Meet?
383 responses

Diagram 7: Students' response regarding class through Google Meet

The piece of statistics above clearly shows that almost all the students enjoy the online live classes through Google Meet software, which is widely used by the course teachers at DIU. When physical classes are no longer allowed by the Country and Ministry of Education, online classes are the only option to continue tertiary education in Bangladesh, and it has been possible because of this special video meeting software called Google Meet. Nowadays 3G and 4G internet services are available in most places of Bangladesh and students are getting access to it. It is also very encouraging that students are enjoying online classes through Google Meet.

ix) Duration of live class:
The ninth question was framed as: 'What should be the duration of each live class?

Question	Less than 30 minutes	30-45 minutes	45-60 minutes	60-90 minutes

What should be the duration of each live class?.	3.9%	34.7%	46%	15.4%

Table 9: Students' response regarding duration of live class

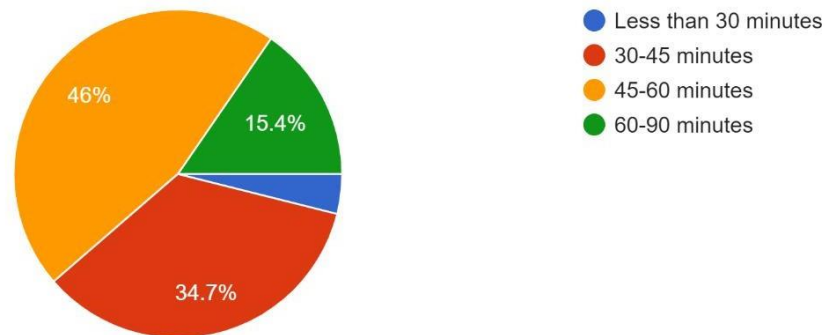9. What should be the duration of each live classes?
383 responses

Diagram 8: Students' response regarding duration of live class

Researchers find that a good number of students (46%) preferred live classes which were 45-60 minutes long. Other 34.7% students preferred live classes of 30-45 minutes duration. Only 3.9% students wanted classes which were less than 30 minutes and rest 15.4% students preferred classes with 60-90 minutes duration. It indicates that students did not like very short or long classes rather they preferred classes which were of moderate length (30-60 minutes).

x) Examination through BLC:
The tenth item in the questionnaire was: 'To what extent are you satisfied with the online examination system through BLC?'

Question	Highly satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Dissatisfied
To what extent are you satisfied with the online examination system through BLC?	25.6%	66.3%	8.1%

Table 10: Students' response regarding examination through BLC

- Highly satisfied
- Slightly satisfied
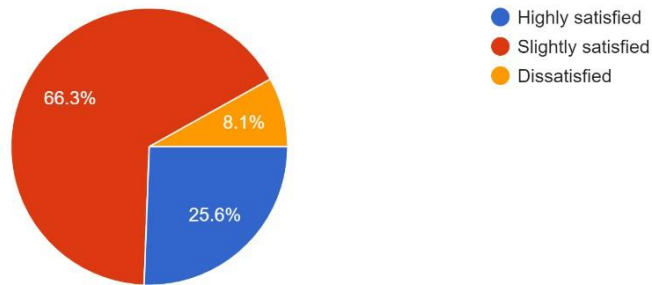- Dissatisfied

66.3%

8.1%

25.6%

Diagram 9: Students' response regarding examination through BLC

As exhibited above, 25.6% students were highly satisfied, 66.3% were slightly satisfied and 8.1% were dissatisfied with the online examination system through BLC. That means maximum students students were more or less satisfied with the online examination system and very few students were dissatisfied. So, the online examination system of BLC was easily adaptable for the students and they expressed their satisfaction.

xi) Assessment/evaluation features of BLC:
The next question of the survey was: 'To what extent are you satisfied with the assessment/evaluation features of BLC?'

Question	Highly satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Dissatisfied
To what extent are you satisfied with the assessment/evaluation features of BLC?	33.9%	61.4%	4.7%

Table 11: Assessment/evaluation features of BLC

- Highly satisfied
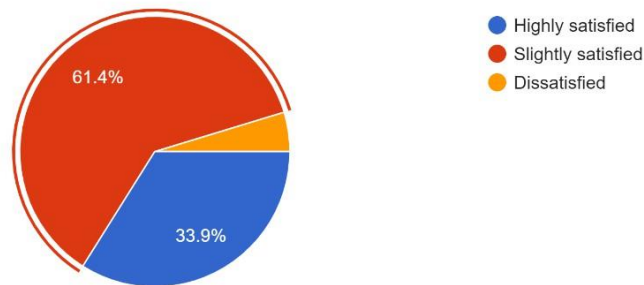- Slightly satisfied
- Dissatisfied

61.4%

33.9%

Diagram 10: Assessment/evaluation features of BLC

Question number 11 is closely connected to question number 10. They both are related with the examination system and features of BLC. BLC has many features that can be used for students' assessment, like assignment, quiz, forum, lesson and others. But teachers generally use assignment and quiz features to conduct examinations. And the responses of this statement clearly show that maximum students (95.3%) were more or less satisfied with the assessment or evaluation features of BLC. Only 4.7% students showed their dissatisfaction in this matter. From the findings here, we can say that the assessment features of BLC were useful.

xii) Strengths of BLC:
The next item of the questionnaire was about the 'Strengths/good sides of BLC'. Some 383 students gave their opinion on it. The answers are listed in the table below with percentage:

Question: Strengths/good sides of BLC	
Options	**Percentage**
A very good online learning platform	54%
All kinds of materials are available	54.8%
Attractive design	24.3%
So many interesting activities available in BLC	38.6%
Online assessment is fully possible	32.9%
Teacher-student online interactions are possible	52.2%
It costs less to attend classes than physical classes	27.2%
Accessible from anywhere with internet connection	29.8%

Table 12: Students' response regarding strengths of BLC

12. Strengths/good sides of BLC: (You can tick more than one options)
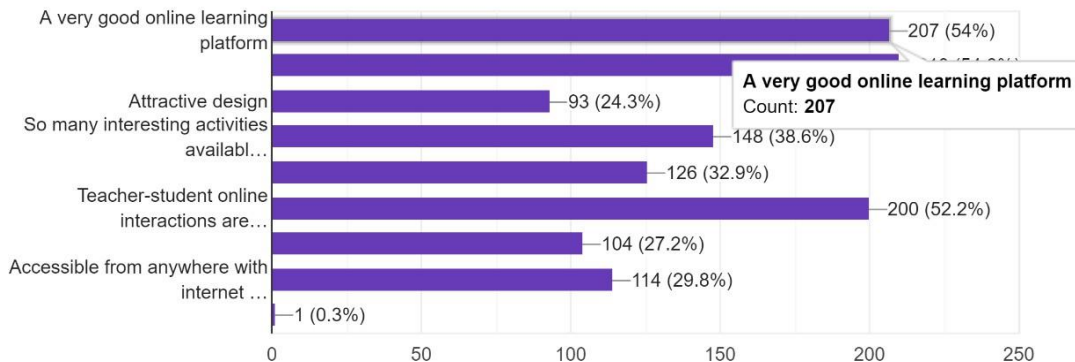383 responses

Diagram 11: Students' response regarding strengths of BLC

Table 12 and diagram 11 highlight all the strengths/positive sides of BLC for conducting online classes. Students were asked to give their opinion on the mentioned options. They were allowed to tick more than one option. The researchers found that 54% of students marked BLC to be a good online learning platform. 54.8% students also marked the availability of all kinds of materials in BLC. 38.6% of students found interesting activities available in BLC. The researchers were happy to know that 52.2 % of students thought teacher-students online interaction is possible through BLC. 24.3% liked the design of BLC attractive. 27.2% participants found it less costly to attend online classes through BLC and 29.8% of the students marked the accessibility of BLC from anywhere with internet connection.

Therefore it is clear that there are a significant number of strengths/positive sides of BLC as an online learning platform. Students were positive about certain features of BLC.

xiii) Other good aspects of BLC:

The next question was designed to know about the other positive aspects of BLC that students could find but not mentioned in the option list of the previous question. Students gave their findings. In the table: 13 the researchers have listed some of the good points mentioned by the students: The statement was 'Other good side(s) found by you', and some of the points are given in the below:

1	When the electricity suddenly goes off during our test, the answer sheet is automatically saved, that's a good thing.
2	We can find our previous class activities very easily.
3	We easily find updated course materials.
4	Giving an online exam in BLC is highly laudable.
5	We can study anytime, anywhere with BLC.
6	Because of this we don't stop reading during lockdown; we could complete our semester.
7	We can get every information from BLC including our grades and teachers comments.
8	Teachers can comment on the student's performance and only that particular student can view the response which provides privacy to the students.
9	It's like a savior to us because we don't have to stop our semester.
10	Easy to find materials of the course
11	We can find every lesson here easily.
12	We establish better relationships between students and teachers in online classes.
13	In BLC, individual course pages contain the materials required beforehand and in sequence. Also different styles of materials can be found and we can give attendance

	completing our task and we can see our grades with reviews so we are aware where we lack.
14	It has many good sides like weak students can easily talk and solve their problem with teachers. In physical class I was so shy to talk but now I am easily and happily doing my classes and I'm improving myself.
15	If we miss any lecture, we can go to BLC and watch it later.
16	We can access whenever we want.
17	The good thing about BLC is that if a student misses any class due to any problem, he/she may find record in BLC
18	This platform will help students to learn technology.
19	We can get all syllabuses easily on BLC beforehand.
20	Easy to access.

Table 13: Other good aspects of BLC identified by students

xiv) Limitations/weaknesses of BLC:
Here the question was about the limitations or weaknesses of BLC as an online learning platform. Students were allowed to tick more than one option.
The answers are listed below with percentage in Table 14.

Question: Limitations/weak sides of BLC	
Options	**Percentage**
Slow network/loading	89.3%
Features sometimes do not work	21.9%
Full of complexity	20.6%
More features than needed	22.7%
Design is not attractive	11.7%
Difficult to use	29.2%
Time consuming	38.4%
Boring	17.5%
Continuously upgrading, difficult to cope up	27.9%

Did not get proper training	23.5%
Enough interaction is not possible with teacher	17.8%
Some features cannot be used through mobile phones	19.3%

Table 14: Limitations/weaknesses of BLC

14. Limitations/weak sides of BLC: (You can tick more than one options)
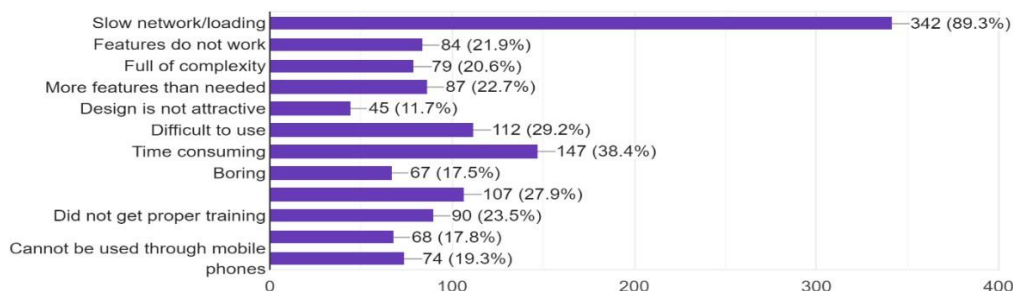383 responses

Diagram 12: Limitations/weaknesses of BLC

Table 14 and diagram 12 show that although students mentioned the positive sides of BLC but they also faced some problems in using this platform. 89.3% of students complained about the network problem. 38.4% marked BLC as time consuming. 29.2% found it difficult to use. Some said that they did not get proper training on it. Another problem that they were facing was that they could not use some features from their phones. Other limitations and problems that they mentioned are lack of interactions, lack of attraction. Some also found it complex to use while some found it boring.

So, the researchers could get an idea about the limitations and weaknesses of BLC as an online platform that can be resolved to best ensure the use of BLC and help students to learn better.

xv) Other problems faced by students:
In the next section of the questionnaire there was an open ended statement, where the researchers wanted to know about the other limitations or weaknesses of BLC that are found by the students. Many of the students have given their comments. The comments are listed below in Table 15. We have omitted those comments which were similar, from the table.

Question: Other problems that you face, write here	
1	Login problem is frequent.
2	Works slow… needs a speedy network often not available here.
3	Sometimes it is disconnected and does not open.

4	Too slow to use.
5	It is costly. We need to spend much to buy internet packages.
6	Server problem occurs now and then.
7	In the exam time, BLC doesn't work properly because of the overflow of users.
8	There is no notification system of teacher's file uploading so I often miss course work deadlines.
9	I cannot use it through the BLC app.
10	Very slow, sometimes log out happens automatically.
11	I think BLC is an extra burden for us.

Table 15: Other problems faced by students

Table 15 exhibits that students faced some other problems while using BLC for their online classes. To mention some, BLC is slow to use. It takes a long time to load. Sometimes students are logged out automatically. Basically most of the points mentioned by students are related to network or server. If these issues are resolved, students will be able to use BLC easily and will derive more benefits.

xvi) Third party app:
BLC is dependent on some third party app/software like Google Meet/Zoom for live spoken interaction. So the question was: Do you view it as a problem? All the 383 participants answered this question as shown below:

Question	Yes	No	May be
BLC is dependent on some third party app/software like Google Meet/Zoom for live spoken interaction. Do you view it as a problem?	14.6%	51.4%	33.9%

Table 16: Students' response regarding third party app

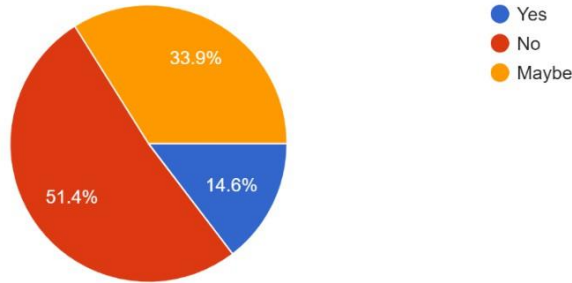● Yes
● No
● Maybe

33.9%

51.4%

14.6%

Diagram 13: Students' response regarding third party app

Table 16 and diagram 13 show that most of the students do not mention it to be a problem to use a third party app like Google Meet or Zoom to conduct the live class interactions, though 33.9% students are not fully aware of. Only 14.6% of students found it to be a problem and said 'Yes' to it. So the research indicates that third party apps can be used for live interactions but if BLC can use its own feature to conduct the live classes, it can also be a plus to it.

xvii) Suggestions for improving BLC:
The obvious next statement was intended to collect suggestions from the students to minimize the drawbacks and maximize the benefit of BLC as an online teaching/learning platform. So the section seeks: 'Your suggestions to improve BLC'. The collected responses are stated below:

Question: Your suggestions to improve BLC	
Options	**Percentage**
The uploading speed of BLC should be improved.	82.8%
Only needed featured should be included.	28.7%
Design and color should be made attractive for students.	17.8%
It should be made much more easier to use.	57.4%
More training is needed for students.	44.1%
It should be made more interactive.	22.7%
Students need more motivation to use it.	37.6%
An app should be made for better uses with mobile phones and other devices	45.2%

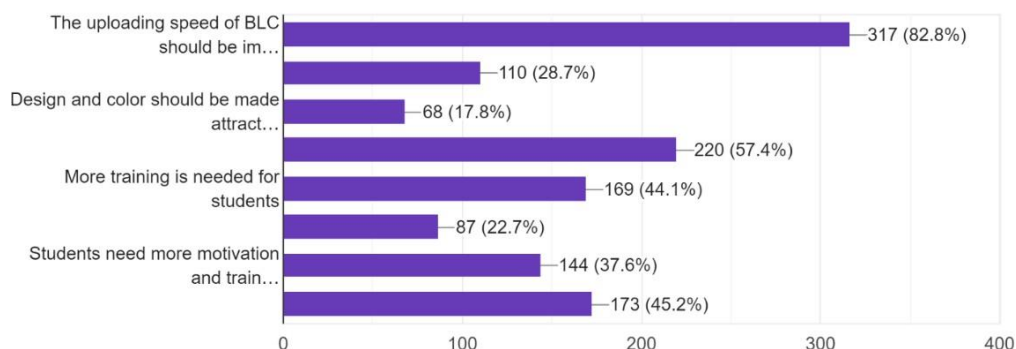**Table 17: Suggestions for improving BLC**

Diagram 14: Suggestions for improving BLC

The researchers got very good responses and suggestions from the participants. If these suggestions are taken into account and solved, BLC can be a great online teaching/learning platform. Some of the important suggestions were like: 'the uploading speed of BLC should be improve' (82.8%); 'it should be made much easier to use' (57.4%); 'An app should be made for better uses with mobile phones and other devices' (45.2%); and 'More training is needed for students' (44.1%). Participants also suggested making BLC more interactive, and more attractive and colorful. Students also need more motivation to get used to it for their own benefit.

Recommendations
The analysis of the above findings indicate that BLC plays a positive role in the online education of students. Therefore, to ensure the maximum benefit out of BLC platform, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1] Proper and timely access to the internet should be ensured.
2] The loading speed of BLC should be made faster.
3] The features of BLC should be made much easier to use for students.
4] Proper training should be provided to the students.
5] Students need more motivation to ensure the maximum use of BLC.
6] The design and color should be made attractive for students.
7] The contents and activities of BLC can be made more interactive to grab the attention of students.
8] An app should be made for better uses with mobile phones and other devices, so that students can access BLC anytime from anywhere.

Conclusion
The years 2020 and 2021 have been exclusively the time for online education. Covid-19 will be remembered in history not only for the health hazards it caused but also its impact on the educational system worldwide. Online education could never be so widespread unless the deadly pandemic appeared with such vengeance to confine life within four walls. Online learning and e-collaborations have exploded during the outbreak of Covid-19 (Favale et al., 2020). Maybe,

lockdown has been a blessing in disguise. When the Covid situation will improve, the classrooms will be opened. But the mode of education will never be the same. 'Virtuality' has got into the marrow of the bone of education. Future education cannot do without it. We suppose, the coming era is for blended learning, half physical and half virtual!

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