

**Blended Learning and Perception of Success: A Case Study of an Adult Literacy Programme in Ireland**

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“Thesis submitted as a requirement for the degree of MSc in Cyberpsychology, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, 2020.”

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work, and has not been previously submitted to this or any other third level institution

Signed: Carmel Fahy

Dated: April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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## Abstract

An understanding of how blended learning can impact adult learners perceived success can help inform policy initiatives and learning design, so they are more responsive to the needs of the learners. This study examined the impact of blending learning on the perceived success of participants in a literacy programme. Participants were 8 adult learners (5 male and 3 female) with an age range of 39 to 77 years. The average age was 59.87 years (SD = 12.37). A case study consisting of quantitative and qualitative components was conducted. The quantitative component compared the perceived success of students participating in a face-to-face delivery method with students participating in a blended delivery method. Results showed that the students participating in the face-to-face only delivery had a significantly higher mean perception of success. Thematic and frequency analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. Participants identified some key themes representing contributors to perceived success: Social Interaction and Class Support, Tutor Support and Participants not Working Independently. This research could inform the design of the online element of a blended learning programme to account for these contributors. Additionally, it lends support to existing learning theory particularly, Social Constructivism (Dewey, 1986; Glassman, 2001) and the Community of Inquiry model (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000), which directs attention to the student-tutor relationship and highlights the teacher presence and its role in the facilitation of the learning experience.

## **Blended Learning and Perception of Success: A Case Study of an Adult Literacy Programme in Ireland**

With the growth of information technology and movement towards online options including massive open online courses (MOOC) and the use of Virtual Reality for example, Big Screen and Engage (Barnard, 2017) and the use of Web-based course-management systems for example Adobe Captivate Prime, and Docebo (Pappas, 2019), there is greater integration of information technology and teaching and learning. This means training providers and students are no longer limited to a traditional classroom-based model.

There is a growing understanding that technology changes the way students learn, where and how training is delivered and how learning takes place (O'Reilly et al., 2014). This is acknowledged by the Vision in the Irish Department of Education Digital Strategy for Schools (2015) to leverage the potential of technology to contribute to improved teaching, learning and assessment. It is also recognized in the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) Pre-budget Submission (2019) with its recommendation to be innovative in learning delivery and to incorporate blending and distance learning, facilitated by technology, to address literacy needs.

Research into the impact of blended or distance learning on the perceived success of students had positive findings. It particularly acknowledged the flexibility and opportunity for independent study (Li & Markovich, 2018; NALA, 2014) but recognised limitations like the need for self-directed learning and limited tutor support (Phillips, Turnbull & He, 2015; Li & Markovich, 2018). Understanding more about the contribution that this type of delivery can make to perceived success of the students can contribute to maximising its cost-effectiveness and availability. It can additionally inform policy decisions around investment and contribute to training design that facilitates the learners to achieve successful outcomes.

## Literature Review

### Growth of online learning

Online learning is defined as “access to learning experiences via the use of some technology” (Moore, Dickson-Deane & Galyen, 2011, p. 129). Analysis across second-level and third-level education has found that there has been an increase in the number of students accessing learning online (Ginder, Kelly-Reid & Mann, 2019; Lederman, 2018; Neghina, 2012).

In the US, the Education Department's National Center for Education Statistics, (Ginder, Kelly-Reid & Mann, 2019) reported that from Autumn 2016 to Autumn 2017 the number who participated, even partially, in online courses grew by 5.7 percent. Approximately one in six students were enrolled in a fully online course and the percentage of students who took at least one online course grew from 31.1 percent to 33.1 percent. This shows an increase from 2012 figures which were under 25 percent (Lederman, 2018). Palvia et al. (2018) also found that there has been a dramatic growth between 2000 and 2011 in online education in Australia and the Asia Pacific Region. In 2012 student enrolment increased by 15-20% with the online availability of courses growing to up to 40% in universities across Europe (Neghina, 2012). In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has seen the Irish Government recommend provision of online resources and online classes where possible (Department of Education and Skills, 2020).

### Blended Learning

Blended learning was defined by Goeman and Van Laer (2012) as a systematic and integrated combination of online and offline teaching and learning activities.

Tang & Cheng (2019) expanded this to refer to not just the teaching process but also the students' initiative and enthusiasm as the subjects of this learning process. It takes the strengths of both offline teaching and online delivery and blends them together.

### **Adult Literacy**

UNESCO (2019) defined literacy as “a percentage of population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life.” While this definition considers reading and writing the definition of literacy is evolving to consider other life skills needed including numeracy and using everyday technology to process information. An OECD Adult Skills Survey (2013) carried out between August 2011 and March 2012 reported 17.9% (550,057) of Irish adults are at or below Level 1 on the literacy scale. At level 1 the person may not understand basic written information. The report also found that Ireland ranked 15 out of the 24 countries surveyed.

Various agencies have recommended blended learning as an approach that may be beneficial in addressing these challenges: The Learning for Life 2000 white paper from the Department of Education and Science (2009) recommended large-scale increases in adult literacy investment and implementation of an ICT programme for adults. It also recommended that the “enormous potential of ICT be recognised as a means for widening access to information and education on a previously unprecedented scale.” (p. 68).

A National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA, 2011) report indicated that less than 10% of adults estimated to have literacy needs participate in literacy learning opportunities. Hegarty and Feeley (2009) also found that it is necessary to look at options available and match them to learners' circumstances or preferences. Solas (2018) in turn proposed that a literacy strategy should provide for distance and blending approaches to broaden access.

Since blended learning is one of the recommended approaches to address literacy challenges in Ireland (NALA, 2019), understanding the impact that it could have on students' perceived success can contribute to potentially informing teaching strategies and policy initiatives that would be beneficial for adult learners.

### **Theories of Learning**

Learning theories such as Behaviourism (Skinner, 1950), Cognitivism (Piaget, 1936), Constructivism (Dewey, 1938; Glassman, 2001), Connectivism (Siemens, 2004) and Online Collaborative Learning (Ertmer & Newby, 2013; Harasim, 2012) contribute to understanding how and why people learn. With the influence of technology, new models based on the original theories have evolved. Some of these are particularly relevant to online or blended learning (Harasim, 2017).

### ***Community of Inquiry model***

This model proposed by Garrison, Anderson & Archer (2000) is focused on three "presences": cognitive, social, and teaching. It emphasises the interaction between students and teachers and considers presence as a social phenomenon. A case study by Cooper & Scriven (2017) found that the model guided the design of a blended learning framework by providing a visual of the important elements that promoted active online teaching, encouraged meaningful discussion and improved social presence. It highlighted limitations of the model including not considering learning presence, associated with self-directed learning, to understand what the students contribute to the learning process. Cooper & Scriven (2017) also noted that the model proposes that cognitive presence is developed through social presence but does not consider students who may not be comfortable with online social interactions. This may be a consideration for adult literacy students who might have digital literacy challenges.

### ***Connectivism model***

Connectivism (Siemens, 2004) considers the flow of information and how that information can grow and change during that flow. Learning is achieved within learning communities. In the context of online or blended learning, ideally those groups include learners and tutors where the role of the tutor facilitates learning as well as supporting learners with complex content (Kibuku & Ochieng, 2019). Strengths of this networked learning theory include the concept of learning to learn, where learners become self-directed and discover learning for life. Its flexibility for learners who are unable to attend face-to-face learning is another strength (Şahin, 2012). The model has limitations as highlighted by Kibuku & Ochieng (2019). It is rooted in technology but cannot keep pace with technological changes. Additionally, for digital-literacy-challenged learners, the use of the tools or the ability of the tools to distract can impact learning. The model lacks the structure of classroom learning which can be a challenge in e-learning if the learner is unfamiliar with technology. Moreover, the lack of definition of the tutor support role and its failure to account for the impact of a lack of interconnectivity between learners may limit the effectiveness of this model, particularly in the context of literacy challenged adult learners.

### ***Achievement Goal Theory***

Achievement Goal Theory (Nicholls, 1984) proposes that task orientation or ego orientation are the basis of the criteria a person uses to assess success. Individuals with task orientation are inclined towards measuring success in terms of mastering a skill, so the success is self-referenced. Individuals with ego orientation reference the performance of others to measure success and aim to exceed that performance, so success is other-referenced (Jagacinski & Strickland, 2000).

Goal orientations are a preferred analysis approach in achievement goal research because individuals can self-report on a single occasion. The self-report aspect contributes to a deeper understanding of the individuals' perceptions. A weakness of the theory is that it does not distinguish goal-based variability from variability associated with other individual factors that might influence the individual's motivations (Elliot, 1999).

### **Perception of Success**

In adult learning, various stakeholders including teachers, students and awarding bodies have different ways of perceiving success. From the students' perspective, the definition of success can be a combination of a range of factors consisting of, for example, attaining a qualification or the ability to read to grandchildren (Tighe, Barnes, Connor, & Steadman, 2013). Since Achievement Goal Theory proposes that the person's perception of success is influenced by their goal orientation (Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001; Roberts, Treasure & Balague, 1998) considering students' goal orientation and measuring perceived success based on this contributes to a deeper understanding of how success is perceived by the learner.

Tighe et al. (2013) carried out a quantitative and qualitative investigation into the perceptions of success of multiple stakeholders, including learners, enrolled in Adult Basic Education programmes. The research identified centres that, based on state scoring, were considered either more or less successful and carried out follow-on observation and interviews (14 teachers, 28 students). Observation and semi-structured interviews explored how students and teachers defined success. Students referenced teacher support as a fundamental contributor to their perceived success, citing encouragement, support and accessibility.

The study found that students measured success in different ways ranging from gaining a qualification to helping their children to learn.

Successful classrooms had a range of training delivery approaches encouraging group, independent and computer-based work. The research had some limitations. It was focused on adult learners in six schools in Florida, so its generalisability is limited. The research was published in 2013 but the review started in 2006 and findings may be impacted by changes in technology. Tighe et al.'s (2013) research did not consider blended learning.

Li & Markovich's (2018) study of participants in a blended delivery of literacy training researched perceived success and the contribution individual differences made to learners' progress. Three community colleges (149 students) were involved in this mixed-method research (a survey and 37 follow-up interviews). The survey captured learners' attitude to online learning, blended learning and perceived success. Perceived success was measured by two 7-point Likert scale items and a survey question about how a blended delivery supported learning. The interviews explored learners' attitudes and blended learning's contribution to meeting student goals.

The research found that the face-to-face element was essential for communication and collaboration with instructors and peers. Students felt the encouragement and feedback they received contributed to their success. Some students (32%) acknowledged that blended learning flexibility contributed to perceived success and 43% found that the online element satisfied learning needs.

There were limitations: It did not assess if perceptions changed over time and the instructors for classroom and online differed. Since the students valued tutor support highly the different tutor may have influenced the results.

NALA-commissioned research also reported mixed finding on blended learning for adult learners. In 2013, research on the use of Writeon, a NALA blended learning website, considered learner progression in terms of actual or perceived skills and knowledge levels (NALA, 2014). The approach was mixed methods (online questionnaire and focus groups). Participants (41) were asked why they used the service and surveyed on perception of progress, confidence and skills development.

The participants indicated that blended learning contributed to meeting training needs and improved skills. Blended learning also extended learning time, encouraged independent study and increased learners' confidence. The research was limited because it focused on English for Speakers of Other Languages learners (ESOL), who may have a more diverse educational demographic than native-speaker literacy students and other unique challenges. Its generalisability is limited because it looked at just three centres' interaction with Writeon. Furthermore it did not compare classroom-based to blended learning to determine if the results could be attributed to blended learning specifically.

Other NALA-commissioned research (NALA, 2011; Hegarty & Feeley, 2011; Feeley & Hegarty, 2013) had mixed findings. The results reported that blended learning extended learning time and encouraged independent study. Contrary findings included concerns that satisfying the requirements of the learning might not correspond with the degree of functional competence. Recommendations suggested future study into the pace of literacy learning facilitated by blended learning (Hegarty & Feeley, 2011).

A case study of third level students in Ireland explored perceptions of e-tutorials and online and blended learning. It found that the student experience was positive with self-paced learning and working independently considered beneficial. The value of face-to-face interaction and tutor support was also referenced (McGuinness & Fulton, 2019). This research was relevant to the current study as the case study approach incorporated participants' perceptions and explored contextual factors.

McGuinness & Fulton (2019) is supported by other studies of 3rd level students including Johnson's research in Australia (Johnston, 2010) where students were very happy with blended learning. Sorden & Munene, 2013 also found increased student satisfaction with blended learning and Vance, 2013 indicated participants were positive about the collaborative nature of online study.

A theme in the research was the importance of personal interactions. Research by Skordis-Worrall et al., (2015) found that students missed peer interaction and found online learning more time-consuming. This is supported by Hauser, Paul, & Bradley (2012) where personal interactions with the trainer were considered important and again reinforced by Reynolds & Johnson (2014) with the teacher-student relationship contributing to success.

Several studies also address self-directed learning such as Phillips, Turnbull & He, (2015), suggesting that self-directed learning readiness was necessary for online learners to succeed. Owston, York & Murtha, (2013), found that satisfaction with blended learning was greater for high-achieving students. Potentially this may have been because low-achieving students lacked independent study skills. Possibly a lack of self-directed learning contributed to increased student dropout rates in blending learning reported by Deschacht and Goeman, (2015).

Despite the range of studies in this area, the focus in Ireland has mainly been on the NALA programme and on third level students. While there is other international research to support blended learning having a positive effect on students' perceived success there are also contrary results. Not enough detail is known about what aspects of blended learning make a positive difference to students' perceived success, compared to the face-to-face approach, particularly for adult literacy learners. Perception of success can inform why students learn (Roberts, Treasure & Balague, 1998) thus considering students' goal orientation and measuring perceived success based on this allows for deeper understanding of why students learn and how success is perceived by the learner. The present study is aiming to research the contribution that blended learning makes to the perceived success of adult literacy students compared to a face-to-face only delivery.

**Research Question:**

***R1:** Does perceived success differ between adult learners who participate in a blended learning versus face-to-face delivery of the same literacy programme?*

**Hypothesis:**

***H1:** There will be no difference in perceived success between adult learners who participate in a blended learning programme versus a face-to-face delivery of the same programme*

## **Method**

### **Design**

A case study design was appropriate because a small group was studied within the context of an adult learning centre environment (Robson & McCartan, 2015). The quantitative component was an experimental fixed design, a between-groups design with different participants for each condition of the independent variable. The aim of the experiment was to establish the statistical significance of the impact of the method of delivery on the perceived success of the participants. The qualitative component was five additional open-ended questions included to gain a deeper insight into how the online or face-to-face method of delivery contributed to the students' perceived success.

### **Participants**

Eight participants (5 male and 3 female), were assigned to two groups of 4. Participant age ranged from 39 to 77 years, with a mean age of 59.87 years (SD = 12.37). They were recruited through an information session at an adult learning facility, using convenience and purposeful sampling from two existing groups already participating in classes at level 3 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) provided in an adult education community centre located in Dublin.

The Department of Technology and Psychology Ethics Committee granted ethical approval for the study and the participants were treated in accordance with the Psychological Society of Ireland's code of ethics (See Appendix A). External approval was granted by the adult literacy centre to access students for this research (See Appendix B).

## Materials

An online survey was designed using Google Forms (See Appendix C). An information sheet included the aims of the research, an invitation to take part, and information about data management (See Appendix D). A Consent Form asked participants to indicate their consent to participate and to confirm understanding and consent to use of quotations (See Appendix E). Demographic data on age and gender and the training method of delivery the the students participated in was collected. The survey included an adapted version of the Perception of Success Questionnaire (POSQ) (Roberts, Treasure & Balague, 1998). It consists of two subscales, each with 6 questions, which measure Task Orientation and Ego Orientation. Items on the scale, for example "I perform to the best of my ability", are measured using a five-point Likert scale, anchored from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. (See Appendix F). Roberts, Treasure & Balague (1998) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0.88 for both the task and ego goal orientations. Clancy, Herring & Campbell (2017) also found that the POSQ had strong psychometric properties.

Five open-ended questions, to ascertain richer detail about what contributed to the participants' perception of success, were added (see Appendix G) for example "What parts of the training did you find most difficult and why?". Finally, a Debrief Form (See Appendix H) provided contact details of a support resource if needed. All forms and the open-ended questions were drafted using Plain English guidelines, defined by NALA (2019) as, "A way of writing and presenting information that helps someone understand it the first time they read or hear it".

A short module about "How to write a film review", appropriate for students participating in a NFQ Level 3 learning programme, was drafted and reviewed with the participants' tutor (See appendix I) for delivery to both groups. Key information from this module was distilled into an overview of the component parts of how to write a film review. An initial paper version was created using image editing software and transferred to MS PowerPoint for printing and use by the face-to-face only participants with a tutor (See appendix J).

The paper version of the worksheet was re-created within Adobe Captivate where interactive components such as checkboxes, sound effects and hide / show animations were added. The digital version, created using Adobe Captivate, was then hosted on a website so the blended learning participants could access it (See appendix K).

### **Pilot Study**

A pilot study of the survey was carried out using two tutors from the adult learning centre and a student of the MSC in Cyberpsychology to confirm the survey was functional and the content was clear and appropriate. Amendments were made based on the feedback before the final survey was distributed.

### **Procedure**

Participants were recruited using convenience and purposeful sampling at an adult learning centre. The delivery of the training and completion of the survey occurred over a three-week period. The same tutor delivered, separately to both groups, the short module about “How to write a film review” during the participants’ scheduled class time. The tutor then delivered the paper version of the Overview to the face-to-face only group. The blended learning group were provided with a link to the digital version of the Overview to complete. The tutor and materials for both groups were the same to guard against confounding variables. Both groups watched a film that was selected for review. After watching the film, participants were asked to complete the online survey and were presented with the debrief and thanked for participating. The survey took approximately 40 minutes to complete.

## Results

### Research Design

A case study design consisting of a quantitative and qualitative element was employed. The Independent Variable was teaching method of a literacy programme with two levels: a teaching method that was blended between online and face-to-face delivery; and a teaching method that was face-to-face only. The Dependant Variable was the perceived success of the adult learners as measured by an adapted version of the Perception of Success Questionnaire (Roberts, Treasure & Balague, 1998).

The data was analysed using an independent T-Test on IBM SPSS Statistics 26. This was appropriate since the research investigated the difference between two groups and the dependant variable was a continuous scale (Pallant, 2013). The qualitative component explored the research question, 'Does perceived success differ between adult learners who participate in a blended learning versus face-to-face delivery of the same literacy programme?'. Responses to 5 open-ended questions in the online survey were examined using thematic and frequency analysis according to Seidel's (1998) and Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines (See Appendix L).

### Descriptive statistics

Participants were 8 students ... enrolled in two courses at an adult education centre in Dublin . There were four in each group. Group A completed the face-to-face only training. Group B completed the blended training. The participants were 63% male and 37% female. The descriptive statistics for the participants can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1***Participants' Demographics*

Group	Age	Gender
A (Face-to-Face)	69	Female
A (Face-to-Face)	63	Female
A (Face-to-Face)	77	Female
A (Face-to-Face)	69	Male
<hr/>		
<i>Mean Age: 70</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>5.7</i>
	<i>Deviation</i>	
<hr/>		
B (Blended)	48	Male
B (Blended)	39	Male
B (Blended)	59	Male
B (Blended)	55	Male
<hr/>		
<i>Mean Age: 50</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>8.7</i>
	<i>Deviation</i>	
<hr/>		

Perceived success scores are found in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Participants' Perception of Success*

Group	Perceived Success	Standard Deviation
A (Face-to-Face)	43.5	2.7
<hr/>		
B (Blended)	38.0	2.8
<hr/>		

**Inferential statistics**

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the perceived success of the adult learners as measured by an adapted version of the Perception of Success Questionnaire (Roberts, Treasure & Balague, 1998) for the two groups.

There was a significant difference in the Perception of Success scores with Group A scoring higher than Group B: Group A (M = 43.5, SD = 2.6) and Group B (M = 38.0, SD = 2.8;  $t(6) = 2.84$ ,  $p = .030$ , two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 5.50, 95% CI: 0.76 to 10.24) was large (eta squared = .57).

Please see (Appendix M) for more details on the SPSS analysis.

## Qualitative data coding and analysis

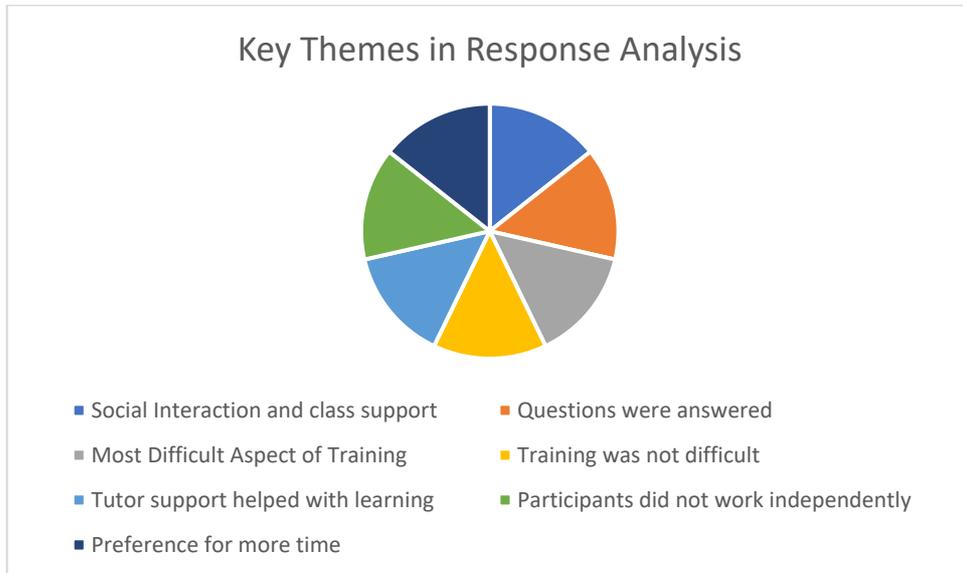
Responses to the 5 open-ended questions were chosen using a deductive thematic analysis based on the literature review (Taylor & Gibbs, 2010) and analysed using the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2006) as follows:

- Familiarisation with the data gathered: Combining the responses to the questions, reading and understand the information and documenting initial ideas for themes
- Generating initial codes: Collating the data into the initial groups based on initial coding, for example “Talking to other students”, “Discussing training in class”
- Identifying themes: Reviewing the codes and creating themes, gathering the relevant data into the potential themes
- Reviewing the themes: Generating a thematic map of the analysis
- Defining and naming the themes: Re-analysing the themes, clearly defining and naming the themes, for example “Talking with others”, “Interacting and working with others” and “Classroom Interaction” were combined into “Social Interaction and Class Support”
- Producing a report: Including the output of the analysis in the discussion of the research

The open-ended questions explored 4 key areas and during the thematic analysis 7 key themes were identified. Figure 1 has the details of these themes. Since the sample was small, an inter-rater reliability check on 50% of the data was undertaken by an independent rater to ensure credibility of the findings. The review had a 90% agreement with the initial analysis.

**Figure 1**

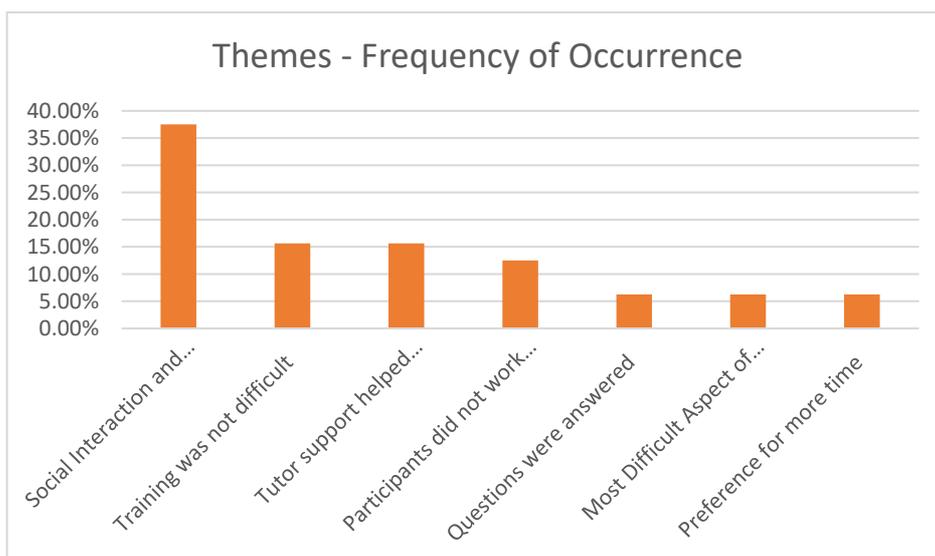
*Analysis of Open-Ended Questions– Key Themes*



Please see Figure 2 for the frequencies of the themes identified. Full details of the coding frame are in the appendix (see Appendix N).

**Figure 2**

*Analysis of Open-Ended Questions – Frequency of Themes*



## Discussion

This study aimed to explore the impact of blended learning on the perceived success of adult learners enrolled in a literacy programme. The hypothesis that there will be no difference in perceived success between adult learners who participate in a blended learning programme versus a face-to-face delivery of the same programme was not supported. The mean perception of success was significantly higher for the face-to-face only group.

This result is consistent with findings from prior research. In Li & Markovich's (2018) study, the majority of participants felt that tutor support contributed to their perceived success. Participants in that study who had positive comments on the on-line element cited the availability of online tutors as a reason for the positive impression. The online element of the current study did not have access to a tutor, so the higher scores for face-to-face also appear to support the findings of Tighe et al. (2013) where students indicated that teachers were an essential component in their success.

In the current study, it is possible that the mean age of 70 years may have contributed to the higher scores for the face-to-face group. Li & Markovich (2018) found a moderate positive correlation between the participants' outlook towards face-to-face delivery of training and their age. In contrast, Park & Choi (2010) found no significant correlation between age and attitude of students to online learning while Edwards (2018) found no significant relationship between students' attitudes to online learning and age. Participants in this contrary evidence (Park & Choi, 2010; Edwards, 2018) were not adult literacy students and digital literacy was not considered. These factors may have an impact on the relevance of the results.

The result of the quantitative analysis appears to be supported by the findings of the qualitative analysis. Several key themes emerged which are in line with prior research and existing theories. The most frequent theme mentioned by students was 'Social Interaction and Class Support' with 37.5% citing this as having contributed to perceived success.

This was reflected in responses like, “I was very happy with the training given, information received and chats among our class was [sic] very helpful working as a team” (Participant 2). This aligns with existing Constructivism and Social Constructivism learning theory (Ertmer & Newby, 2013; Glassman, 2001) which emphasises the social context and importance of collaborative learning. While the Community of Inquiry framework (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000) also highlights discussion, interaction and social presence online, the design of the online element of this research did not incorporate online collaborative learning opportunities, so it cannot be said that this result aligns with that framework. The importance of class support and social interaction correlates favourably with existing research including Li & Markovich (2018), where students noted that collaborating with peers in face-to-face classes had a positive influence on their learning and Skordis-Worrall et al. (2015) who found the lack of interaction and sense of community coupled with feelings of isolation were perceived as a limitation of online learning.

The next most frequent theme of ‘Tutor Support Helped with Learning’ (15.6%) which included quotations such as, “My tutors help was just great” (Participant 3), lends support to the existing theories of Constructivism and Social Constructivism (Ertmer & Newby, 2013; Glassman, 2001) and Community of Inquiry model (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000) with emphasis on teaching presence and where the tutor facilitates the learner to learn. It also corroborates a range of existing research which found that tutor support was valued by students, and that personal interactions with the trainer and teaching support was an essential contributor to their perceived success (Tighe et al. (2013); Li & Markovich (2018); Hauser et al. (2012); Reynolds & Johnson (2014)). These findings do not appear to support the theory of Connectivism (Siemens, 2004) which does not clearly define the role of the tutor and focuses on the concept of self-directed independent learning.

The ‘Training was not Difficult’ theme (15.6%) included quotations such as, “I did not find it difficult as all questions were answered to my satisfaction” (Participant 4) may be associated with tutor or peer support or the content of the training material.

However, without more detail around why the students perceived it to be not difficult it is not possible to establish a link to existing theory or prior research.

The theme of 'Participants did not Work Independently' (12.5%) also support this contrary finding, with comments like, "I didn't work independently" (Participant 6). This has similarities with existing research from Phillips, Turnbull & He (2015) which proposed that online learners need a high degree of self-directed learning readiness to succeed and Owston, York & Murtha (2013), who found that high-achieving students were more satisfied with their blended learning courses and learned better, whereas low-achieving participants found blended learning courses challenging.

The less frequent theme of, 'Preference for More Time' (6.25%), including, "More time with the training" (Participant 5), possibly provides some further support for a study recommended by Hegarty & Feeley (2011), around the pace of literacy learning made possible by blended learning and may be in line with Skordis-Worrall et al.'s (2015) research where the students found the pace of online learning was slower than face-to-face.

Overall, the findings are supportive of prior research and existing theory. Using both quantitative and qualitative questions in the survey enabled triangulation of the data increasing confidence in the results. (Creswell, 2012).

### **Strengths**

The Case Study approach was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to focus in-depth on a small specific group's experience in context, thus contributing to a deeper understanding of the contribution the method of delivery made to participants' perceived success (Yin, 2017; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Triangulating the data and an inter-rater reliability check strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of the results and provided a richer insight into perception of success from the participants' perspective. (Robson & McCartan, 2015).

The results are theoretically generalisable to other groups of adult literacy learners participating in any level 3 course at level 3 on the NFQ at the same or other adult learning centres in Ireland (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

The quantitative component was appropriate since the perceived success of the sample could be measured using an established scale and it was possible to manipulate the Delivery Method variable to analyse the impact on the Perceived Success variable (Robson & McCartan, 2015). The convenience and purposeful sampling approach allowed access to the adult learners already enrolled in a literacy programme who were at the same level of literacy (NFQ Level 3) and possessed the knowledge and experience to answer the research question. (Robson & McCartan, 2015). The material and the tutor were the same for both groups which reduced the potential impact of confounding variables on the experiment's results. The online material applied Hess (2014) MAGIC design principles for online tutorials in that the module was Maintainable, Available, Geared at Users, In-formative, and easily Customizable. The survey to collect the data was accessible, easy to use and appropriate for the respondents since it was designed using Plain English guidelines (NALA, 2019).

### **Limitations**

The findings from this case study have limited generalisability (Tellis, 1997). Since prior research indicates that some of the benefits of blended learning include enabling participants to extend learning time and provide flexibility in accessing work outside of class times (Hegarty & Feeley, 2013; Li & Markovich, 2018), the lack of this option may have impacted the perceived success scores. Although previous research found no correlation between gender and attitudes to online learning (Li & Markovich, 2018), there were no female participants in the Blending Learning group, so gender may have confounded the results. Even though the level of information in the responses to the open-ended questions provided valuable background, the lack of detail in the responses to some questions may be associated with the literacy levels of the participants. A focus group session may have provided a better alternative for collecting the qualitative data.

## **Theoretical implications**

This research adds further weight to existing learning theory particularly Constructivism and Social Constructivism (Dewey, 1938; Glassman, 2001) where the role of the tutor is proposed as facilitating the learner to learn. Although these theories pre-date the significant influence of technology on learning, these research findings on the positive contribution of tutor and peer support reinforce their relevance today. The theories can continue to contribute to eLearning design of online collaborative learning activities and learning exercises that encourage discovery (Kibuku & Ochieng, 2019). The results substantiate the Community of Inquiry Model (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000) and its emphasis on the interaction between students and teachers. The 'Not Working Independently' contributor to success and its possible links to self-directed learning support proposals to extend the model to include learning presence to potentially mitigate lower teaching and social presence online (Shea & Bidjerano, 2012). The triangulation of results where the qualitative responses align with the quantitative outcomes supports the suitability of measuring success based on the goal orientations cited in Achievement Goal Theory (Nicholls, 1984) and not focusing only on task-mastery goals to measure success. The results add support for proposals that the theory should consider influences such as context, for example, online vs. off-line (Wirthwein et al., 2013).

## **Practical implications and Future Research**

A longitudinal study with a variety of learning topics at more than one literacy centre would help address some of the limitations of this research and provide more information on the learning process over time, including fluctuations in perceived success and fear of failure. The design of the online element of training attempted to replicate some tutor presence by using a passive cinema usher character but it did not include any voice-over or avatar representing the presence of a tutor. There was also no capability to interact with the tutor or other students online. A study incorporating these design elements and their potential contribution to success would be beneficial.

While the perception of success scale (Roberts, Treasure & Balague, 1998) is an established scale it is primarily used in the context of sport. Further investigation to establish the construct validity of the adapted scale for this context would provide more confidence in the measure.

These research findings can contribute, in a small way, to the approach and design of the online elements of blended learning training for adult literacy students. With the high value placed on peer and tutor support, consideration should be given to replicating these elements as much as possible in the online delivery including collaborative spaces and timely tutor feedback. Additionally, how individuals perceive success is more multifaceted than, for example reaching a defined level of literacy. Considering the perceptions of the learner in how success is measured could contribute to a more rewarding learning process. Initiatives like Distance Travelled tool (SICAP, 2020) which measures soft outcomes, for example, problem solving abilities and self-confidence progress, are already contributing to this area.

## **Conclusion**

This study provides some insight into the impact that a blended learning approach has on adult learners' perceived success. Ascertaining directly from the learners how they think the training contributed to perceived success has added a certain level of detail on individual perceptions and provided support for findings of prior research. Adapting the case study approach used to include observational study and more detailed focus groups and interviews across a range of locations could enhance this detail and provide a more complete understanding of learners' needs. The research question looked in particular at the method of delivery but expanding the question to further investigate some of the results would be informative.

Additional research around the pace of learning, the impact of individual difference on perceived success and how the learners' level of digital literacy influenced perception would contribute to the body of knowledge in this area.

Although the value placed on peer and tutor support is supported by existing adult learning theories, including Constructivism (Ertmer & Newby, 2013; Glassman, 2001) and the Community of Inquiry model (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000), expanding the blended learning element in further studies to incorporate the proposals of Connectivism would also contribute to a deeper understanding of how and why learners learn and how technology can support success.

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## Appendix A

### Ethics B Form

# DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

## ETHICAL APPROVAL FORM B\*

Title of project The impact of blended learning on the perceived success of adult learners participating in a literacy program

Name of researcher Carmel Fahy

Email contact fahy.carmel@gmail.com

Name of supervisor Sinead Meade

		Yes	No	N/A
1	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	X		
2	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	X		
3	Will you obtain written consent for participation (through a signed or 'ticked' consent form)?	X		
4	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	X		
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	X		
6	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	X		
7	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	X		
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e., give them a brief explanation of the study)?	X		
9	If your study involves people between 16 and 18 years, will you ensure that <u>passive</u> consent is obtained from			X

	parents/guardians, with active consent obtained from both the child and their school/organisation?			
10	If your study involves people under 16 years, will you ensure that <u>active</u> consent is obtained from parents/guardians <u>and</u> that a parent/guardian or their nominee (such as a teacher) will be present throughout the data collection period?			X
11	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?		X	
12	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?		X	
13	Does your project involve work with animals?		X	
14	Do you plan to give individual feedback to participants regarding their scores on any task or scale?		X	
15	Does your study examine any sensitive topics (such as, but not limited to, religion, sexuality, alcohol, crime, drugs, mental health, physical health)		X	
16	Is your study designed to change the mental state of participants in any negative way (such as inducing aggression, frustration, etc.)		X	
17	Does your study involve an external agency (e.g. for recruitment)?	X		
18	Do participants fall into any of the following special groups?	People with learning or communication difficulties	X	
		Patients (either inpatient or outpatient)		
		People in custody		

If you have ticked **No** to any of questions 1 to 10, or **Yes** to any of questions 11 to 18 you should refer to the PSI Code of Professional Ethics and BPS Guidelines. There is an obligation on the lead researcher to bring to the attention of the Department of Technology and Psychology Ethics Committee (DTPEC) any issues with ethical implications not clearly covered by the above checklist.

\* This Ethics B form should be completed by researchers whose studies involve any ethically questionable practices.

I consider that this project **may** have ethical implications that should be brought before the DTPEC.

Please provide all the further information listed below, adhering closely to the suggested word counts.

#### 1. Purpose of project

The focus of this research is on blended learning in the context of adult learners participating in a literacy program to develop a better understanding of the contribution it makes, compared with face to face only delivery, to the success of these adult learners. The Learning for Life 2000 white paper (Department of Education and Science, 2009) contended that “the application of ICT in Adult Education practice had vast untapped potential”. There has been independent research since then commissioned by NALA but the focus has mainly been on their own WriteOn program. Further research on blended learning has been primarily focused on 3<sup>rd</sup> level students and while they have found that there are advantages and it does contribute to success, it also found that individuals with a high degree of self-directed learning were more successful with blended learning and that participants valued the interaction with their peers and tutor. Since literacy challenged adult learners may not, at least initially, have a high degree of self-directed learning and may rely on tutor support it is important to understand more about how successful a blended learning approach is with this particular type of learner in order to maximize the potential of this learning approach.

#### 2. Proposed methodology:

**Recruitment:** Participant will be drawn from the adult literacy students already participating in an adult literacy program at a Training Centre of the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) They will be recruited, following an information session explaining the purpose of the experiment. All learners will be informed that their participation is voluntary. During the session they will review an information sheet and complete consent forms. The researcher and a literacy tutor from CDETb Ballyfermot will verbally walk through the content of all forms and allow

time for questions. Following that session, the volunteers will be assigned to the face to face or blended learning group.

**Number and age:** 24 participants over the age of 18 years randomly assigned to two groups of 12.

**Gender:** Varied gender depending on who volunteers

**Inclusion Criteria:**

1. Participants will be required to be English speaking
2. Participants will need to be already enrolled in an Adult Literacy program at CDETB Centre Ballyfermot
3. Participants must have provided informed consent

There are no **Exclusion Criteria**

**Methods and Measurements**

The proposed study will have an experimental fixed design where one group of students will participate in a blended learning delivery of a literacy training module and the other will receive the same training content but only in a face to face environment. The perceived success of the adult learners will be measured to gain a better understanding of the contribution blended learning might make to learners' success. The Progress Framework, a tool for teaching and learning developed in 2012 by the CDETB, will be completed before and after the course by participants in both groups. The framework (*Appendix C*) is supported by the guidelines produced in the Solas Report on ongoing assessment of Adult Literacy and Numeracy (Solas, 2018) The framework matches particular tasks with pre-defined levels of Reading and Writing Literacy and records the stage of the learners progress across 6 dimensions: Knowledge of skill, Fluency, Setting, Confidence, Learning Process and Independence. Because it considers not just Knowledge and Fluency but also Independence and Setting it provides a well-rounded, inclusive view of student's performance and progress.

**Ethical Considerations**

In completing the research, the following ethical considerations are relevant to the research and the participants. Voluntary participation, participant anonymity, participants' right to withdraw from the study, informed consent and secure data storage. Since the participants may have literacy challenges the information sheet and consent forms will be reviewed verbally to confirm understanding and to ensure that the consent is an agreement between the participant and the researcher to work

collaboratively. The aim of the information session, where the participants will be recruited, is to emphasize the voluntary nature of the participation and provide background on the reason for and the nature of the study. During that session and again in the debrief participants will be reminded that they can opt out of the research at any time. The research question is concerned with measuring perceived success and will only collect data, using the Progress Framework, that is relevant to that question. Data collected will not be personally identifiable and will be disposed out within the timelines agreed and consented to by the participant.

I am familiar with the PSI Code of Professional Ethics and BPS Guidelines (and have discussed them with the other researchers involved in the project). I have read and understood the specific guidelines for completion of Ethics Application Forms.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Applicant*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Supervisor*

## Appendix B

### External Approval for Research



To Whom It May Concern

I confirm that Ms. Carmel Fahy has permission to undertake research with students of the City of Dublin Education & Training Board.

The purpose of the research is for a thesis, the topic of which is 'The impact of blended learning on the perceived success of adult learners participating in a literacy programme'.

Signed:   
Blake Hodkinson, Director of FET

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Príomhfheidhmeannach / Chief Executive: Carol Hanney BA, H Dip, M Ed.

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## Appendix C

**Link to Google Form Survey:**

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yj0EyaSMImVrH9896lxCTzvIldHypG5ppHLT8X3bss4/prefill>

## **Appendix D**

### **Information Sheet**

**Study Title: Does a mix of online and classroom learning compared to classroom learning only make a difference to participants' sense of success in a learning programme**

#### **Why am I doing this Research?**

The research is trying to understand if using online learning as well as working with your tutor in the classroom, compared to classroom only learning, makes a difference to your sense of success when completing a topic for the course you are in.

#### **Invitation**

Would you like to take part in a study about whether a mix of online and classroom learning makes a difference to your sense of success in a learning programme?

The project is carried out by **Carmel Fahy**

Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what you will be doing. Please take time to read this information carefully and talk with friends and family or your Adult Literacy Organiser. If anything is unclear or if you need more details, please contact me.

### **Do I have to take part?**

**You do not have to take part.** If you decide to take part, you will need to sign two copies of a consent form. One consent form is for you to keep and the other is for my records.

You can change your mind and leave the study at any time. You do not have to give me a reason. Taking part in this study has no impact on any future studies or exams you do in the centre.

### **If I take part, what do I have to do?**

As part of the course you are attending at the centre, you will learn how to write a film review.

1. Depending on what group you are in, you will either
  - complete the topic in class with help from your tutor
  - complete the topic in class with help from your tutor AND have some extra online training that you will look at during your Computer Skills class.
2. After completing the topic, you will watch the film you are going to review.
3. After you have watched the film, you will be asked to complete a short survey about your thoughts on learning to write a film review.

Note: All participants will have access to the online material when the training is completed

**Why should I take part?**

Taking part will help educators better understand if combining online and classroom learning has an effect on how successful students feel. This may help with the design of future courses.

**What are the disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

There are no risks to taking part and no risks if you change your mind and leave the study at any time.

**How will you use information about me?**

I (Carmel Fahy) will use the information collected to understand better the effect a combination of online and classroom learning might have on how successful students feel.

I will analyse the information and will write about it in my report about this study. This report is part of my Masters in Cyberpsychology thesis and may be included in academic papers or presentations.

### **Who will have access to information about me?**

- Your personal information and feedback will be stored securely. Any paper copies will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and online copies will be saved in a password protected drive on the Institute of Art Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT) computer network.
- The personal information will be changed so nobody will recognise you from reading the information. You will create a private reference number so that you can have your personal information and feedback removed at any time before April 1st 2020. Nobody else will know that the data relates to you.
- I will keep the anonymous data for 5 years.
- After 5 years have passed, I will delete the online copies and shred the paper copies.

### **What will happen to the results of the study?**

This report will be part of my (Carmel Fahy's) thesis and will be submitted to the Institute of Art Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT) as part of my Masters in Cyberpsychology. If you would like to see a copy of the completed research, you can contact me at [N00182601@student.iadt.ie](mailto:N00182601@student.iadt.ie)

### **Who has reviewed the study?**

This study has been approved by the Department of Technology and Psychology Ethics Committee (DTPEC) in IADT.

### **What if there is a problem?**

If you are worried about any aspect of this study, please contact me or my supervisor. Contact details are provided below.

**Contact for further information**

- Carmel Fahy [N00182601@student.iadt.ie](mailto:N00182601@student.iadt.ie)
- Sinead Meade (Thesis supervisor) **Email:** sinead.meade@iadt.ie.

**Thank you**

Thank you for taking the time to listen to this talk about my research and for reading this information sheet.

**Date**

## Appendix E

### Consent Form

**This Project: Does a mix of online and classroom learning compared to classroom learning only make a difference to participants' sense of success in a learning programme**

Name of Researcher: Carmel Fahy

No.		Yes	No
1	My tutor has explained the study and the information sheet for the above study.		
2	I had the opportunity to ask questions to make sure I understood		
3	I understand that taking part in the research is voluntary and I can leave the study at any time.		
4	I agree to take part in this study.		
5	I understand that any personal information collected during this study will be changed so that nobody reading the thesis will recognise me.		
6	I agree to be contacted about other research projects that I might be interested in.		

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant                      Date                      Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Researcher                      Date                      Signature

## Consent Form (for use of quotes)

**This Project: Does a mix of classroom and online learning compared to classroom only learning make a difference to how successful you feel when you have completed a topic in a course**

I may want to quote you directly in my thesis. Your personal information collected during this study will be changed so that nobody reading the thesis will recognise me.

Name of Researcher: ***Carmel Fahy***

**Please tick ONE of the boxes below**

- 1 You can use quotes from me in your study
  
- 2 Do not include quotes from in your study
  
- 3 Before using any quotes from me, check with me first

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant      Date      Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Researcher      Date      Signature

## Appendix F

### Open Ended Questions

#### **Question 1**

What parts of “How to Write a Film Review” training best helped you to write the review? (For example; The training material, talking with other people in the class, being able to work on my own, etc) Why do you think they helped?

#### **Question 2**

What parts of training did you find most difficult and why?

#### **Question 3**

Which part of the training did you find easiest and why?

#### **Question 4**

If you worked independently without your tutor's help do you think that helped you learn more and why?

#### **Question 5**

What, if anything, could the training have included that would have made it easier for you to learn?

## Appendix G

### Adapted Perceived Success Questions

Child Question	Adult Question	Orientation	Definition	My Question
I try hard	I work hard	Task	Effort	I have worked hard
I really improve	I show clear personal improvement	Task	Self-Improvement	I have shown clear personal improvement
I overcome difficulties	I overcome difficulties	Task	Self-Improvement	I have overcome difficulties when trying to learn this topic
I succeed at something I couldn't do before	I reach a goal	Task	Learning a new task	I can succeed at something I could not do before
I perform to the best of my ability	I perform to the best of my ability	Task	Effort	I have performed to the best of my ability
I reach a target I set for myself	I reach personal goals	Task	Task Mastery	I have reached a target I set for myself
I beat other people	I beat other people	Ego	Superior Ability	I have learned more than other people in my class
I am the best	I win	Ego	Superior Ability	I was better at learning than anyone else in the class
I do better than others	I am the best	Ego	Better than others	I think I did better than others in the class
I show other people I am the best	I show other people I am the best	Ego	Superior Ability	I can show others that I succeeded in my learning
I accomplish something others cannot do	I outperform my opponents	Ego	Better than others	I can do something others cannot do
I am clearly better	I am clearly superior	Ego	Better than others	It is clear to others that I am better at this topic

## Appendix H

### Debrief

Thank you very much for taking part in this research study.

**The study that you took part in trying to understand if a mix of classroom and online learning make a difference to how successful you feel when you have completed a topic in a course**

If you have questions about this research or if you want to remove your personal information and feedback results from the study carried out in February 2020 please contact me at the following e-mail address:

[N00182601@student.iadt.ie](mailto:N00182601@student.iadt.ie).

Alternatively, you may contact my supervisor at the Institute of Art Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT) on + 353 1 239 4000; **Email:** [sinead.meade@iadt.ie](mailto:sinead.meade@iadt.ie).

Thank you so much for joining in the research. I want to make sure you understand that your personal information is confidential and will be changed so nobody would know who you are from reading it and would not be able to link it back to you.

If you have been affected by the content of this study in any way, the Adult Literacy Organiser or the Adult Education Guidance Service below may be of assistance:

Phone 01 623 9716 Email: [siobhan.condron@aes.cdetb.ie](mailto:siobhan.condron@aes.cdetb.ie)

Carmel Fahy

## **Appendix I**

### **Training Material**

#### **Writing a Film Review** (approx. 45 minutes)

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Having completed this session participants will have learned about how approach writing a film review. They will:

- Identify ways to finding a starting point and stimulating ideas for writing the film review
- recognize the typical format and content of a film review
- Identify typical terms that are used in a film review
- Recognize the steps in writing a film review

After this session, participants will watch *Borstal Boy* and write a review of the film.

## Writing a film review

### What is a film review?

A film review is an examination of a film or a documentary that gives you information about the film. The person who writes the review (the reviewer) studies the story and the style of the film and lets you know what they thought of it. The Reviewer may also try to convince you to watch or go to see the film. Sometimes, film reviews are funny, with catchy titles and funny descriptions of the actors or the story. The reviewer sometimes uses a “star rating” so the reader can quickly see what the reviewer thought of the film, without having to read the review.

The next page has an example.

Read through the review and see if you can find examples of the following:

- Where you can quickly see what they thought of the film
- Information about the type of film it is
- Details about the story
- Where the reviewer is trying to convince you to watch film

## Movie Review - Meet the Parents



**5 STARS!!!**



I saw *Meet the Parents* and really liked the film. It is a comedy that shows what happens when a man meets his girlfriend's family for the first time. He ends up getting himself into a lot of trouble that he never expected.

This movie is filled with amazing actors who make the film really good. First, Robert De Niro gives a great performance in this film and is very funny. Ben Stiller, as the lead actor, is his usual funny self. Finally, Owen Wilson is also funny in the film, even though he is playing a supporting role. The casting for this movie is very well done

During his first meeting with his girlfriend's family, Greg (Ben Stiller) gets himself into troubles involving family pets, lies, family members, fires, and even sports. The problems he faces will have you in stitches. He is unlucky with the amount of funny problems he finds himself in. It is hard to know what is going happen at the end and it keeps you on the edge of your seat.

One of the best things about this movie is you can understand how he feels. We all have those moments, some of them with our love lives and family lives that are funny and embarrassing. You can't help but laugh at his expense.

Without giving too much away, there are so many times where you think that Greg is finally going to make a good impression but then ends up messing up all over again, making you laugh even more.

Overall, this is a great movie with a mix of laughs and a love story all rolled into one. If you're looking for a pick-me-up or a good laugh, this is the movie for you.



Was there information in the review about the type of film it was?  
Can you write a short example from the review?

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Does the review give some detail of the story? Can you write a short example from the review?

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Does the reviewer try to encourage you to watch film? Can you write a short example from the review?

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## Common words in Film Reviews

When you start to read film reviews, you will see the same words and terms in most of them. Here are a some you might come across You can use them when you are writing your review.

**Genre:** The category that the film belongs to. For example, the film could be Comedy or Science Fiction or Western or Crime or Horror

**Plot:** What the story is about. For example, “Frozen” is about a princess who has magical powers that mean she can create ice and snow. Her sister must find her to free the country they live in from endless winter.

**Characters:** The characters in a film, are the people that the film is about. For example, “Frozen” is about two princesses “Elsa” and “Anna”.

In “Meet the Parents” the main character is “Greg” played by Ben Stiller.

**Audience:** The group of people that the film might suit. For example: “Frozen” would be suited to a young audience but a horror film might only be suited to adults.

**Spoiler:** When a reviewer writes about secrets and plot twists that could ruin the surprise for the audience and mean they would not enjoy the film as much.

When writing a review, you should try to be sure you don't have any spoilers. Don't give too much away!



Match the word to the description. The first one is done for you:

<b>Word</b>	<b>Description</b>
Characters	The people that the film might suit best. For example, Over 18s
Plot	The type or category of film. For example, Crime
Spoiler	The people that the film is about
Audience	The story of the film
Genre	Telling too much about surprises or how the film ends

## The layout of your film review

Film reviews can look very different, but they usually have some of the same common sections.



Have a look at the useful handout that your tutor has given to you to help with the layout and to give ideas about what you can include in each section of a film review.

We can talk about this as a group.



You should keep this handout in your folder and bring it with you when you are going to watch the film.



Can you remember the last film or even TV show you watched? Could you write a line or two in the sections below about it?

Film Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Star Rating



The Plot

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Your Opinion

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***\*\*\*Only deliver this section to Group 1. This section will be completed online by Group 2***

## Getting Ready to Review a Film

In your next class, you will watch the film *Borstal Boy* and will prepare to write a review of the film.

When you're watching a film that you are going to review, it helps to be prepared while you are watching it.



Let's go back over the layout and terms to use

See details in Appendix I

Looks like you're ready to watch the film and are prepared to write a review.

Don't forget:



Bring your My Film Review handout with you



Make notes



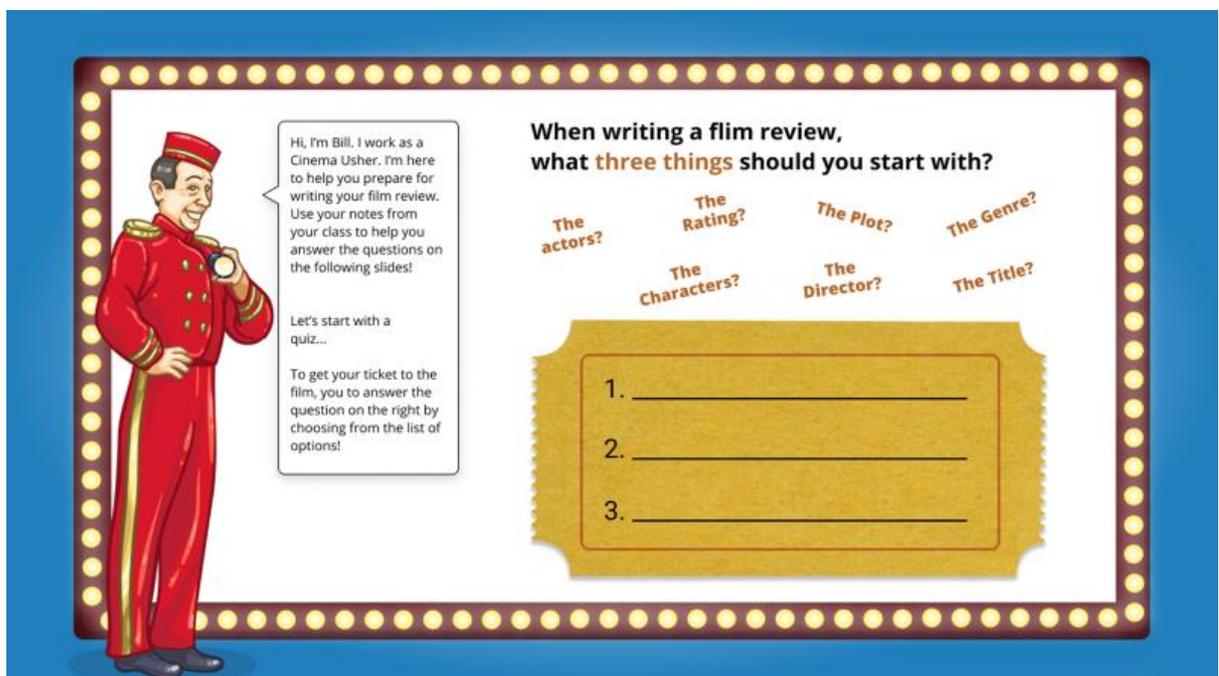
Think of why you like the film while you are watching it



Have fun!

## Appendix J

Online Material Hard Copy Delivered to Face-to-Face Group



## WRITING ABOUT THE PLOT!

When I read film reviews, I always like to find out a little bit about the film plot. But I don't want to know too much information or else it might ruin it for me!



When writing your review, what kinds of things should you include in the Plot section?

- Where the film is set?
- The title of the film?
- What happens in the film?
- How many awards it won?

## WRITING ABOUT THE CHARACTERS

When you are describing the characters in the film, what do you think is the most important information to include?

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My favourite film character ever is Spider-Man. He is a superhero who in real life is a man called Peter Parker. He is the main character in all of the Spider-Man movies. Peter Parker's backstory is that he was bitten by a radioactive spider during a field trip to Empire State University. This gave him superpowers and he became a hero by fighting criminals as Spider-Man so that he could still live his normal life as Peter Parker.





## Your opinion of the film!

When you write your film review you should always include a bit about your own opinion of the film.

Think of a film or TV Series you watched recently, what did you think of the plot and characters? Think about why you liked or disliked them.

Name of the film or TV series \_\_\_\_\_

What did you think of the plot?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

What did you think of the characters?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



## Your recommendation!

When recommending the film to others, you should always think about the type of people who would like it. Make sure you include this in your review!

Think of people you know, what type of films would they like?

HORROR FILMS	My child
ACTION ADVENTURE FILMS	My Mum
FAIRY TALES	My Grandparents
WESTERNS	My Partner
HISTORICAL FILMS	My Friends
KIDS MOVIES	



## Appendix K

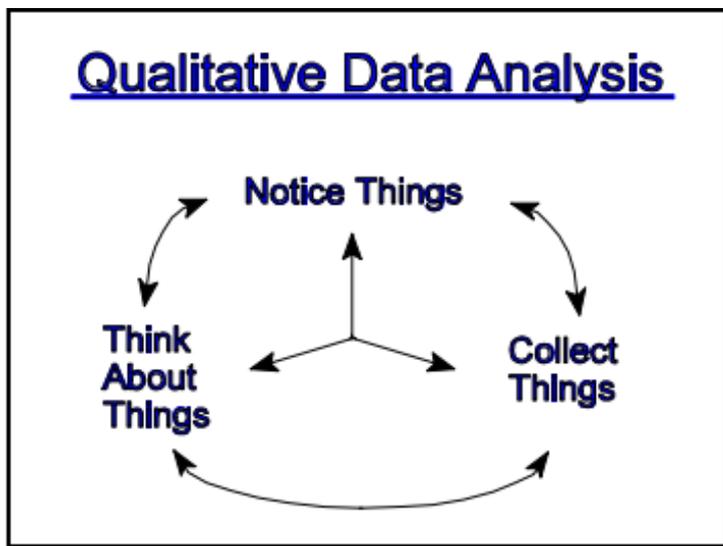
### Link to online material

<http://elearning.coolpeeps.nett>

## Appendix L

### Applying Seidel's Process

The responses to the 5 open questions were analysed using Seidel's process Noticing, Collecting and Thinking about thing as illustrated below:



For example, for the theme of Social Interaction and Class Support was the result of the following process.

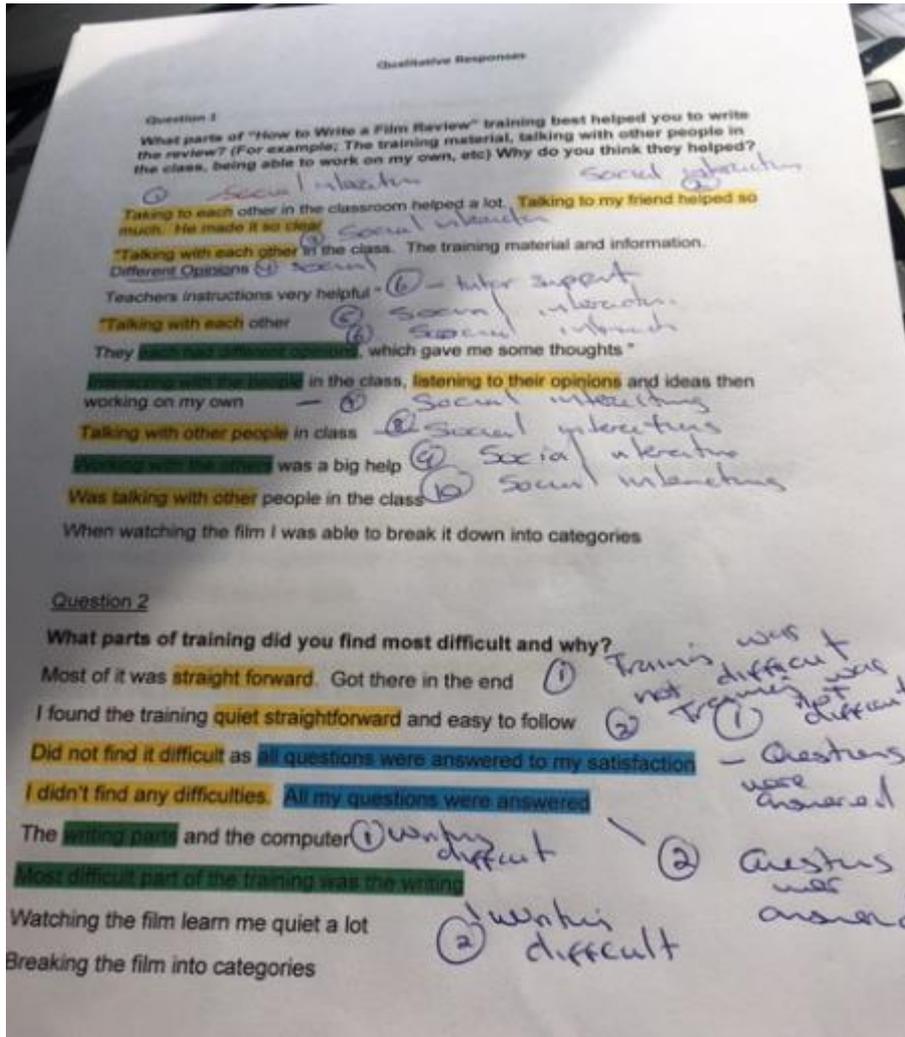
Initially noticed that “talking with others” “Working with others” “Discussion with classmates” occurs multiple times in the responses

Gathered all the “talking with other” together and “working with others” and “discussion with classmates into categories

Looked at the categories and the responses and after thinking about it recognised that they all are part of an overall theme and could be considered to be “Social Interaction and Class Support”

Reviewed the responses again and noticed other responses that could also fall into the category for example “different opinions”

Note: This was not a linear process but was iterative with the final categorisation occurring after multiple cycles of analysis.



Question 3

Which part of the training did you find easiest and why?

I found it fine. **It was easier than I thought** - Training was not difficult

I found training easiest to follow and with worksheets and good listening skills and discussions within the class (11) Social + Classroom interaction

**Listening to the teacher** - (12) Training was not difficult

How she explained the whole process of reviewing the play or film (1) Tutor support helped

Watching the film and online

Taking notes

I found the training very helpful. That easiest part was thinking of a film to review

Watching and understanding the film

Question 4

If you worked independently without your tutor's help do you think that helped you learn more and why?

I found it good to get independent help from my tutor (2) - Tutor support helped

No. I found it easier to engage within the class and some help from the tutor

"No - My tutors help was just great (3) tutor support helped"

I have learned a lot from my tutor (4) Tutor support helped

I would not have been able to work without the help of the teacher, the different stages of the process i.e. genre, characters, the plot etc (5) Tutor support helped

I didn't work independently (1)

I didn't work independently (2)

I didn't work independently (3)

Not applicable (4)

- Not working independently

Question 5

What, if anything, could the training have included that would have made it easier for you to learn?

Nothing - it was easier than I thought (5) Training not difficult

Nothing. I was very happy with the training given, information received and (11) Social + Classroom interaction

Nothing would have made it any easier (12) Social + Classroom interaction

Nothing at all

More time with the training (1) More time

More of a (12) Social + Classroom interaction

I would have liked to write the film review

If I had more time to study the film (2) More time

## Appendix M

### SPSS Output

#### Frequencies

##### Statistics

		Gender	Age
N	Valid	8	8
	Missing	0	0
Mean		1.3750	59.8750

#### Frequency Table

##### Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	5	62.5	62.5	62.5
	Female	3	37.5	37.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

**Age**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	39.00	1	12.5	12.5	12.5
	48.00	1	12.5	12.5	25.0
	55.00	1	12.5	12.5	37.5
	59.00	1	12.5	12.5	50.0
	63.00	1	12.5	12.5	62.5
	69.00	2	25.0	25.0	87.5
	77.00	1	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total		8	100.0	100.0

**Statistics**

Total Perceived Success

N	Valid	8
	Missing	0
Mean		40.7500

**Total Perceived Success**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	36.00	2	25.0	25.0	25.0
	38.00	1	12.5	12.5	37.5
	41.00	1	12.5	12.5	50.0
	42.00	2	25.0	25.0	75.0
	44.00	1	12.5	12.5	87.5
	47.00	1	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

**Descriptive stats**

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	8	39.00	77.00	59.8750	12.36860
Total Perceived Success	8	36.00	47.00	40.7500	3.88219
Valid N (listwise)	8				

**What type of training**

**Case Processing Summary**

What type of training		Cases					
		Valid		Missing			
		N	Percent	N	Percent		
Total Perceived Success	Classroom - Tutor Only	4	100.0%	0	0.0%		
	Classroom and Online	4	100.0%	0	0.0%		

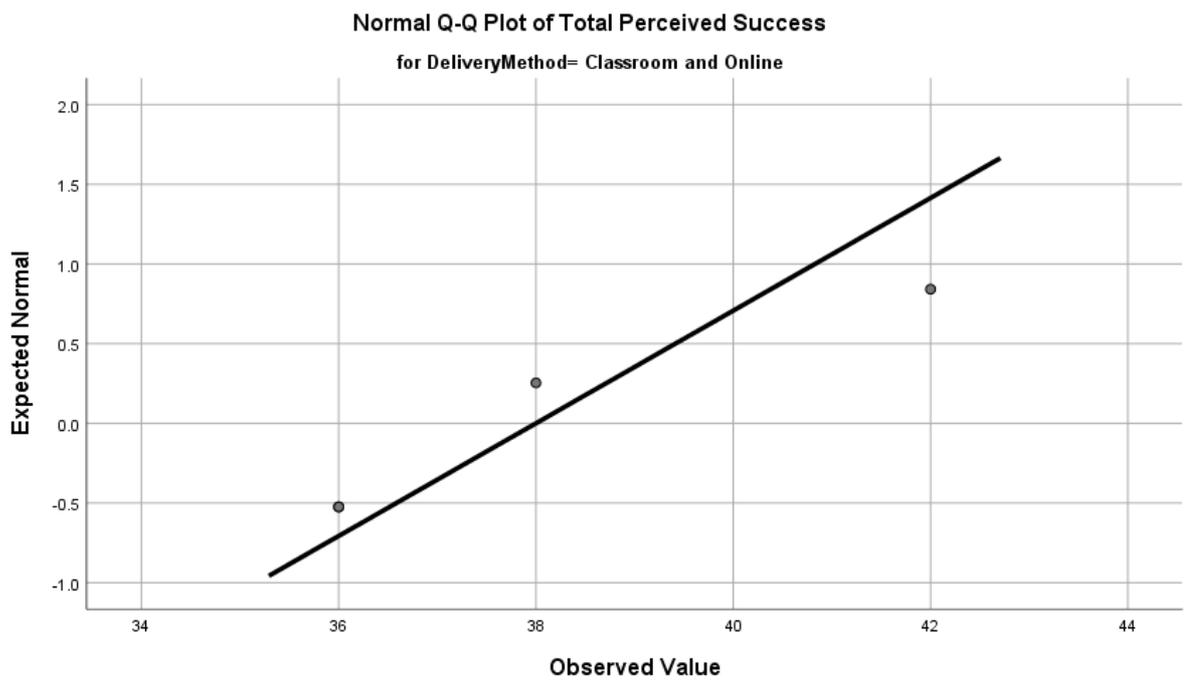
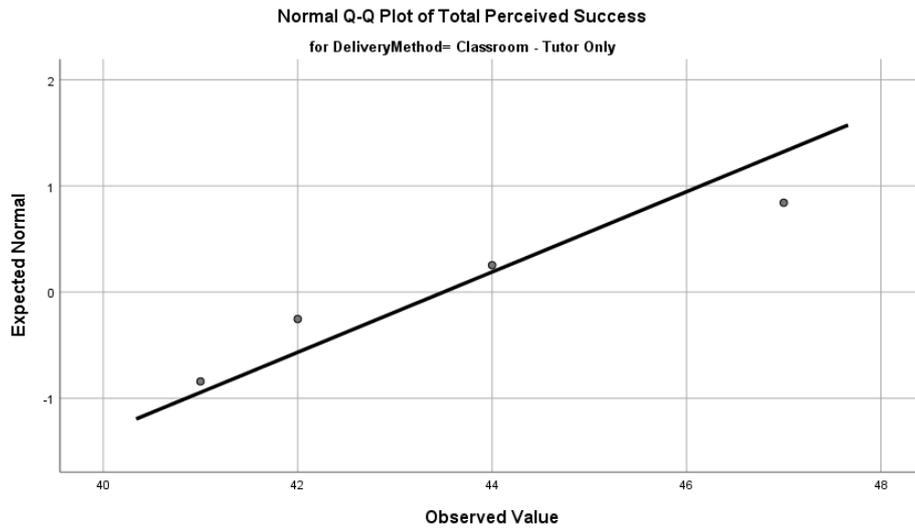
What type of training		Statistic				
Total Perceived Success	Classroom - Tutor Only	Mean		43.5000		
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound		39.2900	
			Upper Bound		47.7100	
		5% Trimmed Mean		43.4444		
		Median		43.0000		
		Variance		7.000		
		Std. Deviation		2.64575		
		Minimum		41.00		
		Maximum		47.00		
		Range		6.00		
Interquartile Range		5.00				

	Skewness		.864	
	Kurtosis		-.286	
Classroom and Online	Mean		38.0000	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	33.4993	
		Upper Bound	42.5007	
	5% Trimmed Mean		37.8889	
	Median		37.0000	
	Variance		8.000	
	Std. Deviation		2.82843	
	Minimum		36.00	
	Maximum		42.00	
	Range		6.00	
	Interquartile Range		5.00	
	Skewness		1.414	
	Kurtosis		1.500	

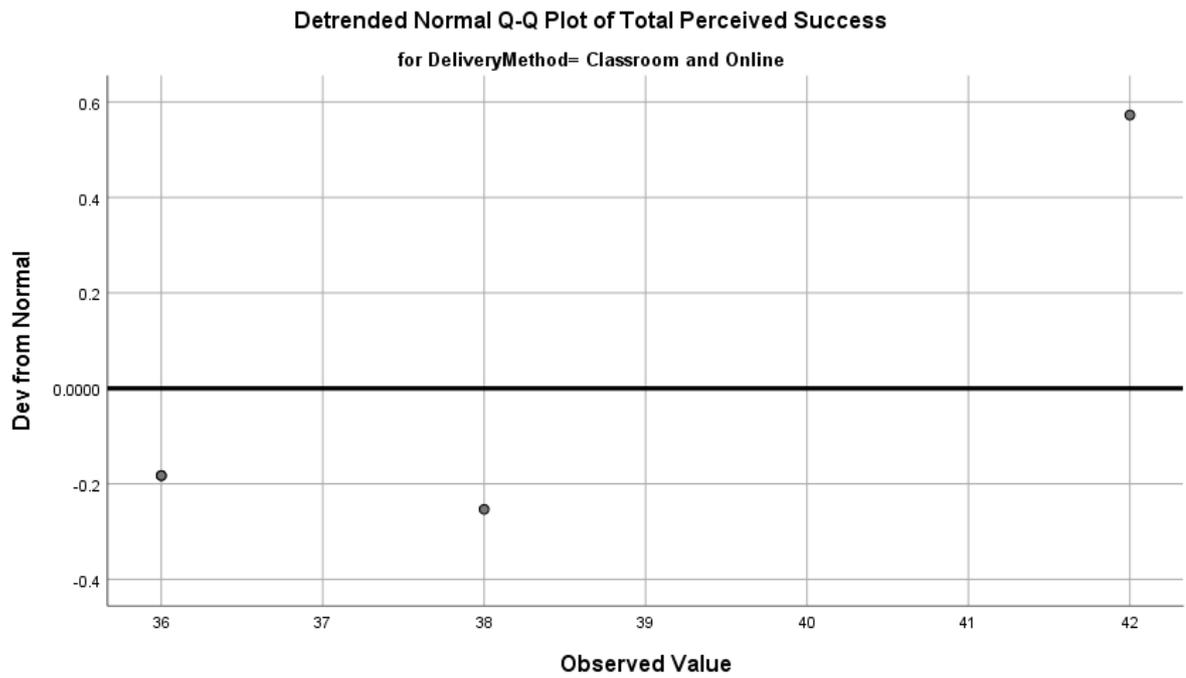
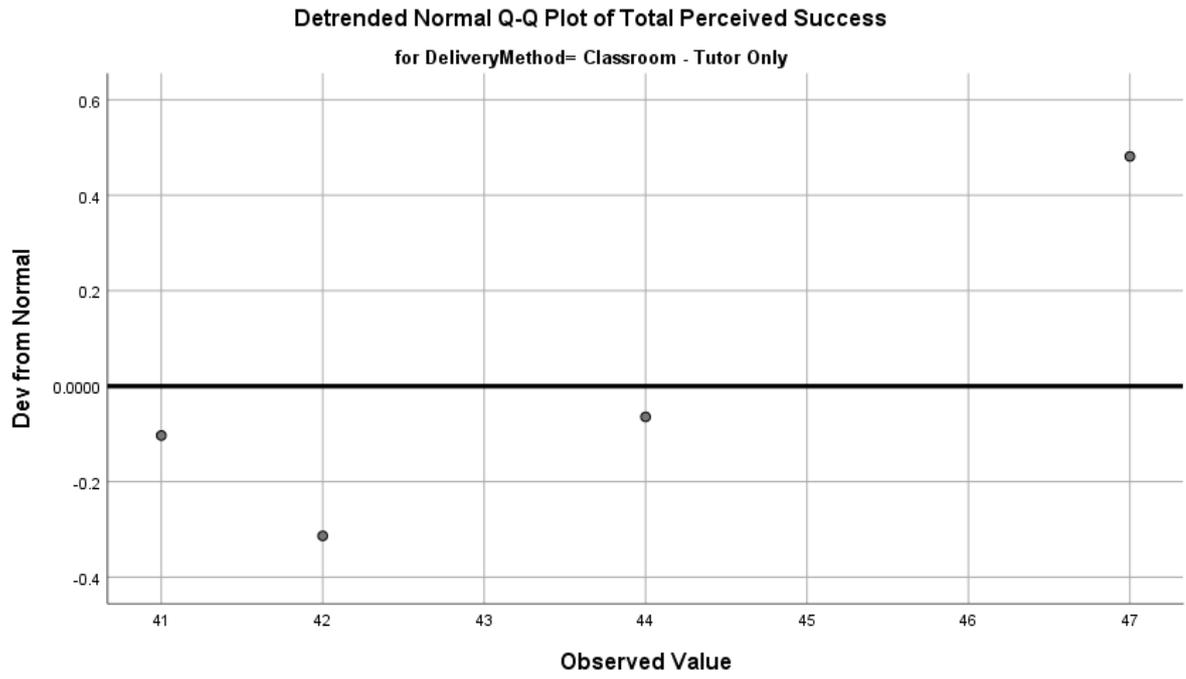
**Tests of Normality**

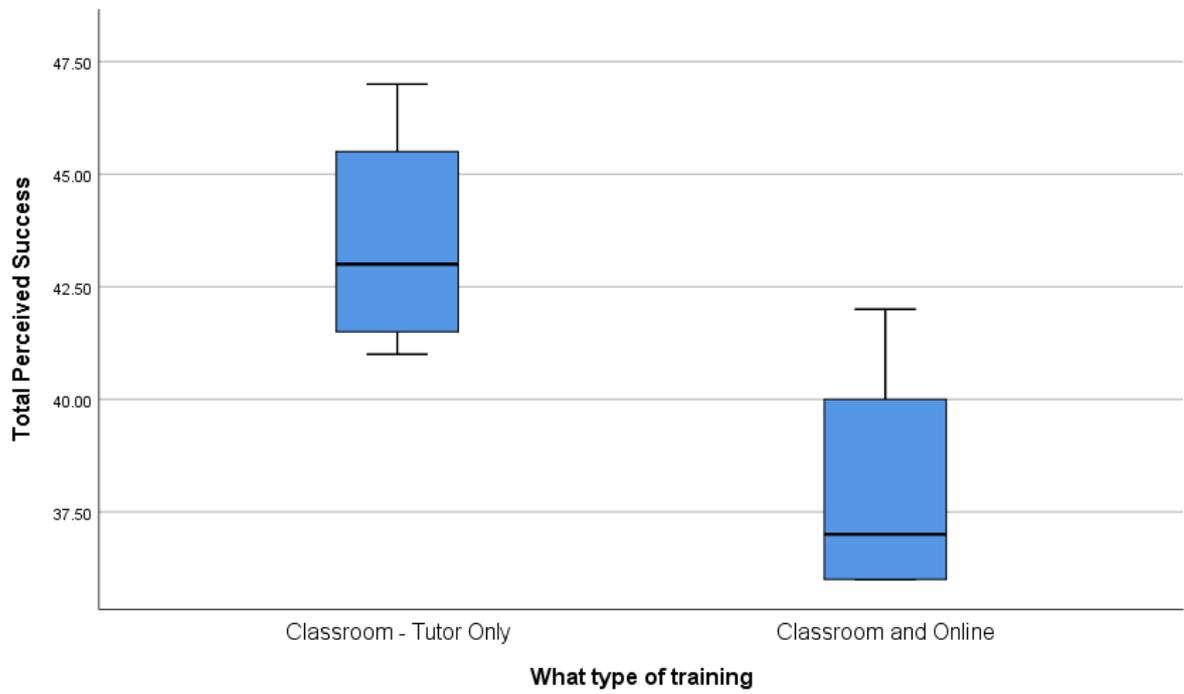
Total Perceived Success	What type of training	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk	Statistic		
		Statistic	df	Sig.				
Total Perceived Success	Classroom - Tutor Only	.215	4	.	.946			
	Classroom and Online	.260	4	.	.827			

Normal Q-Q Plots



### Detrended Normal Q-Q Plots





**T-Test**

**Group Statistics**

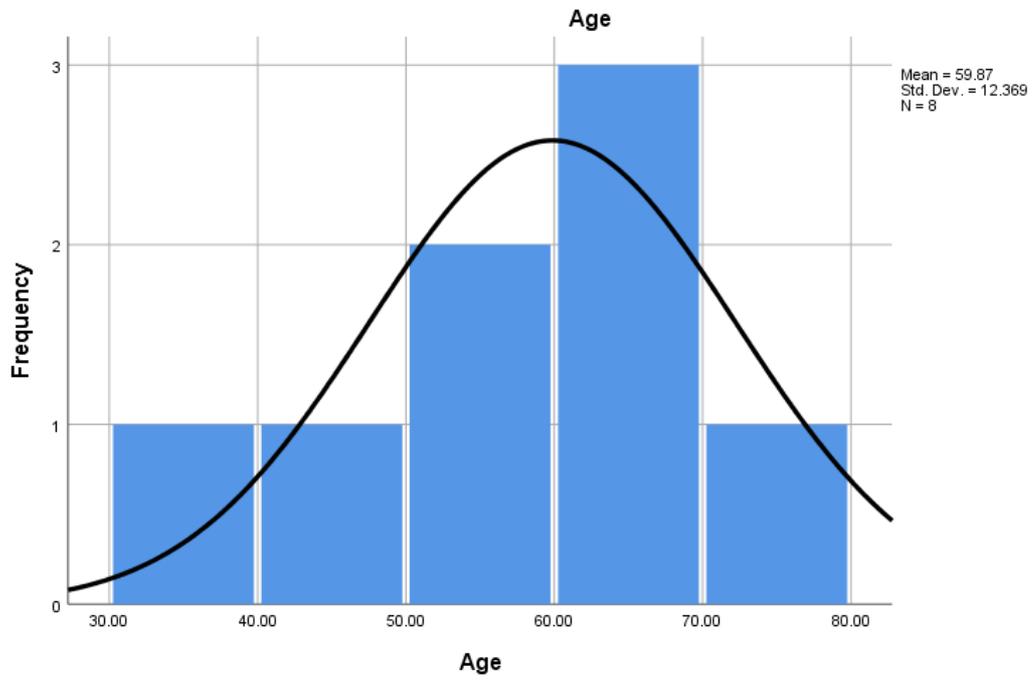
	What type of training	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Total Perceived Success	Classroom - Tutor Only	4	43.5000	2.64575	
	Classroom and Online	4	38.0000	2.82843	

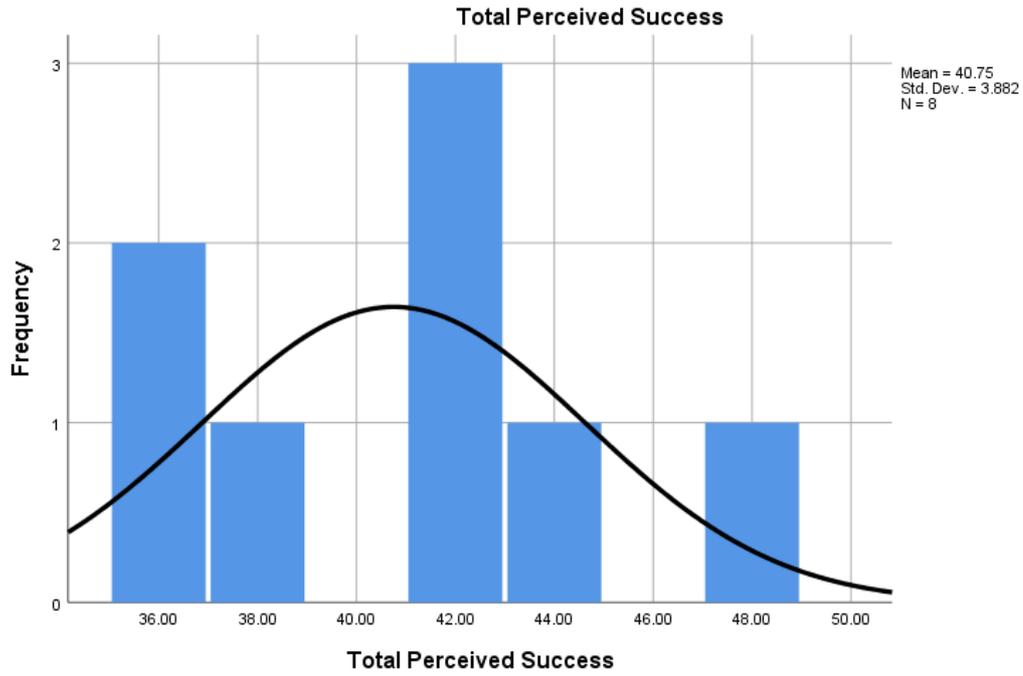
**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	t						
Total Perceived Success	Equal variances assumed	.000	2.840						
	Equal variances not assumed		2.840						

## Frequencies

## Histogram





## Descriptives

### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Error		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic		
Age	8	38.00	39.00	77.00	59.8750	4.37296		
Total Perceived Success	8	11.00	36.00	47.00	40.7500	1.37256		
Valid N (listwise)	8							

**Frequencies**

**Statistics**

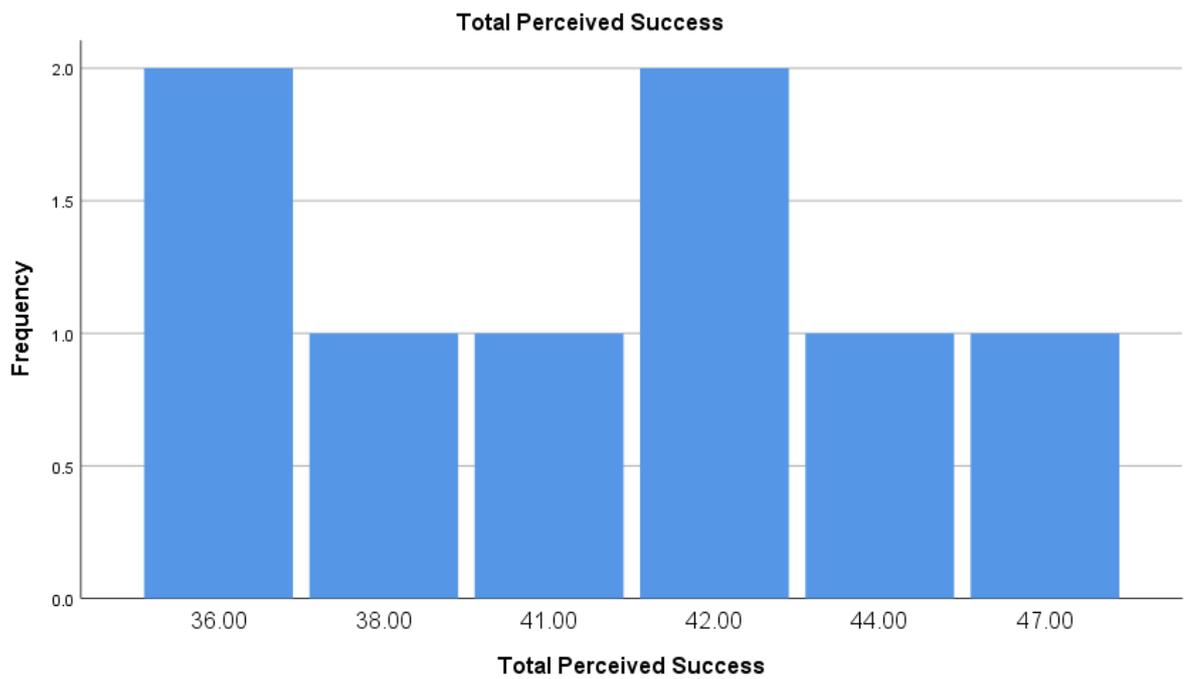
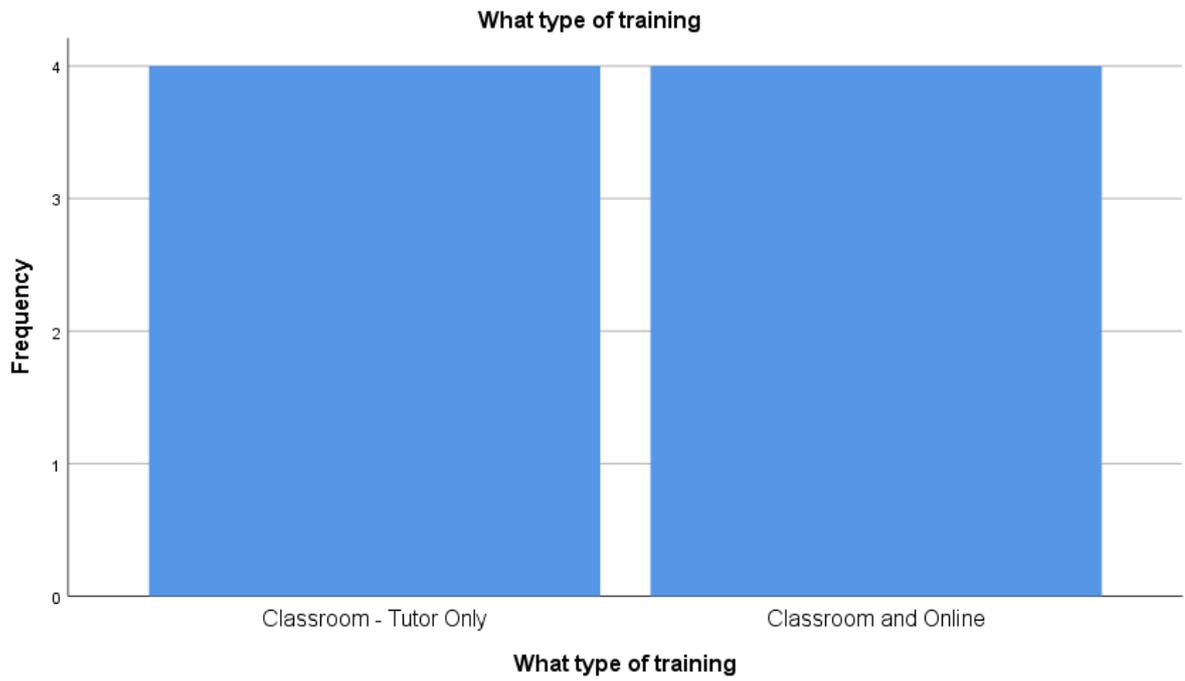
		What type of training	Total Perceived Success
N	Valid	8	8
	Missing	0	0

**Frequency Table**

**What type of training**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Classroom - Tutor Only	4	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Classroom and Online	4	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total		8	100.0	100.0	

**Bar Chart**



## Appendix N

### Coding Frame for Qualitative Analysis

Question Number	Theme	Frequency	Description of theme/ sub theme	Example of evidence
1	<b>Aspect of training that helped most</b>			
	<b>Social Interaction and class support</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Talking through the training, interacting with other learners and using the other learners in the class to support the students' learning process</b>	<p>“Talking to each other in the classroom helped a lot”</p> <p>“I was very happy with the training given, information received and chats among our class was very helpful working as a team”</p>

Question Number	Theme	Frequency	Description of theme/ sub theme	Example of evidence
	<b>Questions were answered</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Learners relied on someone for help in answering questions</b>	<p>“Did not find it difficult as all questions were answered to my satisfaction”</p> <p>“All my questions were answered”</p>
<b>2</b>	<b>Most Difficult Aspect of Training</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Learners found aspects of the training where they had to write responses difficult</b>	<p>“The writing parts and the computer”</p> <p>“Most difficult part of the training was the writing”</p>
	<b>Training was not difficult</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Learners found the training straightforward and did not</b>	<p>“I found the training quiet straightforward and easy to follow”</p>

Question Number	Theme	Frequency	Description of theme/ sub theme	Example of evidence
			<b>find the topic difficult</b>	“I found it fine. It was easier than I thought”
<b>3</b>	<b>Working independently and its contribution to success</b>			
	<b>Tutor support helped with learning</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Participants found that the tutor helped with learning</b>	<p>“My tutors help was just great”</p> <p>“I have learned a lot from my tutor”</p> <p>“Listening to the teacher. How she explained the whole process of reviewing the play or film”</p>

Question Number	Theme	Frequency	Description of theme/ sub theme	Example of evidence
	<b>Participants did not work independently</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Participants relied on the help rather than self-directed independent learning</b>	<p>“I didn't work independently”</p> <p>“I would not have been able to work without the help of the teacher”</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>Additional items that would have helped with training content or delivery mode</b>		<b>Understanding if the method of delivery or materials could have included additional items to help with perceived success</b>	
	<b>Preference for more time</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Participants would have preferred more time to learn</b>	<p>“More time with the training”</p> <p>“If I had more time to study the film”</p>