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**Students and Teachers Perceptions toward the Use of Blogs
in Literature Reviews' Writing**

*A Case Study of Master II Students of English Department and Teachers
of Mathematics and Computer Science Department
Amar Telidji University -Laghouat*

*A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English Language as Partial Fulfillment
of the Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization*

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Dedication I

To my beloved parents Fatima and Mohamed for their sacrifices and prayers

To my sisters Khadra , Maghnia and Fairouz for their love and encouragement

To my brothers Lahcen and Ramzi for their support and precious advice

To the light of my heart Jana Tasnim

To all my friends

Benguettache Dahiba

Dedication II

*I dedicate this thesis to my father Djaloul who always believed in me and my mother Fatiha
who gave me all the emotional support needed*

*To my brothers Taher and Mohamed, and my sister Zohra for being the source of inspiration
and for their constant support during my study.*

I also dedicate this thesis to my close friends whom always supported and trusted me.

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ABSTRACT

The current research paper aims to investigate if the blog use could be as an effective tool to gather information and to facilitate writing literature reviews through collecting sources. It seeks to find answers to whether blogging can be used as a research tool to gather information and what are the perceptions of both teachers and students towards the use of such a tool in writing literature reviews? The selected participants represent 10% of the whole population; 13 students from Master Two of English Department and 7 teachers from Mathematics and Computer Science Department at Amar Thelidji University – Laghouat were selected randomly as samples. The descriptive method was adopted and data was collected through two questionnaires. The results demonstrated that blogs are effective tools in gathering literature and to write reviews, and both teachers and students are satisfied with them. The use of blogs facilitates the process of literature reviews writing. Therefore, we recommend the future researchers to use them in writing their reviews.

الملخص

تهدف الورقة البحثية الحالية إلى دراسة استخدام المدونات كأداة فعالة لجمع المعلومات وتسهيل كتابة مراجعات الدراسات السابقة من خلال جمع المصادر. حيث تسعى إلى إيجاد إجابات عن إمكانية استخدام التدوين كأداة بحث لجمع المعلومات، وما هي تصورات كل من المعلمين والطلاب تجاه استخدام هذه الأداة في كتابة مراجعات الدراسات السابقة؟ يمثل المشاركون المختارون 10 ٪ من مجموع الكلي؛ تم اختيار 13 طالبا من السنة الثانية ماستر في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية و 7 أساتذة من قسم الرياضيات و الإعلام الآلي في جامعة عمار ثليجي - الأغواط بشكل عشوائي. تم تبني الطريقة الوصفية و جمع البيانات من خلال الاستبيانين. أظهرت النتائج أن المدونات هي أداة فعالة في جمع المصادر وكتابة المراجعات الدراسات السابقة، فكل من المعلمين والطلاب راضون عنها. إن استخدام المدونة يسهل عملية كتابة المراجعات الأدبية. لذلك، نوصي الباحثين باستخدام المدونات في كتابة مراجعاتهم للدراسات السابقة في المستقبل.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|--|
| ESL | English as a Second Language |
| HTML | Hypertext Mark-up Language |
| ICT | Information and Communications Technology |
| RSS | Rich Site Summery /Real Simple Syndication |
| URL | Uniform Resource Locator |

General Introduction

General Introduction

Background of the study

With the advances in communication technologies, the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have become a new way in which the researchers reacquiring knowledge through their abilities to share and publish their thoughts, ideas and even their research with others. ICTs which consist of virtual technologies such as blogs reconsidered as effective and powerful tools for doing research.

The increase use of blogs among researchers offers unlimited opportunities for them to share ideas, exchange information and collaboration in general. The blogs enable the researchers to publish the results, findings, and methods to share and discuss with peers. Also, they give the opportunity for them to engage in online collaboration with others, and to get other interpretations.

This technological engagement in online webpage encourages researchers to do their research works in an easy and new way. However, the literature reviews' writing is an important step in any academic works through which the researchers can give a clear picture about their works. The researchers do a hard effort to give good literature reviews. The use of such a technical tool "blogs" may facilitate the way of their writing literature reviews through gathering more information, and reliable references about their topics.

Rationale

In view of the fact that many researchers use a blog in their research career and mark noticeable benefits in advancing research process, the research has been chosen because researchers and particularly the Master two students of English Department at Amar Thelidji University are struggling with writing their literature reviews of their researches. Many researchers and students consider writing literature review a hard task impedes their research process, where they use different sources such as books, articles and websites for the sake of

finding relevant and reliable information. This way takes a long time to find what they need and sometimes the process fails with no relevant source found. Students are interested in finding the sources in a short time and write their literature reviews easily. Thus, they may use a blog as a research tool to collect information, find sources and gather literature related to their topics to write reviews. These motivate us to conduct this research in order to investigate the effectiveness of a blog to write literature reviews.

Statement of the Problem

When it comes to conduct a research, the researcher should start reading and searching for sources and information to write literature reviews. However, this step has become by many researchers like Master Two Students a challenged task where the majority of them face many difficulties in writing them. Thus, the use of new and useful technological tools such as blogs may facilitate this process as it has huge usage among Master Two students of English Department for many purposes to communicate with each other and participate themselves in different activities through sharing ideas or comments. This study tries to shed light on the use of technology tools “blogs” in facilitating the way to gather literature and to write reviews.

Purpose of Study

This study aims at:

- 1- Investigating the use of a blog as a research tool to gather information.
- 2- Exploring to what extent the students and teachers are interested in using of blogs to their literature reviews writing.
- 3- Investigating the usefulness of blogs in academic research for relevant literature.

Research Questions

According to the expressed problematic, the following questions can be raised:

- 1- Can blogging be used as a research tool to gather information?

- 2- What are the perceptions of teachers and students towards the use of blogs in writing literature reviews?
- 3- What is the effect of using blogs in academic research on enhancing literature reviews' writing?

Hypotheses of the Study

In order to answer the above questions we hypothesize that:

- 1- Blog can be used as an effective tool to gather information.
- 2- Both teachers and students may be satisfied with using the blogs on their research process.
- 3- Blog may facilitate the way of finding the sources that are used in the literature reviews writing.

Literature Review

The increasing use of new technologies such as blogs encourages academics and researchers to enter in a new form of research. Many scholars conducted researches to analyze and investigate the use of blog in research process.

The researcher may use a weblog to collect data and resources not just as a tool devoted for the purpose of providing feedback and thoughts and publishing research process. Barr-Ilan conducted a research to analyze the use of blogs as a tool to convey professional information. He stated that "blogs are excellent information hubs, i.e. provide short summaries (sometimes with a personal touch) with links to further information on major issues related to the topic of the blog" (297).

In addition, Turgeon stated that bloggers who have similar interest are attracted by blogs where they enter the same blogosphere for both sharing and collecting information they are interested in (qtd. in Jones and Alony). Moreover, for collecting data function, Ackland in his book "*Web Social Science: Concepts, Data and Tools for Social Scientists in the Digital Age*"

presented that the researchers use blog in research through the use of web crawlers to track permalinks and blog roll links, in which blog roll links appear on blog page and permalinks, which are more appropriate for researchers, are created when blogger refers or comments on another blog or website (qtd. in Wilson et al. 2). However, Luzón conducted a study to investigate the reasons of using links in academics blogs and the way they are used for distribute information. She stated that the utility of academic blog by scholars involves the use of blog features 'links'. The use of links by academics tends to sort out information, distribute their research, in addition, to take on hypertext conversations for the purpose of collaboration (*Scholarly Hyperwriting* 75).

Many researchers use blogs to publish their thoughts, research methodology and collect information. But in the issue of writing literature reviews through blogs, we conduct the current study aiming to investigate another side in using blogs in the research process to write literature reviews. The researchers can use a blog as a research tool to gather sources, literature, previous knowledge and studies related to the topic in aim to facilitate writing literature reviews.

Research Methodology and Tools

To prove or disapprove the hypotheses stated above, the researchers are going to investigate the use of blogs as an efficient tool in research work. This study is based on the two questionnaires to examine both teachers and students' attitudes toward the blogs' use. The first questionnaire is given to Master two students of the English Department - Amar Thelidji University of Laghouat. Yet, the second questionnaire is given to teachers of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department- at the same university, since those teachers are familiar with such tool, the questionnaire aims at evaluating the usefulness and effectiveness of blogs in their research studies.

Limitations of the Study

This conducted research is restricted to the use of ICT tools especially to the use of blogs only. Other ICT tools like microblogging (twitter) are excluded. In addition, this study focuses on one group of students and teachers at Amar Thelidji University of Laghouat-Algeria. The researchers choose blogs as an effective tool to write literature reviews because of blogs are currently the new and the most popular online pages among students and teachers. Yet, the visits to these pages are different from one to another; each one has different reasons to surf on the blogging community. Furthermore, the other limitation is related to the students of English, unlike their teachers , most of them are familiar with this technological tool “blogs” but they don't have awareness about their use to facilitate their literature reviews‘ writing, especially to gather relevant information for a particular topic of their interests.

Structure of the Dissertation

This work is divided into five parts. The first part is a general introduction which provides general background area of study, questions, objectives, review of previews studies and the structure of dissertation. The three parts represent the three chapters where two parts are theoretical and one part is practical. The first chapter devotes for blogs and blogging, and the second chapter presents background knowledge about literature reviews writing. The third chapter covers the practical part; it focuses on research design and methodology. It discusses the method that is used in order to advance the research and how data are collected, as well as the interpretations of both questionnaires. The final part is the general conclusion.

Chapter One

Blogs and Blogging

1.1. Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provides tools such as blogs that make the world a global village. These tools offer an opportunity for valid communication and facilitate collaboration among people. The features of blogs and platforms facilitate the utilize of blogs which increased their use as a personal page and as learning tools in language teaching classes, as well utilize them as tools for conducting research by researchers.

1.2. Basic Concepts

To engage in the blogging community, internet users should have some knowledge and information about blog aspects that cover many elements such as features and characteristics of blogs as well as categories of blogs.

1.2.1. Blogs Definition

Blog is a contraction of the word “weblogs”; it was originally designed by Jorn Berger in 1997. Blogs have been defined as a web journal where the entries are organized chronologically (Herring et al., *Conversations in the Blogosphere* 1). It is also described as a web page that is recurrently updated and contains archived post that is organized or listed with date and time sequences (Nardi et al. 1). According to Campbell, a weblog is considered as an online journal owned by an individual who can constantly update through publishing his/her thoughts and ideas via software that makes updating easy.

In March 2003, the word blog was added in English Oxford Living Dictionary, it defines the noun blog as “a regularly updated website or web page, typically one run by an individual or small group, that is written in an informal or conversational style.” The word blog was proclaimed by Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary as a “word of the year” in 2004, and it was defined as “A Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer.”

Many scholars agreed in one definition of a blog in which they described it as an online journal or diaries where the posts are written by author and organized chronologically. However, a blog can range texts, images, links and offer the readers with an ability to comment in a blog post (Herring et al., *Bridging the Gap* 4). Links can make blog community interconnected, and build what is called “blogosphere”; the blogger can link to other bloggers and refer to them or post their comments in each other bloggers’ blogs (Herring et al., *Conversations in the Blogosphere* 1).

Weblogs and websites differ from each other and probably not all internet visitors can distinguish them. Blog consists of elements that mark the diversity such as archives, comment, lists of links or “blogroll” and updated content. The weblog is like a white paper that can write anything you want on it; it can take many forms such as dairy, journal, a tool for communication and many other forms.

1.2.2. Blog Origin and its Evolution

The origin of blog went back to the first half of nineties. The emergence of World Wide Web traced the establishment of weblogs where the beginning, before they gains their popularity in 1999, marked by their utility as online personal diaries and collection of links acquired by a few numbers of people. According to Blood, the origin of blog dated back further to the age of sharing links that was based on links, commentary and personal pages, and their creation require minimal technological knowledge of code Hypertext Mark-up Language (HTML).

However, 1994 was the year of raise for the blogging site Link.net. It is considered as the first blogging site on the net, this site was created by Justin Hall, a college student at Swarthmore University, who is considered as a father of personal bloggers. The site she created was known as personal home page (Alejandro Rioja), and it is considered as “a pioneer among online diarists and Web loggers” (Harmanci). Pinhanez started what is known

as “Open Diary” through blogging short entries (Wiener). Furthermore, before the creation of these sites, in 1993, The Mosaic Communications Corporation was the first company which collected a list of new websites “What’s New” and applied archive feature throughout archiving this list monthly and updating it every day (Prusty 50).

The second half of nineties traced the rise and development the use of blogs among people, academics and students. The function of sharing links and publishing information on a World Wide Web in the late of 1990 led to the increase use of a blog which reaches its significant popularity in 1999. Jorn Borger used the term “weblog” when he started his website “Robot Wisdom” in 1997 to portray his log activity in the internet world (Wiener). By 1998, there were handful weblogs that were a collection of links or personal pages. Cameron Barrett on Camworld posted the list of links that he received from Infosift editor, Jesse James Garrett, and similar Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) were sent to be added on the list as well. Brigitte took Barrett step and created “Eatonweb Portal” where she posted a list of blogs she is familiar with; Eatonweb Portal was listing all weblogs that are available in the net. In 1999, there have been 23 blogs acknowledged on the whole web (Blood). The first blogging platform “Open Diaries” was developed by Bruce Ableson in which the users of weblog can comment on other’s posts (Barron). However, on that year, the word “blog” was identified by the programmer Peter Merholz who started his own blog “Peterme.com”, and he identified the term weblog to “wee-blog” which was shortened to “blog” with referring the user of the blog to “blogger” (Blood). He said in his blog: “I’ve decided to pronounce the word “weblog” as wee-blog. Or “blog” for short.”

In early 1999, blogs were not developed as now. The uploading and services that were offered by blogs were limited, which made the users of blog face many difficulties to upload their content. However, many blogging platforms were developed to facilitate and support uploading content, and make blogging action fast and easily for individuals. The invention of

these platforms marks a new event on the history of blogs and blogging. Pitas, LiveJournal, Xanga, Blogger and other tools and platforms were launched (Barron). Pitas was the first free weblog tool launched on July 1999 (Blood), it was invented by Andrew Smales, and thereafter Brad Fitzpatrick created LiveJournal platform (Barron). At Pyra Labs, Blogger was launched as a commercial platform by Evan William and Meg Hourihan, and afterward Google acquired and presented to all people for free on February 2003(Chapman). Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication correspondingly (RSS) was released for use on My.Netscape.Com; it “allows publishers to syndicate data automatically and allows people to stay up to date with their favorite bloggers or news sites” (Barron). Besides these platforms, Xanga was firstly considered as a social networking site compared to MySpace, it was added to blogging features in 2000 (Zantal-Wiener).

In the beginning of 2000, the eventful year, many platforms were released and blogs marked an increase development in their content, upload, features and hosts that facilitate access to them. In 2001, other platforms were released, “Moveable Types” which is a self-hosted platform for bloggers, soon after proposed new feature “trackback”, which notify the blogger that his blog post has been linked to another blog (Barron). In the other hand, WordPress was developed since 2001, and officially was introduced in 2003 (Chapman). A new platform called Typepad was provided by the software company Six Apart (Barron) .In early 2002, Technorati, the first search engine for the blog, was launched (Carvin). Overall, the facilitation that offered by blog software, helped in introducing a new form of the blog, in which the first video blog was introduced in 2000 by Adam Kontras ; the type he introduced is named by Professor Adrian Miles “Vog”. This new form of the blog was proposed when Adam Kontras companied a written post of blog with a video (Zantal-Wiener). The first Audioblogger and video blogs started in 2003 and 2004 before YouTube was developed. Furthermore, AdSense advertising platform launched in 2003; it was considered as the first ad

network. Through using this platform, blogger can make money from advertisements (Chapman).

Since the first blog was emerged till the mid of 2000s, a lot of changes occurred that made the use of blog easier. The development of blog tools and the invention of platforms facilitate blogging, and made blog popular and rich a mainstream in the mid of 2000s. The start of blogging in the nineties marked the use of a blog as an online diaries and online journal. In 2008, there were 113 million blogs (Technorati: About Us), and 152 million blogs in 2013 (Johnson). The blogs' number increased where reached at least 400 million blogs as of 2018 ("*How Many Blogs*").

1.2.3. Features and Characteristics of Blog

Blogs have common features and structures that distinguish blogs from websites and improve community engagement. Several studies were conducted for help to acquire knowledge about the features and structure of blogs. Blogs comprise of title, posts, trackback and permalink, Footer (Duffy & Bruns), blog post archive, RSS Feed, comment system, comment spam protection, search, social media integration, contact method (Craig) and weblogrolls (Luzón, *Academic 2*). Appendix 1 shows a screenshot of blog features.

1.2.3.1. Title

Each blog has a main title to describe it. It appears in the upper (header area) and reveals the nature and blog's function.

1.2.3.2. Posts

Blog posts are the most basic elements of blogs; they are organized by date and time stamps of when the post is written and published, and also include the title of written text. The content of blog entry may contain photos, videos and records, and it may be long or brief due to the author.

1.2.3.3. Trackback and Permalink

Trackback refers to links back from other sites, while permalink refers to the URL of the full article or document of the individual.

1.2.3.4. Footer

The footer appears at the underside of the post. It demonstrates post date and time, author, category, and stats such as the number of reads, comments or trackbacks.

1.2.3.5. Blog Post Archive

Each blog has a post archive appears on the home page. Archive post is a part where previews entries/posts are listed and organized chronologically by months and years or by categories. It is an essential feature where it provides a whole picture of blog content and it helps interest reader to find the content they want to read. Blogging platforms and good content management system can construct a blog post archive.

1.2.3.6. RSS Feed

RSS Feed is a way for syndication of content. It allows the readers of the blog to keep track for newly updated content of their favored blog through subscribing instead of checking the blog each time. In fact, it helps in building a community due to the number of followers they are interested in blogging.

1.2.3.7. Comment System

In describing disable comment feature of the blog, Jeff Atwood said: “a blog without comments enabled is not a blog.” Both readers and bloggers are able to interact and discuss a topic of blog entry through commenting. It can be open to all readers of the blog or just restricted to registered members.

1.2.3.8. Comment Spam Protection

This feature is devoted mainly for blog owners. It protects the blog from comment spam the blogger want not to see and to prevent blog departure from functional blog to worthless one.

1.2.3.9. Search

The search feature is another way may readers use to find posts or content they need instead of checking archive post.

1.2.3.10. Social Media Integration

The author of the blog can integrate social-media-sharing capabilities on his blog in order to facilitate sharing blog content.

1.2.3.11. Contact Method

Contact method is one of tool that the reader of the blog may use to make a contact with blog author in order to ask a question, report issues or ideas.

1.2.3.12. Weblogrolls

Weblogroll is a list of links that the blog's author favorite and it appears in the sidebar of the blog. The blog's author can share the list to the readers.

1.2.4. Categories of Blogs

Nowadays, there are several kinds of the blog that are extended on the internet world. The categories are classified according to the content of blog entries and specific goals that the bloggers directed to reach. However, Blood identified three categories of blogs: *the filter blog* which focuses on posting links of other web pages, *the personal blog* that is reflected with personal life and thoughts, and *notebook or knowledge blog* that is devoted to publish references of knowledge and information in particular field and it ranges between personal and focused in external world (qtd. in Herring et al., *Bridging the Gap*2-3). The categorization she provided was relying on the content that author of a blog post. Also White and Winn presented three types of blogs: *the personal blog*, *the professional blog* and *the corporate blog* (qtd. in Hank 68). Ramos and Piper as well classified blog into three types: *aggregators* that collect other blog postings and writings from various digital media, *personal narratives*, and a synthesis of the two (571).

1.3. Academic Blogging

1.3.1. Academic Blog Definition

The development of the internet provides a new tool “blog” for academics and researchers, students and teachers to use in order to exchange information, ideas and knowledge, gather sources and developing skills. According to Walker, the term academic blog conducted to pure research blogs (5). Therefore, blogs become a popular tool among researchers and academics to share knowledge, exchange information or communicate with their community and peers. Dunleavy and Gibson said that the easiest and essential thing that academic should do nowadays is blogging, and Siemens claimed: “It’s great to see research-focused academics entering the blog space.”

However, in the world of academic blogs, the users of blogs increase where bloggers view blogs as best places to test their ideas, announce their research and build a communicative and interactive environment (Maslen). Luzón proposed that the appearance of both Web 2.0 and Science 2.0 have an extraction in increase of academic blogging where both of them stood on the idea of constructing collaboration community for sharing information, building knowledge, and release access to academic engagement, research outcomes and theories (*Scholarly Hyperwriting*76).

Mewburn and Thomson, in their study to investigate what academics were blogging about and for who they write for, discovered that academics use blog to “translate” their work to public audience and there is communicative environment built among academics, and both academic discourse and academic blogging are identical in purpose in which they look to proceed “knowledge and understanding”. However, the spread use of a blog by academics popularizes information to others even whom are non-academics; moreover, it creates a collaborative community that focuses on advance and share knowledge. Scholarly work is reachable to the public outside the academy via blog (Gregg). Within the support of exchange

and share knowledge among scholars, academic blogs have been stretched for use in huge ways.

With advance and increase use of blogs in academics, it is necessary to claim that academic blogging delivered a space for academics and non-academics to meet and to participate in the discussion, share and exchange points they are interested in. Halfords said that “the situation within academic blogging seems to be that we are currently a bunch of islands that are vaguely connected but not really arranged into continents and groups. We are all spread out across the digital world with a fragmented network between us.” When used one of the social software tools “blog” in an academic way, it also provides a fast and efficient means of effective intervening of academics, as Jenkins stated that blogging put academics in a more active position in which their intervening, in popular debates about the topics they research, are more effective.

Weblogs are supplied a new version of debates that is far from face to face communication, this version relies on online communication. The virtue of blog arises among academics where interest is directed to support peers and public intervening in topics they interest in. Furthermore, in online scholarly communication, Luzón (*Scholarly Hyperwriting* 75) suggested, blogs are resourceful tools.

1.3.1.1. Types of Academic Blog

The variation of categories and types of academic blogs differ according to the content and posts that author publish or the member of authors they run. Walker (2006) proposed three main categories of the academic blog: public intellectuals, research logs, and pseudonymous blogs about academic life. Also, Nathan and Overman identified three kinds of academic blog post: blogging for content, blogging for comment and blogging for reportage. Another two types of academic blogs were presented by Bessette which are individual blogs

and group blogs. Dunleavy introduced another categorization of academic blogs according to the number and type of all author: solo, collaborative, and multi-author blogs (MABs).

Walker divides academic blogs into three main categories. The first category is *public intellectuals*, this type of blog is a platform of political debate in which bloggers use it to argue and discuss a current event and issues related political sector. The second category is *research logs*, a “pure” research blog; the author of the blog uses this blog to document the research that he conducts. The last category is *Pseudonymous blogs about academic life*, the researcher uses this kind of an academic blog to discuss the method of research and aspects of academic life rather than documenting research process; it is more suitable for coffee breaks than conference (Walker 4–5).

In addition to Walker categorizations, Nathan and Overman categories academic blogs according to the posts that researchers post, they identified three kinds of an academic blog post. *Bloggng for content*; the author provides the readers with summaries about his research and founding. The second kind is *bloggng for comment*; the researcher for running public conversation using the research he is doing to push the discussion to the point he needs to achieve. *Bloggng for reportage* is the third type they present; it is a kind of notebook, the researcher types the notes, thoughts and ideas they founded interest.

In another hand, Bessette followed another side and categories academic blogs according to the number of authors. He identifies two types; individual and group blogs. *The individual blog* runs only by one academic who writes all entries, the author of this blog is building an academic identity through his unlimited and complete control of the content he publishes. *Group blog* is maintained by a group of academics who share the same responsibility and write the content of the blog. This type of blog is able to create a community easier through multiple contributors.

Dunleavy identifies three types of academic blogs, including the solo blogs, collaborative blogs as well as multi-author blogs MABs. However, *solo blog* runs by one author who writes all blog posts that are interested to him or stress personal opinion. *Collaborative or group blog* is obtained by less than ten authors who generate all blog content; they have limited disciplines but the entries they publish are superior. *Multi- authors blogs (MABs)*, the editorial team have a theme identity gather text from different authors and publish them with strong edition; they publish topical developments of a particular area.

1.3.1.2. Use of Academic Blog in Research

The increasing use of new communication technologies such as weblogs led to developing in academic communication, this served the researchers needs. In recent years, use of blogs in research has been increased considerably where many scholars conducted studies to investigate the use of academic blogs in research practice.

The use of a blog by academics is to record daily academic life or commenting on a current event in their research area instead of integrated as a part of their research methodology (Wakeford and Cohen 311). Nevertheless, several researchers have integrated blog in their research projects and published the way blog affect their research process rather than oriented it for disseminating methods and daily life of their academic discipline(E.g. Torill Mortensen & Jill Walker, 2002; L. Giarré & L. Jaccheri, 2008; Pat Thomson, 2017; Janet Salmons, 2017; Helena Bukvova et al.).

Mortensen & Walker have been involved in the blogging community when they started their own blogs in 2000 as a part of their PhDs research. They used as they stated “to keep our focus while online, serving as constant little reminders of the real topics we were supposed to write about” (Mortensen and Walker 250). The positive experience in maintaining a weblog helps them not only to keep writing in the blog but also in doing their research. Also, they were mentioned that characteristic of academic writing is more formal than the weblogs, but

the weblogs are more popular, and the researchers can use weblogs to share information not just display it.

L. Giarré and L. Jaccheri started their own blog as a research tool on October 2004, and they used to document their experience as researchers. Blogging for academics is used to share knowledge in research and open an opportunity for everyone interest to interact, give feedback and to submit and cooperate. Therefore, they created a blog to attract other peers to share their experience, they stated “the final goal of the ResearcherBlog is to support reaction and learning in the field of research methods” (L. Giarré and L. Jaccheri 14633). The experience they got it with other blogs made them understand that blogging is not only for communicating and writing, but also a way to interact with others. They portray blog as a blank paper where people post questions and get answers. The blog is a space where the researchers meet for real inter-disciplinary competences to engage in lots of interactions with their peers to exchange ideas and views about the research process.

In the other hand, there are several research-related blogging strategies that academics used in order to attract partners and peers for a wide audience in purpose of advance research activity. Thomson used blog during her research career; she identified two effective ways that work fairly with her in using a blog in research while doing her research, Blogging a serial-style literature review and Blogging appreciative stories. In blogging a serial-style literature review, she decided with her partner as a first step to gather or generate ideas from literature review about their topic and blogged them weekly with posing idea to their scholar to read them. In the second way, blogging appreciative stories, she wrote a short impressionistic about an aspect of their visit they did to schools for their study. Both ways she used aims to support the partners and community involved in the research.

Researchers and academics provide the information; they want to share about their studies, in different ways that are attractive and prospective to researcher interest. The use of

blogs among researchers can be divided into three different main ways; Researcher-to-Researcher, Researcher-to-Participant, Researcher-to-Public (Salmons). He defined Researcher-to-Researcher as a way that academic use blog to present information about research interest and open a conversation for exchanging ideas , sharing resources and links to the recent publication of their interest and foundation with their peers. For researcher-to-participant, Salmons suggested that academics create a blog and introduce the study they carry on in simple and easiest way with showing the reliability of the researcher to make clear for the current participant. In the last way, Researcher-to-Public, the academic bloggers post information about the topic in a way that is both easiest to understand and attracted for the reader through the use of familiar words. They share their findings and results of the study.

Researchers use blog during their research process to propose a content they are interested, which marks diversity in blog content that attributed for each researcher, the diversity in not only in the blog content itself, but between each blog. Consequently, three types of blog content were delivered: expertise, activity and identification (Bukvova et al. 92). In expertise-related content, the researcher utilizes blog for a goal of publishing information and knowledge on the area of interest. Secondly, they used to record the activities they took a part on it in both researching and teaching, and reports from conferences and workshops. Finally, some researchers may use the blog as an identification card; through the entries they post, they show their interest and even their personal information.

1.3. Educational Blogs (Edublogs) Definition

The dominant of modern technology on teaching and learning classes became common phenomena. The influence of technology in pedagogy provides new tools “blogs” to design and develop an effective instruction. In recent year, blogging became progressively popular not only among the users of the internet, but it receives a huge interest from different sectors especially education sector that focuses on teaching language. The emergence of Edublogs or

educational blogs opens a lot of opportunities for the teachers and learners of language to develop and facilitate learning process. Application of blog in education is to possess a new tool for teachers and learners alike in order to use it as instructional resources for teachers and to advance students perception.

However, use blog as an educational tool increased where educators and students started using the blog as a part of their teaching and learning process. Edublogs are platforms of learning process for both teachers and learners in which they can exchange their ideas and experiences about language learning (Gorąca-Sawczyk 65).

Blog has a significant role in education in which can enhance different skills and offers a space for both teachers and students to communicate, the Australian Department of Education and Training about the role of blog in education stated that “weblog provides a communication space that teachers can utilize with students whenever there is a curriculum need to develop writing, share ideas, and reflect on work being undertaken in the classroom” (qtd. in Muwanga-Zake et al. 16). According to Ray, utilize blog in education focuses on providing communication; besides, it can be used as an instructional resource by the teacher as well as collaborative tool among learners (175).

The use of a blog in educational context is better as it is a new form of pedagogical tools that is more organized, more reliable in save information and available for anyone who is able to access the internet. Teaching and learning using software technology “blogs” make class teaching more active in which learners are more active and integrated in learning process.

1.3.2.1. Types of Edublog in ESL Class

Educational blog or Edublog was created to integrate blogs into the curriculum and was designed to facilitate learning and teaching process. However, the uses of edublogs differentiate due to the owners and purposes they devoted for. According to Campbell, tutor,

learner and class blogs are three categories of Edublogs that are used in English as a Second Language class (ESL).

1.3.2.1.1. The Tutor Blog

The tutor or teacher blog is authored by a teacher. It is used for the learners in order to practice reading outside the classroom, as well as a tool to inform them about the syllabus and activities. This kind of blog can be used as a way to discover English websites and support the learners for an online exchange, it utilizes also as a source for self-study through links.

1.3.2.1.2. The Learner Blog

It is run by an individual learner or a group of learners. It allows the learners to practice their writing through expressing their thoughts and ideas in relation to the reading assignment, which improves their writing skills. It provides the learners with further reading practice and encourages them for self-expression through free writing.

1.3.2.1.3. The Class Blog

It is considered as an outcome of learners' collaboration of the whole class. It provides a space for learners to post messages, images and links about classroom topic of discussion and homework assignment. It can be used as well for an international classroom language exchange.

1.3.2.1.4. Project or Topic Blog

Gorden identified this type of blogs; this blog only deals with projects or topics where learner created it for this purpose. It may run by a group of learners who are able to edit it, and they post only what is related to the project (qtd. in Mesili 9).

1.3.2.2. Benefits of Edublog in ESL Class

Since the emergence of the blog in the mid-nineties on the World Wide Web, blogger has been used the blog as a communication tool. The last few years, the free and easy access that blog hosting website offered, Blog became more popular among people and touched different sectors such as the educational sector.

Integrating ICT tools in education especially in ESL classes highlighted potential benefits that the learners gains in the classroom. Zhang declared that “Blogs have formidable potentials as a useful tool for the teaching of EFL writing classes” (66). However, the use of blog enhances the learner attitude to engage in communication environment and improves learners’ writing and reading skills, as well as their critical, analytical thinking, reflection and boost collaboration.

The use of a blog by students for various purposes improves their writing as well as reading performances. Blog which is a frequently updated page allows the learner to enter a new form of practice through writing entry and commenting on posts, “Blogging is also seen as a form of a writing exercise that allows learners to increase the quality and quantity of their written outputs through frequent posts and comments” (Nepomuceno 97). Writing skills through blogging improved more than in traditional teaching. Learners in writing process became somewhat more carefully, and they use vocabulary more accuracy in expressing their thoughts, the improvements likewise touched the grammatical part in using the tense system, phrasal verbs and linking devices (Montero-Fletaa& Pérez-Sabaterp 776).

In fact, it has been improved that both writing and reading skills are related. Brown claimed that the students acquire knowledge about writing by observing, or reading the written word. Utilize blogs in language teaching class able the learners to improve their writing skill through providing entries to read, analyze and observe (347).

Moving from improving learners writing and reading competencies, the development of critical and analytical thinking is one of the benefits that may be provided. Besides, it plays an effective role in developing the reflective skill. Use of blog in education enhances the critical and analytical thinking of the learners, and it makes them think more before they write an entry or comment on the post. According to Oravec (618), it encourages the students to think more before they publish their entries, their views are not only about themselves but also about the interpretation of others. Yang et al said that “an electronic exchange of ideas with peers can motivate and can also provide opportunities for increase critical thinking skills.” Blogging is not an activity that focuses on writing and publishing only, but it has another influence. It is an action that makes you “think about thinking” (Mortensen and Walker 254). However, the development of this skill requires a learner-centered environment. However, Duffy and Bruns argue one of the benefits that the students get when they are engaged in blog post writing assessment is they will be aware about planning and scheduling (qtd. in Mesili 15).

The use of blog in language teaching provides a learner with a new sense of collaboration. It helps learners to create a collaborative class environment (Huffaker). Edublog engages the learners in a space of collaboration with peers and educators; it promotes their social interaction and group work which facilitate the exchange of ideas and thoughts through reading and leave comments on each other’s entries. Godwin-Jones suggested that blog offers a collaborative learning through two ways; the second way is that the learning students gain comes from the interaction between each other and “it is this sharing of knowledge and acquisition that is the basis of a constructivist approach to language learning” (13). Otherwise, Oravec said that the experience learners get in collaborative learning environment through using a blog in education assists in decreasing isolation (232).

1.4. Blogs and Writing

Writing is a tool for communication, provide information and express ideas. It is not about writing words only, but it relies on many structures and rules to form a coherent text. Many students and researcher see academic writing as a complicated task which makes them feel uncomfortable. However, the use of blogs by researchers and students and engage in blogging community make them directly practice writing and become writers.

Blogging improves writing skills and boosts the bloggers, researchers or learners, for more writing practice not only inside the classroom and cycle of research, but also outside in daily life. The frequent adaptation of blog post that is offered to blog authors, and the purpose of attracting more readers to the entry enhance writing skill, in which “Frequent writing improves writing” and “Writing for audience improves writing” (Bernstein qtd. in Akdag and Özkan81). Furthermore, blogging activities such as creating blog entries, reading, commenting and reflecting on others’ blog play a major role in making writing more advanced (NurEhsan et al. 96).

Blogs provide a virtual space for academics, researchers and student not only to share knowledge and ideas, but also to practice writing, in which blog activity is considered by NurEhsan et al. (96) as a kind of “writing exercise”. Therefore, it allows the learner to think more about their writing which helps them to reflect about their thoughts and ideas (Heap 149).

In a language learning context, Noytim in his study presented that the use of blog among students was noticeable as a functional tool in “improving writing, reading, vocabulary, self-expression, thinking skills and social interaction” (1131). According to Akdag and Özkan (90), enhancing writing skills especially in terms of vocabulary enrichment and syntactic accuracy are one of the blog contributions for learners who had experienced blogging. Moreover, writing on blog pushes the learners toward an academic writing style

through training them to check every step in their writing process, it helps the learners to select the right sentence and paragraph structure, decide and check their grammar, spelling, word choice and the presentation of arguments in writing (NurEhsan et al. 100).

Fear to express their ideas and make mistakes in writing prevents the learners to propose a better writing paper. Nevertheless, blog offers a space where learners are more confident and feel comfortable to write and take on apart in writing cycle to share and express their opinions and ideas. Blogs decrease anxiety about writing among learners and tolerate bloggers to achieve learning in the context of “ideas, language grammar and structure, and organization of their essays” (Supyan et al.).

Improving writing skill is not monopolized to the learners and students only, but researchers and academics focus to improve this important skill as well. The use of blog among academics and researchers while doing their research make them involve directly in writing process. Blogging helps them improving their academic writing in the context of intelligibility of expression and presentation of ideas as well as mastering lexicon (Heap 149).

Blogs offer valid writing practice. Writing blog pushes the learners to develop an academic writing style and their voices as well as being contributors of literacy text (Bloch), and experience authority in writing and being an author (Heap 149). Also, it helps the academics to build an academic identity (Kirkup76).

It has been proven that blogs have a major impact in developing writing skill because of their easy use and frequent adaptation of posts which provides an authentic writing for bloggers. Writing blog improved writing skills not merely for learners, but academics and researchers as well.

1.5. Benefits of Blogging

The use of a blog by researchers, academics, and in language teaching by students and educators offers a substantial progression over individual self-expression, reflection, reading and writing skills, and massive influence in advancing research process, collaboration and sharing knowledge.

Blog comment feature and interactivity promote the researchers with an ability to examine others opinion and they can gather data faster as they are able to download files easily (Webb and Wang 210). However, Peironcelly presents 6 benefits of academic blogging for bloggers which are: improve your writing where “The more you write the better you write.” Get exposure, help others, clarify your ideas, get feedback and see the bigger picture. Having a blog and be part of a blogging community means being a writer, researchers use the blog as a tool for writing. It helps them to keep up writing which improves their writing skill and it also uses as a tool to reflect and express ideas (Kjellberg).

In learning language class, the utility of a blog by learners proposes several benefits that faster learning and developing of different skills, which motivate the teachers for more integration of this technology tool in classes. Blog can advance critical and analytical thinking and creativity of learners as well as engage them in social interaction (Duffy and Bruns 33). In addition to that, Richardson suggests that blogging increased motivation and associational thinking, and Sun stated that blogging in learning class helps the learners to develop authorship and learning strategies. Moreover, blogging offers an active environment for students to practice more, in which their writing skills, reflection and language making are improved (Pinkman). The use of a blog as a writing tool has potential benefits as stated by Godwin-Jones, in which support feedback and expressing ideas and opinions, promote the learners with reading and writing activity, advance critical analysis as well and enhance persuasion and argumentation skills (10-11).

1.6. Conclusion

The easy use of blogs made them rich a mainstream among users of the internet. Their usefulness promotes in creating a community for bloggers in general to interact, communicate, and share ideas and opinion with others. However, the uses of ICT tools “blogs” differentiate due to the purpose that is devoted for by the author in which they can integrate it in an educational context for teaching and learning, or in the research process by researchers.

Chapter Two

Literature Reviews

Writing

2.1. Introduction

The literature reviews are the evaluative reports of previous studies relate by the research area. Many academics and scholars consider the literature reviews writing as the primary important step to write any scholarly paper such as a dissertation or thesis. They see it as the most challenging task in their academic studies, and they do a hard effort to enhance their level of literature reviews writing. The researchers need to know some skills to write the literature reviews' paper in formal way. Through it they can give a strong framework of their research, while their readers use it as a key to get a full understanding of what the researchers discussed in the particular topic of research.

2.2. The Basic Concepts

The researchers must know the elements of literature reviews writing such as the structure of review, the characteristics, strategies, and types. The main purpose from it is to give a theoretical base for the research work.

2.2.1. Definition of Literature Reviews

The literature review term is a combination of two words, literature and review. The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word literature as the collection of published works on a particular topic, and "it is the body of written works produced by scholars or researchers". It also defines the word review as "to look over" what has been established in a specified topic, and use it "to examine with an eye to criticism or correction the research findings". The literature review is a "critical analysis of a segment of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies, reviews of literature, and theoretical articles" (*Learn How to Write*). The researcher in writing the literature reviews focuses more on analysis the body of knowledge, then compares the main findings to take an appropriate one that is related to the research topic.

In essence, the literature reviews are more than comprehensive summaries of previous works on a particular topic. They are an evaluative and synthesis of the relevant sources that have information relate to the subject area. For reviewing the sources O'Leary stated that "the researcher does not want to focus on the body of literature only but also need to be able to compare, contrast, synthesize, and make arguments with that literature in ways that indicate a readiness to contribute to the literature itself" (81).

Furthermore, the literature reviews are the academic pieces of writing. They are the overviews of what the researchers have read in a particular topic, and how they gather information to put them in a formal way. Hart suggested that the literature reviews are the gathering and selecting information, and evidences from either published or unpublished sources about a certain topic to give other interpretations on the nature of the topic. Also, he presented the literature review as a plan to create a new design of a certain topic (2). A literature reviews are the places where the researchers put all what they found relevant to the topic and what they understand in full comprehensive essay.

The researchers in the literature reviews writing can describe methods, compare theories, evaluate of the main information, and debate points in the topic of their interests. The main focus of literature reviews writing does not rely on making a list of summaries for each source or giving the historical explanation for the field of study, but also identifying the theoretical gap in the literature that the researcher has been read, and establishing the new version to fill this gap (Nakano and Muniz Jr 4).

Both researchers, Boote and Beile claimed that "A researcher cannot perform significant research without first understanding the literature in the field" (3). Because the literature reviews are like the roadmaps for the researchers' work, the researchers firstly should take a clear vision of existing knowledge that is related by their subject, followed by

identify the relevant sources that help them to advance their researches, then fill the gap that they found from others' studies.

The literature reviews base on two main skills which are reading and writing skills. Firstly, in the reading skill the researcher bases on the skimming technique. After identifying the relevant sources, the researcher needs to skim his references for collecting the main points and databases that are important for his research. Furthermore, the technique of skimming sources is different from one source to another, like the skimming of relevant journals is different from the skimming of newspapers, and it is totally different from the skimming of books. In the journals the researcher can read the abstracts and summaries at the end of paragraphs of journals, but in the newspapers the researcher can only read the lead in the opening paragraphs. In the other hand, the researcher finds the books, and he needs only to look for the table of content. If it has an interest, he will go to check the introduction and conclusion paragraphs of the chapter (Berregui and Boulaachab 22). Secondary, in the writing skill the researcher bases on the note-taking technique. In the literature reviews writing, the researcher uses this technique to register all the main points that are related to his topic, and record all his thoughts and his interpretations about the relevant information. Also, this technique helps him to do not forget what he reads, and goes back or identifies where his ideas came from (Kesselman and Peterson 3). However, these both skills are important for the researcher to find data, and to arrange his main information in a full organized essay.

2.2.2. Importance of Literature Reviews' Writing

The literature reviews writing is important for both researchers and readers. For the researchers, they have the opportunity to put the theoretical framework of their research in reviews writing. Also, it gives clarity for research findings that are investigated the research gap, through literature reviews writing the researchers show their manner of selecting appropriate suggestions or theories to fill the gap. Furthermore, the literature review

demonstrates what the researchers know, and what they do not know in the field of study, and it is important for researchers to aware the others' findings in a similar search for identifying the strengths and weaknesses points from the sources. Also, from the literature reviews writing, the researchers justify their arguments found in the work, they base on what they have read and understood in different sources that are relevant to their topics of interest. Moreover, the literature reviews writing disappears the fear of falling in the plagiarism act. From the reviews' writing, the researchers can give the authenticity of their works because they use the reliable sources that allow them to get correct information. And to write it, the researchers they use their own words and paraphrase what others' say without changing the meaning (Oliver 6-11).

In addition, the importance of literature reviews' function is to build a rapport between the researchers and their readers. Through writing literature reviews the readers can predict if the work is successful or not, they see how the researchers can develop their arguments, and put their ideas in organized way from the past to present, general to specific, and from important to more important, step by step to take a full understanding of the whole work. In other hand, the readers use the literature reviews to take a general view of the particular research topic; they can know what the researcher discussed and how he evaluated the various schools of thoughts. Also, if the researchers do a good literature reviews; it will be easy for them to convey their readers about what they have been discussed in a particular field of their study.

2.2.3. Structure of Literature Reviews

In the literature reviews' paper, the researcher should write a solid theoretical foundation for his research. This writing must be in a formal and organized way. The literature review like any academic piece of writing, it comprises three basic components: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion (Ramdhani et al.53-54).

The introduction of a literature reviews should be brief, clear, and it has a relation to the field of study, whereby the researcher defines the research topic and gives an overview about the work context .The strong introduction includes the problem statement which was missing in previous studies.

The literature reviews contain a clear discussion and examination of the relevant sources in the body paragraphs. The researcher must presents his arguments that are connected with the subject area of study, he can compare his arguments with others' arguments, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize what he found related to his topic. Furthermore, it is better for him to paraphrase and use his own words in the literature reviews writing, and avoid using the direct quotations to show the readers that he is familiar with the subject.

Additionally, in the body paragraphs of the literature reviews the researcher can organize the relevant sources according to two main ways which are chronologically and thematically orders. The literature reviews organize by the chronological order; the researcher follows the linear time of sources publication, and arranges his ideas based on events of occurrence. But in the thematic order the researcher organizes his literature review around a particular topic or theoretical concept; he puts the discussion bases on themes that are important to research work.

In the conclusion of the literature reviews, the researcher gives a summary of the conclusions that he has drawn from the relevant sources. Also, he can show the significance of the work for further research, and how he can advance future research.

2.2.4. Characteristics of a Good Literature Reviews

The researchers must focus on some categories that help them to give a good literature reviews. Randolph stated that the reviewers must follow Cooper's (1988) "*Taxonomy of Literature Reviews*" to give a good literature reviews writing. This taxonomy based on six

characteristics which are: focus, goal, perspective, coverage, organization, and audience. These six characteristics can help researcher to distinguish from other peers (2-4).

2.2.4.1. Focus in Writing Literature Reviews

The first characteristic to write literature reviews is the focus. The researcher must focus in the four elements which are: 1) research outcomes; 2) research methods; 3) used theories; 4) practices or applications in writing process. The researcher in writing his literature review is focusing on research outcomes, in this step he focuses only on the findings and the final results of relevant sources to draw conclusions and identify the weaknesses and strengths points in a specific topic. Also, the focusing on research methods is important for the researcher. From the process of collecting data and synthesis he can take a clear vision if the other relevant sources are methodologically flawed or need more clarification. Furthermore, the researcher in writing his literature review is focusing in highlighting the pioneer theories that are related with his research topic, to explain the particular use of theories in his research, to give the relationship between these theories, and create new theories. Finally, literature reviews can be focused on practices or applications on how the group of readers applied a particular theory in their research practice.

2.2.4.2. Goal from writing Literature Reviews

The second characteristic in writing of the literature reviews is the goal. The researcher puts some goals in his literature reviews writing; the most common one is to give the theoretical framework of the research topic. In addition to that, the researcher evaluates the previous sources to give the structure of his work around the theories that are linked to the research subject, or goes back to the past to demonstrate the other critical views of literature on a particular topic. Furthermore, from this goal the researcher can advance his arguments and interpretations in his research.

2.2.4.3. Researcher's Perspective

In This characteristic the researcher has two choices which are writing his literature review with a neutral perspective, here the researcher puts himself outside the review which means he does not include his point of view on a particular topic, and doesn't support any view sides, he just puts it as it is. In other hand, he can be in an espousal of position, here the researcher can engage with one side that adopts with his work and supports it.

2.2.4.4. Coverage of Literature Reviews

According to Boote and Beile, in the literature reviews writing the researchers have a choice to involve or exclude information in writing their reviews (7) .For a better understanding, the researcher has four options to coverage: Exhaustive, where the researcher serious to look for each source relevant to the subject area. Or exhaustive with a selective citation, the researcher can limit himself when he will review the relevant sources based on some elements like age group, and method of the researcher. Furthermore, the researcher has an option of representative review, he utilizes references that representative the same publication, and relate directly with the topic. The last option is central review where the researcher must fully focus on essential work to comprehend the subject area of study.

2.2.4.5. Organization of Writing Literature Reviews

The organization of literature reviews has three basic formats which are the historical, the conceptual and the methodological to give clear version of research work. In the historical format the researcher analyzes and evaluates ideas bases on its historical context in chronological order. While, in the conceptual format the researcher builds his literature reviews bases on the concepts and theories that focus on the field of study, and in the last format the researcher looks for arrangement and regulation like introduction, methods, results and discussion.

2.2.4.6. Audience of Writing Literature Reviews

The last characteristic in Cooper's *Taxonomy of Literature Reviews* is the audience. In writing a thesis or dissertation, the researcher needs to take into accounts that are two kinds of audiences. His supervisor is the first audience because in writing the literature reviews the researcher uses the suggestions of his supervisor as guidelines and takes any advice in his consideration. The second audience is his peers or other researchers in the same field of study, to get their views or further expectations relate to his topic.

2.2.5. Types of Sources for Review

The researchers write their literature reviews to give a general background from the main previous works. They cover several sources to advance their themes in a particular field of study, and to show their readers what they establish from these relevant sources. These different sources give the researchers a clear understanding of major writing publications that are related to their topic. In their research works, they use various sources to develop their arguments and make evidence in discussion work. The main purposes of this diversity in using sources are to give a strong literature reviews writing; convey the readers about what a particular knowledge have been established on the research subject. However, the researchers must put in their minds the kinds of sources that are using to gather information, this can help them to differentiate from original information or it is just a copy from the original one. According to Anderson and Beveridge, there are two kinds of literature reviews sources which are the primary sources those are the first - hand documents, thoughts, interpretations from the original author, and they are unfiltered by one other. Also, the secondary sources which are those filtered sources which mean the interpretations or the views by another one else that describe the original works.

2.3. The Strategies of Literature Reviews Writing

Many authors have suggested that the literature reviews writing bases on different stages. Bolderston suggested that the researcher needs four main steps to write a comprehensive literature reviews. These steps are: starting out, searching the literature, appraising the literature, and come to writing the final article (86-92). However, other authors presented other steps to write the literature reviews, which are: topic selection, searching and selecting an appropriate article, analyzing and synthesizing the literature, and organization of writing the review (Ramdhani et al. 50-53). Despite these suggestions are adequate with the writing process of literature review, both writers EfratEfron and Ravid (6-7) presented other six steps that are opted by many researchers which are:

Step 1: Choosing a Literature Review Topic.

Step 2: Locating Literature Review Sources.

Step 3: Analyzing and Evaluating Literature Review Sources.

Step 4: Organizing and Synthesizing a Literature, and Building an Argument.

Step 5: Developing a Writer Voice and Following Writing Conventions.

Step 6: Writing, Editing, Refining the Literature Review.

Step 1: Choosing a Literature Review Topic

The most important preliminary step for literature reviews writing is determining a topic of interest. A topic is from the area of study. The researchers make sure that their topics are not too broad or too narrow because in their dissertation or thesis they have the opportunity to explain it more. If they narrowed the topic too much, they will limit the suggestions, and arguments that they need to support their evidence, and use them to fill their research gap. The choosing a good topic from the field of study allows the researchers to find appropriate and relevant references to advance the research work.

Step 2: Locating Literature Review Sources

After deciding what research topic is about, the researcher searches and selects appropriate sources. He bases on the variables that are defined in the topic. He chooses the relevant references and looks for the databases in the field of study with the aim to answer his research question. Furthermore, the researcher can find literature sources in different ways. The main way is an online database, through it the user can find easily the information just by entering the keywords that are needed to look for, and download faster. Like, the modern libraries use the interlibrary loan system as a new way to facilitate the requests of researchers and to give more reliable sources for developing the research studies, and make it more enjoyable.

Step 3: Analyzing and Evaluating Literature Review Sources

After the researcher has located and collected the sources, he is ready to skim the sources each one separately. Through reading the sources, he can know what they are about, and identifies the data on it, to decide if it is relevant for his research study. The researcher can evaluate the content of the source by assessing it if coverage meets his particular need or no, and its credibility. For each relevant source, the researcher can put summary paragraphs, and take note for any important idea with reformulating it by his own words, and his own style. These summaries can help him to save time, and avoid missing the key information of the research subject.

Step 4: Organizing and Synthesizing a Literature, and Building an Argument

The researcher can organize his research findings in a table to facilitate his process of gathering information. He compares what he found with what he needs in his research work, and he discovers the relationship between them to state his arguments in a clear way with a unique interpretation. He identifies the similarities and differences between various sources to advance his arguments, and gives evidence for his research.

Step 5: Developing a Writer Voice and Following Writing Conventions

At this stage, the researcher has an active role. He can put his voice as a writer, which means he can use his personality and his inspiration in writing a literature review. Here, the writer's voice leads to a dialogue with the authors mentioned in the review, which gives the opportunity to present a researcher's arguments, thoughts, and comments differ from other original authors. The researcher is not only offered what others are saying, but also supporting a review by the original thoughts, controlling his work in well structured, and writing a literature review in his own style.

Step 6: Writing, Editing, Refining the Literature Review

The final step is writing the literature review in a coherent essay. The researcher should show his ability to integrate his research findings and what the research intended to fill. Through a full understanding the body of literature in the area of study, the researcher needs to write the literature reviews in an organized way, then editing it in a cohesive manner as any academic work. The researcher makes a link in his structures, arguments, and judgments to create the best of literature paper without any writing errors as a professional writer. The particular purpose to write a literature reviews is to clarify, and convince the reader that the research work is important for further research.

2.4. Types of Literature Reviews

There are several types of literature reviews that will be used by the researchers in different fields of studies like, traditional or narrative review, a systematic review that contained two methods meta-analysis and meta-synthesis. Also, there are theoretical or conceptual reviews. Each of these types is different from one to another. The researchers must choose an appropriate type that is adequate with his field of study.

2.4.1. Traditional Literature Reviews

The traditional literature reviews are “the standard reviews, narrative reviews, critical reviews or commentaries within the literature” (Hemingway & Brereton 2). The narrative literature review is to give an overview of research findings by analyzing and summarizing the body of knowledge on a topic, then writing a summary about the body of knowledge in logic way. The researchers in this type take a comprehensive impression about the literature, discuss and synthesize it to identify the gaps in body of literature. The main purpose of this type is to give a comprehensive background of literature in a particular topic for the readers (Coughlan et al. 38).

2.4.2. Systematic Literature Reviews

Unlike the traditional narrative reviews, the systematic reviews undertake a rigorous and more comprehensive approach to evaluate the literature. They are more common using in scientific research, and empirical studies, Green suggested the aim of the systematic literature reviews are to “appraise, summarize, and communicate the results and implications of otherwise unmanageable quantities of research” (270). In the systematic reviews, the researchers need to evaluate and synthesize all that they are found in relevant sources, and they use the specific methods to give a clinical explanation like the Cochrane Collaboration group (Bolderston 87).

The systematic reviews relays on a particular and very specific empirical question, the researchers put a complete list as possible of all types of sources in order to identify accessible evidence, which is using to give meaningful answers to the research question. According to Nakano and Muniz Jr, there are three phases to build any systematic literature reviews which are: “(i) planning, (ii) execution, and (iii) summarization/reporting. In the first phase, the researcher must establish the need for research and put the best design for it. In the second phase, they should select and synthesize appropriate data that are relevant to the

research topic. In the final phase, the researchers should give a summary and report for the results” (3).

2.4.2.1. Meta-Analysis

It is a method of systematic reviews, and it bases on the quantitative approach. The researchers analyze all the best selective individual studies to draw conclusions about the topic of interest and combine them with findings to full understanding. Their works base on statistical studies for data collection to a deductive research approach (Polit and Beck).

2.4.2.2. Meta-Synthesis

In contrast to meta-analysis, the meta-synthesis method is based on non-statistical technique. It is integrating the research findings and evaluating all the relevant sources to give inductive research. The researchers synthesis the main elements and formulate them into a new version (Polit and Beck).

2.4.3. Theoretical Reviews

A theoretical literature review is other type of literature reviews. It is analyzing sources based on their theoretical concepts and it aims to examine the theories that are related by a particular issue or phenomena. It helps to identify the important theories and establishes the relationship between them, and investigates them to give new theories that adequate with the research problem. Through analyzing all the relevant theories the researchers can discover the lack or inadequate theories to solve or explain the research problem in a clear way.

2.4.4. Conceptual Reviews

The researchers through the conceptual reviews type, they introduce and discuss any concepts which they intend to draw on to provide direction for their work and help them to make a sense of their information about a particular topic. This conceptual technique is based on analyzing, comparing and identifying how others have debated and defined the concepts

that have related with a particular field of study. The researchers gather information, and synthesis them according to the particular concepts to give a full understanding for their research work.

2.5. Purposes of Literature Reviews Writing

The researchers use the literature reviews writing as a guide for their academic research. Randolph stated that “the conducting literature reviews is to demonstrate the author’s knowledge about a particular field of study including vocabulary, theories, key variables and phenomena, and its methods and history” (2). Through writing of literature reviews, the reviewers aim to be familiar with previous works, this to identify the relationship among the different literature that relates by their topics area, and to get new information about their topic and select an appropriate one. Hart stated that “The literature reviews help the researchers understand the existing body of knowledge– What we know– What we do not know” (1). Also, the researchers through writing literature reviews aim to give new research based on what they have read about their topic, and what the others discussed in previous work about it. This puts their works later on as a relevant source for the future and further research.

Furthermore, the aim of literature reviews writing is to organize the structure of the researchers’ writing in very well manner. According to O’Gorman and MacIntosh, the researchers through analyze the arguments and use their own words in the writing, they show their abilities to understand, evaluate other researches and allow their readers to have knowledge about the research work. Also, from writing literature reviews, the researchers aim to let their readers discover how they identify the problem and how they put the suggestions and answers in their research. In addition, the aim of literature reviews writing is to make it by the researchers as a place where they can show all their skills of summarizing, evaluating, synthesizing the reliable sources, and to give their readers the sense of confidence that the

content of their research have an assertiveness, and ensure that it has not been done before(31-34).

2.6. Problems in Writing Literature Reviews

Many scholars see that the writing reviews as a hard process. They have a fear about giving a poor literature review and they have a lack of confidence by their abilities to write their reviews in a good manner, for this reasons many of them do a randomly mistakes in their literature reviews writing. Gratton and Jones stated that the mistakes can be generated in those common ones (67):

- **Making the review simply is past of studies and producing an annotated bibliography:** this is a frequent error doing by the researchers; they just list the ideas of previous works and put them without any analysis, explain, and interpret them in his work, and they just put a list for the citation in their writing as John said..., Smith identifies....
- **No relationship between the literature review and the study, this another common mistake that the researcher must avoid it in his writing literature review.** Here the researcher fails to link between his review and the particular field of study that he will discuss it in the literature review.
- **Overemphasizing weaker or less important sources:** in this error, the researcher gives insufficient literature review because he collects data from non-relevant sources; this led his arguments to become poor and weak.
- **Focusing on the secondary sources rather than primary one of literature:**A lot of students gather data from the journals or articles rather than gathering it from the reading books; they do not use the original sources, and they favor only the second sources.
- **Avoiding the critical evaluation and accepting uncritically the finding of literature.** In many cases, the researcher has no ability to combine the logical arguments because, in

his reading process, he is focusing more in the summarizing of what others do without giving enough time for his critical evaluation or synthesize what he has read.

- **Not considering contrary findings, and alternative interpretations.** In this mistake, the researcher considers his work is unique, he does not need for further interpretations or explanations; his work based on just an agree side does not mention the contrary side of the arguments, he does not need to engage more about what others work in particular field of study.
- **Raising problematic issues but not addressing them.** Sometimes the researcher fails to address the research problem in his review because he missed it or does not know how to put it in the clear problem statement, and sometimes he fails to explain very well how the findings help him to answer the research question.

These common mistakes led to the poor literature reviews writing, and to misunderstood as well as failure to write a strong literature review. The researcher improves his literature reviews writing by following some advices like, avoiding the topics that are excessively broad or excessively narrow, identifying what he needs, and what he will search. Also, searching for academic sources and avoid the general one. Furthermore, he needs to explain how the findings help him to solve his research question, and he must be selective, using only the relevant references, not the irrelevant one. In writing literature reviews the researcher should be objective; do not give a personal opinion when he critiques the other's works, he must use his own words, or paraphrase what others said to do not fall in plagiarism. Also, he can cite all the references that he will work on to give his literature review in a comprehensive and clear way.

2.7. Conclusion

The researchers at whatever level of their experiences are needed to write literature reviews in their academic research. They write their reviews for the readers to give them a clarified picture about the structure of the work. In this writing process the researchers show their abilities to reformulate and evaluate what the previous work done, they draw the conclusions and outcomes from all the relevant references that are finding on it. Through this process, the researchers use some strategies and techniques to write reviews in easy way. The literature reviews open an opportunity for their readers to expect what the researchers will do in their whole research work.

Chapter Three

Research Design and

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Chapter three introduces a full report of the methodological part of the study and interpretations of the results; it presents research variables as well as research tools and samples. Furthermore, it deals with the analysis of the findings that are provided from questionnaires which are dedicated to both Master two students of English Department and teachers of Mathematics and Computer Science at Amar Thelidji University in Laghouat. In addition, this chapter seeks to investigate the use of a blog as a research tool for the purpose of gathering information, explore the perceptions of teachers and students towards the use of blogs in writing literature reviews, and discover the usefulness of blogging in academic research for relevant literature.

3.2. Research Variables

The variables are the main aspects of any research. These variables have different types that are influenced the study work. This research relies on two basic variables which are independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is blogging which is a stable aspect in research work, and the dependent variable is the literature review writing which is a changeable aspect we study it.

3.2.1. Independent Variable

Blog as a new technological tool, it is used by teachers, learners and researchers in their fields. Therefore, using a blog during the research process can help the researchers to enhance their knowledge concerning their topic. Moreover, implementing a blog in the research process can help researchers to collect information and sources to enrich their literature reviews writing.

3.2.2. Dependent Variable

Writing literature reviews is a dependent variable that is affected by blogging as independent variable. The process of writing literature reviews can help the researchers to

understand of the subject area very well, and thus help them to conceptualize their research problem. Through using blogs, the researchers can make this process of writing literature reviews easy and fast.

3. 3. Research Plan

With the purpose of investigating the use of a blog to write literature reviews, both Master two students of English Department and teachers of Mathematics and Computer Science at Amar Thelidji University –Laghouat have been taken as samples. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are used to conduct this study. First, the quantitative study is used to explore the use of blog among teachers and students to write literature reviews. Second, this research is qualitative for the sake of investigating that blog may facilitate the way of finding the sources that are used in the literature reviews' writing.

3.3.1. Research Questions

For the current research, the main research questions were formulated as follow:

1. Can blogging be used as a research tool to gather information?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers and students towards the use of blogs in writing literature reviews?
3. What is the effect of using blogs in academic research on enhancing literature reviews' writing?

3.3.2. Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been conducted:

- 1- Blog can be used as an effective tool to gather information.
- 2- The teachers and students may be satisfied by using the blogs on their research process.
- 3- Blog may facilitate the way of finding the sources that are used in the literature reviews' writing.

3.3.3. Research Objectives

The objectives of the present study are:

- 1- Investigating the use of a blog as a research tool to gather information.
- 2- Exploring to what extent the students and teachers are interested in using blogs for their literature reviews writing.
- 3- Investigating the usefulness of blogs in academic research for relevant literature.

3.4. Research Sample

The target population of this dissertation is Master Two students from the Department of English Language at Amar Thelidji University. They have been selected for this research since they are more familiar with the literature reviews in their writing dissertations. The sample of this study was of mixed genders and the average age of these students is between 23 to 26 years old, this sample of students was randomly chosen consisted of 13 students (3 males and 10 females) that represents 10% of the whole population.

Furthermore, we have purposefully contacted some teachers from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Amar Thelidji University. The selection of such sample was based on the consideration that those teachers have better experiences with the use of the blogs in their research careers. These questionnaires were distributed to students and teachers of both Departments of English language, and Mathematics and Computer Science at Amar Thelidji University in a form of papers.

3.5. Research Tools

In the process of collecting data, two questionnaires were proposed; the first one is designed for students whereas the second one is for the teachers. Both questionnaires started with a short paragraph which introduced the purpose of these questionnaires. The first questionnaire is composed of three parts blogs, literature review writing, blogs and literature reviews writing, which consist of six questions for each part.

The second questionnaire is teachers' questionnaire, it is proposed for teachers of Mathematics and Computer Science at Amar Thelidji University -Laghouat. This questionnaire is divided essentially into two parts, the first part composes of two questions which delivered for personal information, and the second part consists of five questions about the use of a blog in writing literature reviews. All of these questions directed for the purpose of investigating the usefulness of blog in the research process to write literature reviews Table 3.1 and 3.2.

| | Sections | Types of question | Number of questions |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Students | Section one | blogs | 6 Q |
| | Section two | Literature reviews writing | 6 Q |
| | Section three | Blogs and literature reviews writing | 6 Q |
| Teachers | Section one | Personal information | 2 Q |
| | Section two | Blogs and literature reviews writing | 5 Q |

Table 3.1: The Distribution of the Questions in the Questionnaires

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Students' sample | Do you believe that blog contribute to the development of your writing literature reviews? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Teachers' sample | In your opinion, what are the benefits of using a blog in writing literature reviews for researchers? |

Table3.2: Sample of Questions Types

3.6. Questionnaires Analyses and Interpretations

3.6.1. Students' Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire was directed for the aim of investigating to what extent students are familiar with blogs and how much they use them. In addition, it seeks to discover the process of writing literature reviews and the difficulties that students faced, as well as it is intended to figure out how the use of blogs in an academic way especially as a research tool facilitates literature reviews writing by asking the students about their opinions concerning their use of this tool in their literature reviews' writing. The quantitative findings of students' questionnaire are represented in statistical data where the analyses are summarized and symbolized in figures.

3.6.1.1. Analyses of the Results

Part One: Blogging

Question1: Do you know what is a blog?

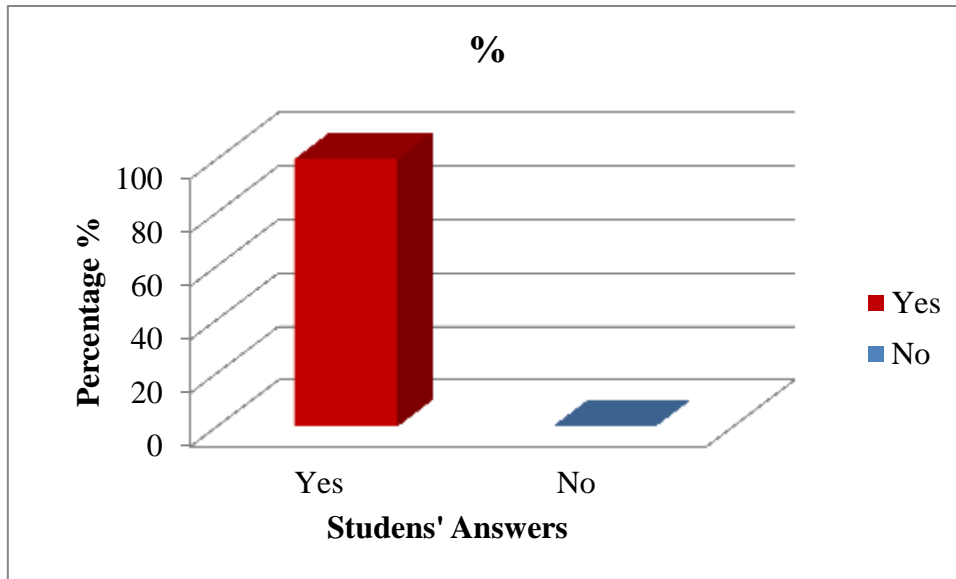


Figure 3.1: Students' Familiarity with the Blogs

The figure shows that all students (100%) know the blog.

- If yes, what is it?

Most of the students define the blog as a web page that is updated frequently while others define as an online journal or online diary in which its content is organized chronologically and recurrently restructured.

Question 2: Do you have a blog? Or just you follow others blog?

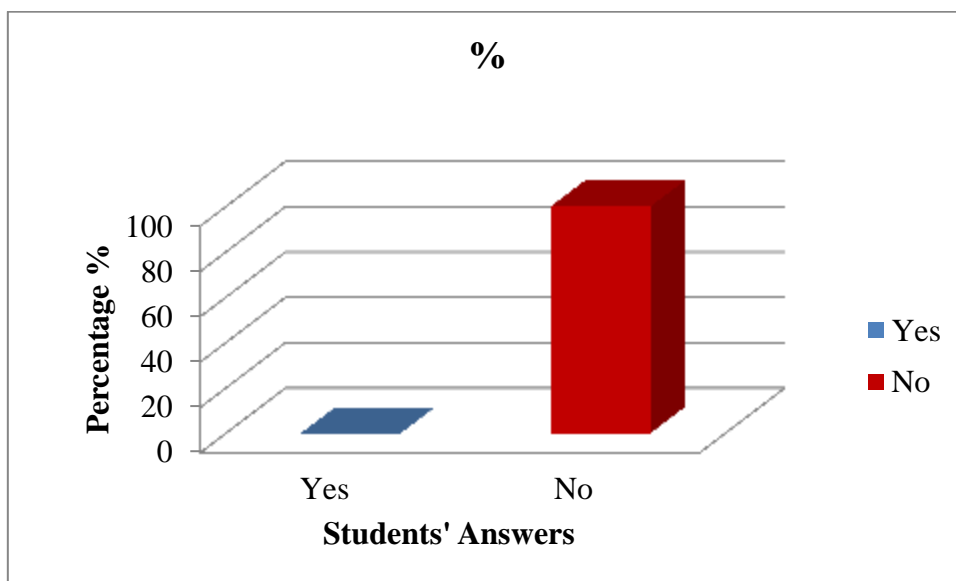


Figure 3.2: Students' Usage of Blogs

This graph present that all students don't have a blog instead they just follow others' blog.

- How do you interact with blog content?

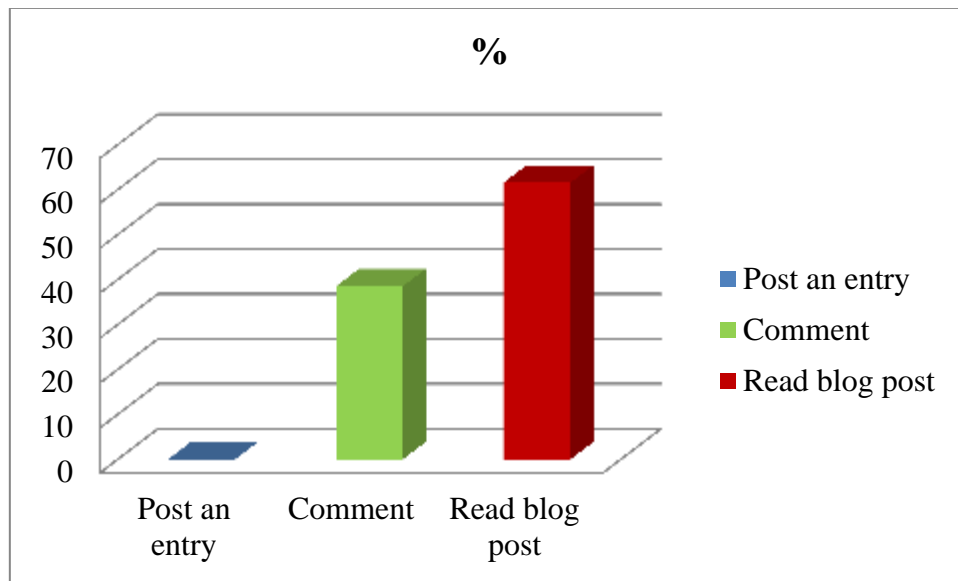


Figure 3.3: Students' Interaction with Blog Posts

Regarding students answers, 61, 54% say that they interact with blog content through reading blog post only. While 38, 46% of them state they interact with blog content by leaving comments.

Question 3: What make you visit blog? Look for:

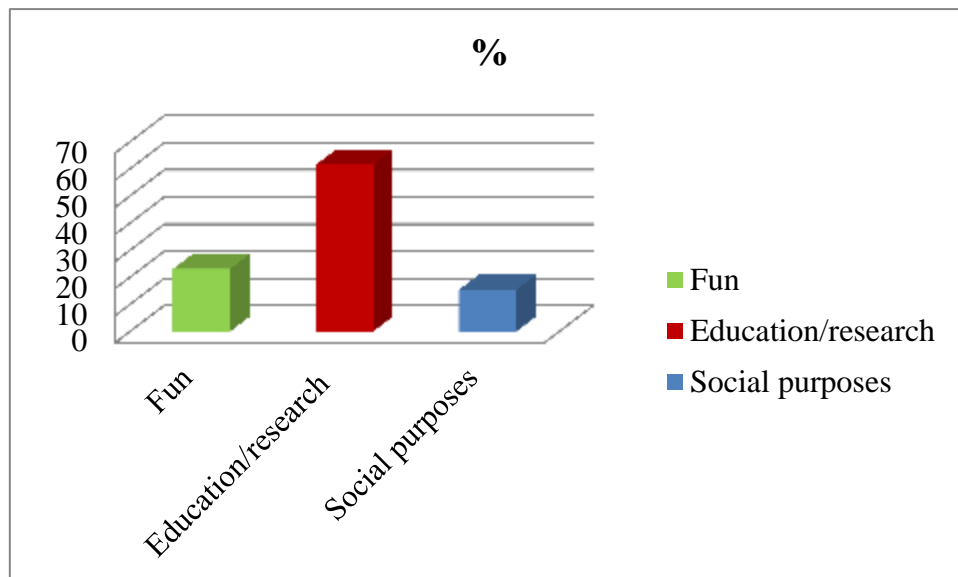


Figure 3.4: Students' Purposes when Visiting Blogs

The figure above indicates that 61, 54% of students visit blog for education and research purposes. Others 23, 08% have social purposes and remainder 15, 38% visit blog for fun.

Question 4: How long have been visiting blogs?

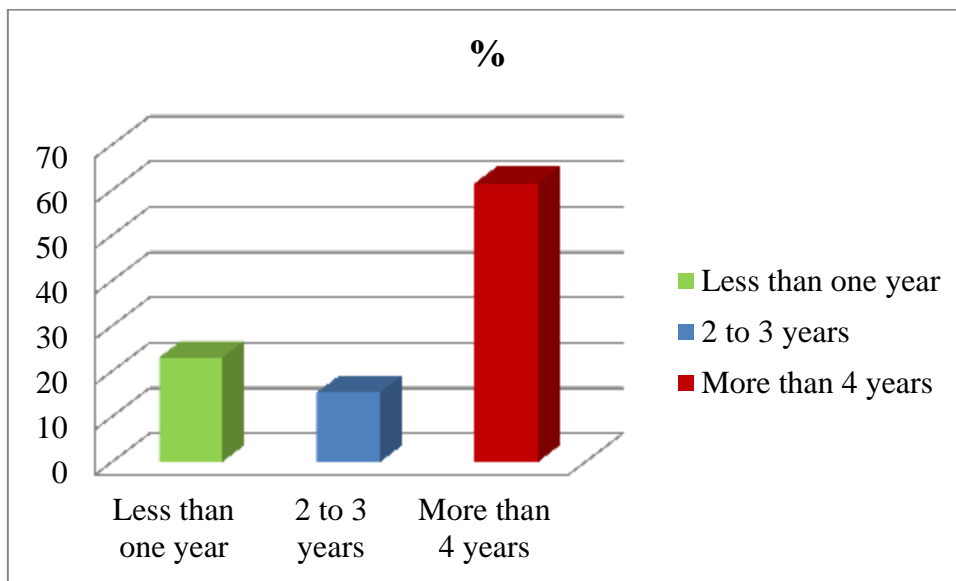


Figure 3.5: The Experience of Participants with Blogging

The result above shows, 61, 54 % of students have more than four years when they start visiting blog whereas 38, 46% they have less than one year. The rest state that they begin visiting blog from 2 to 3 years.

Question 5: How many times you visit blogs?

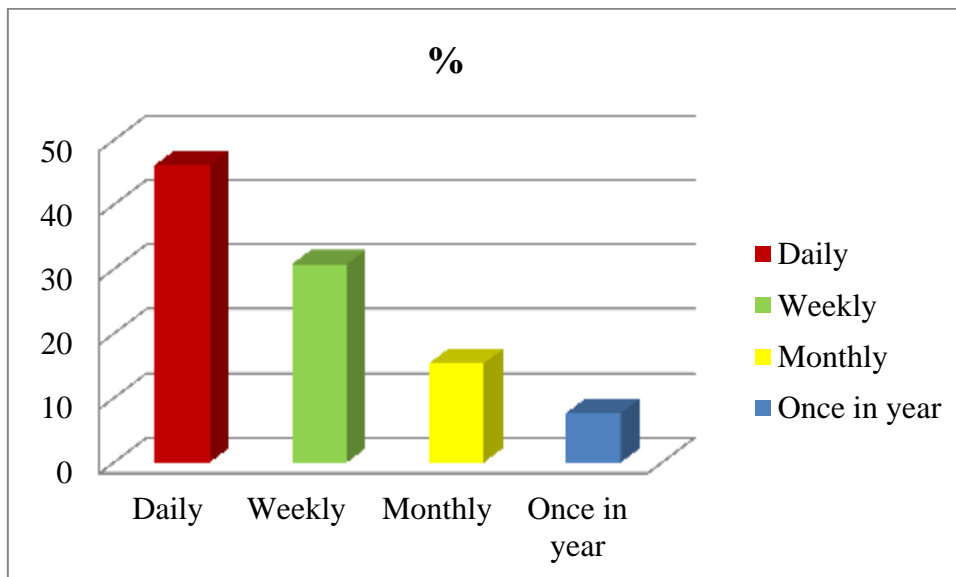


Figure 3.6: Students' Blogging Practice

The answers that are presented in this figure reveal that 46, 15% of students' use blog daily while 30, 77% weekly. 15, 38% of them use it monthly while the rest utilize it once in a year.

- the time you lasted on one visit:

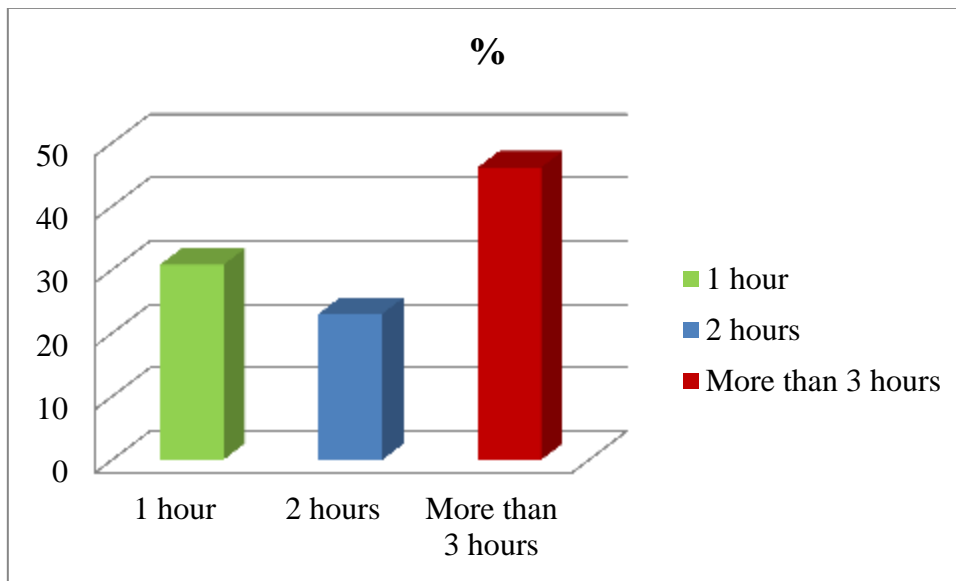


Figure 3.7: Students' Daily Usage of a Blog

The graph above shows that the highest percentage of students (46, 15%) spend more than three hours in one visit, the rest of percentage divide between 30, 77% one hour for one visit and 23, 07% for two hours maximum.

Question 6: Which type of blog you visit more?

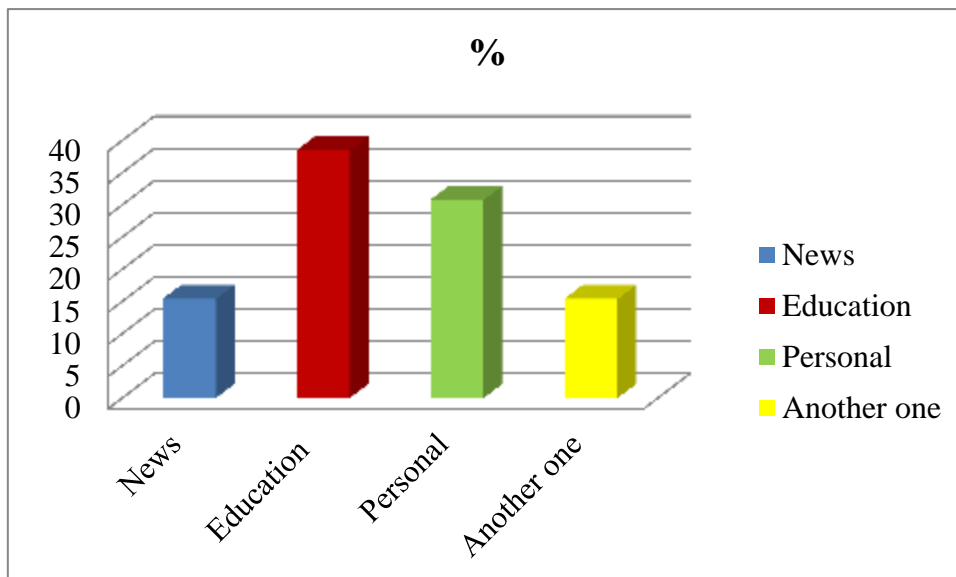


Figure 3.8: Types of Blogs Students Visit

The majority of students (38, 46%) agree that the educational blogs are the most one they visit while the others 33, 77% state that they look for personal blogs. The remainder students divide between news and other types.

Part Two: Writing Literature Review

Question 1: Why writing literature reviews is important?

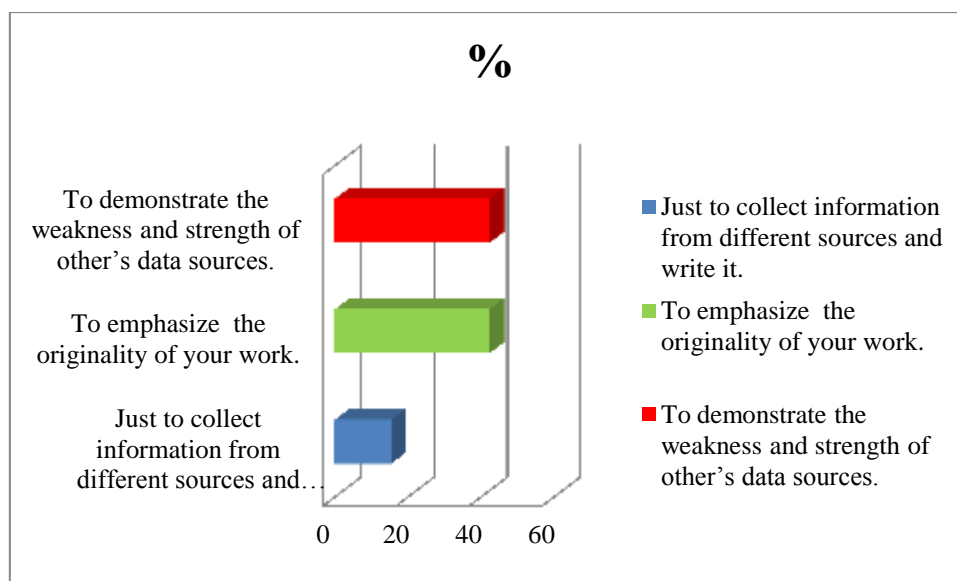


Figure 3.9: Importance of Literature Reviews Writing

As indicated above, 42, 3% of students say that writing literature reviews is important because they need to demonstrate the weakness and strength of other's data source and the same percentage (42, 3%) say to emphasize the originality of their works. The remaining students (15, 38%) say they write literature review just to collect information from different sources.

Question 2: Why do you emphasize the limitations of existing knowledge in writing literature reviews?

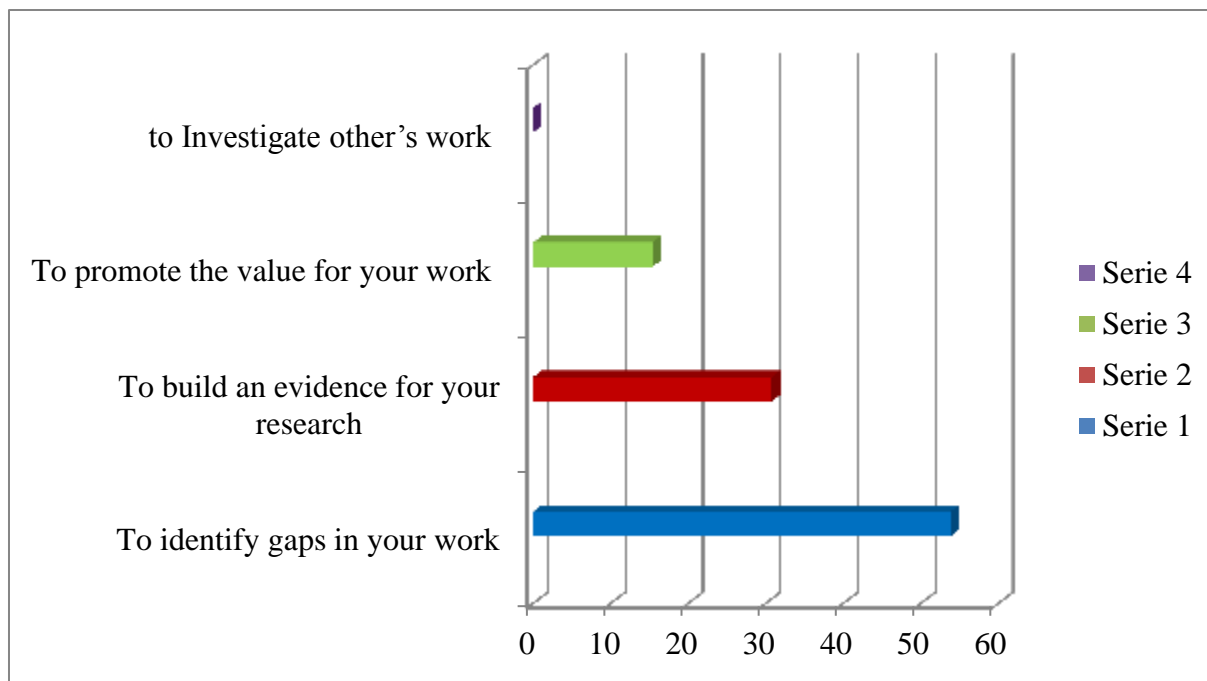


Figure 3.10: Students' Causes of Identifying Limitation of Existing Knowledge

The figure above illustrates that 53, 84% of students claim that they emphasize the limitations of existing knowledge in writing literature reviews to identify the gaps in their works while 30, 76% to build evidence for their research and 15,38% to promote the value for their work.

Question 3: Do you need to put your personal opinion when you write literature reviews?

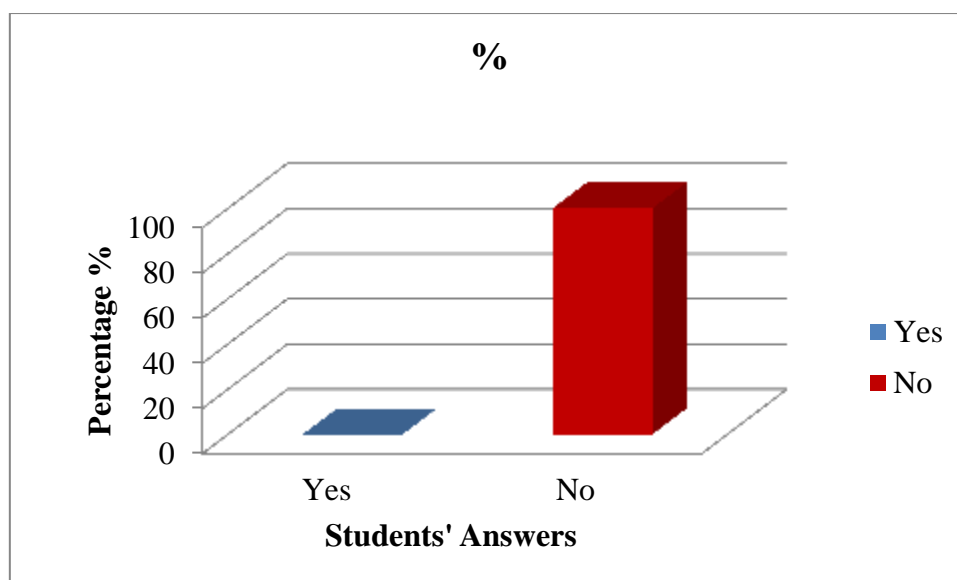


Figure 3.11: Students' Interpretations about Putting their Personal Views in Literature Reviews' Writing

As shown above, all of the students (100%) state that they don't need to put their personal opinion when they write literature review.

Question 4: What are the difficulties you faced in writing literature reviews?

The answers to this question were divided into three views. The First view, some students said that the common challenge of writing literature reviews is the lack of sources and the unavailable sources that are related by their topics of interest. However, in the second view, other students stated that they cannot confirm if these sources are reliable or no. In the last view, some of them said that they do not know the structure of writing literature reviews.

Question 5: Do you think that use of technology can facilitate writing literature reviews?

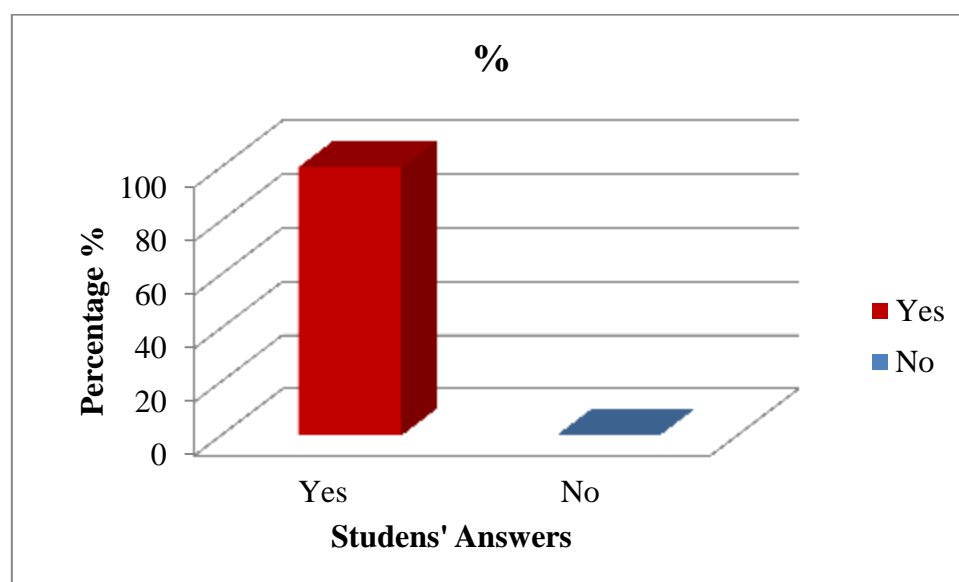


Figure3.12: Students' Perceptions about the Usefulness of Technology in Facilitating Literature Reviews' Writing

All students (100%) agree that the use of technology can facilitate writing literature review.

Question 6: Which tools you think are more appropriate in facilitating writing literature reviews?

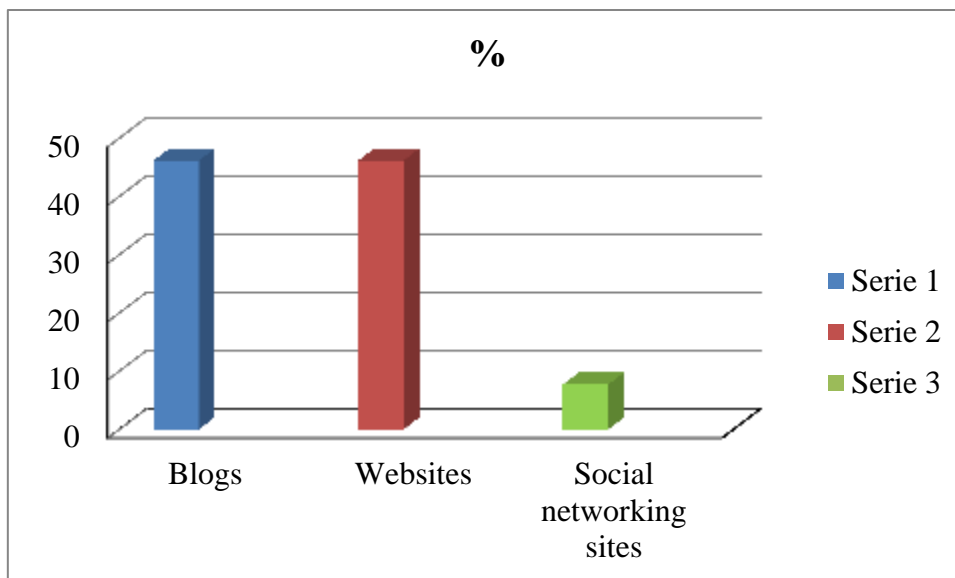


Figure 3.13: Students' Views about Appropriate Tools in Facilitating Literature

Reviews Writing

Regarding students' answer, 92, 3% of students divided between 46, 15% of them see blogs as most appropriate tools in facilitating literature review writing and the same percentage by 46, 15% see websites as an appropriate one. The remaining students (7, 7%) see social networking sites as appropriate tools.

Part Three: Blogs and Literature Reviews Writing

Question 1: Why do you use blog in educational context?

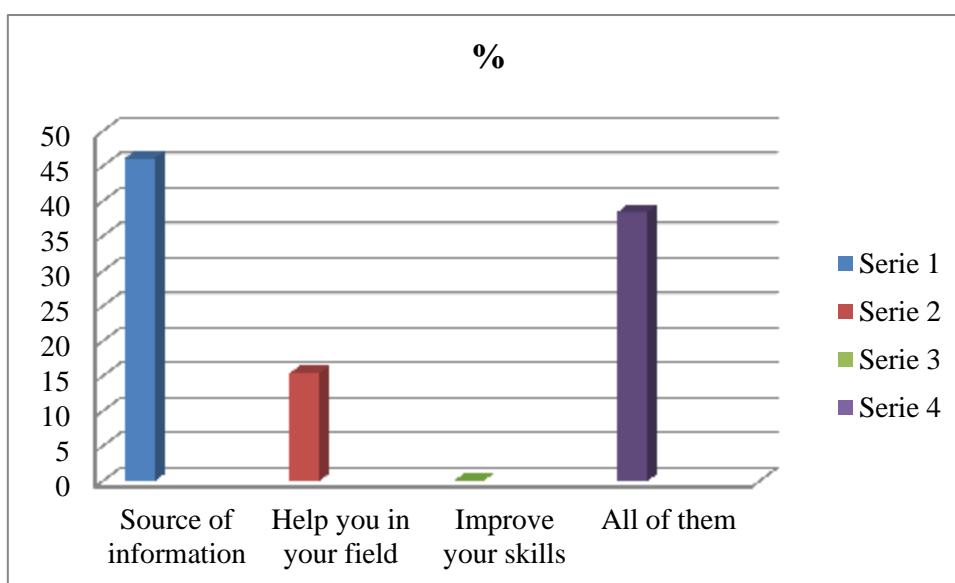


Figure3.14: Student's Reasons of Using Educational Blog

As shown above, most of the students 46, 15% use blog in education context because they consider it as a source of information while 15, 38% state that it helps them in their field.

38, 46% of them claim that they use a blog because it is a source of information, helps them in their field and improves their skills.

Question 2: What do you think about using a blog as a relevant source for collecting information?

The answers of students indicate that blog is an appropriate tool that may has a major role in facilitating the process of collecting information especially for its easy use and features that facilitate the process particularly comment , links, archive features and blog post .

Question 3: Do you evaluate the information you collect from the blog?

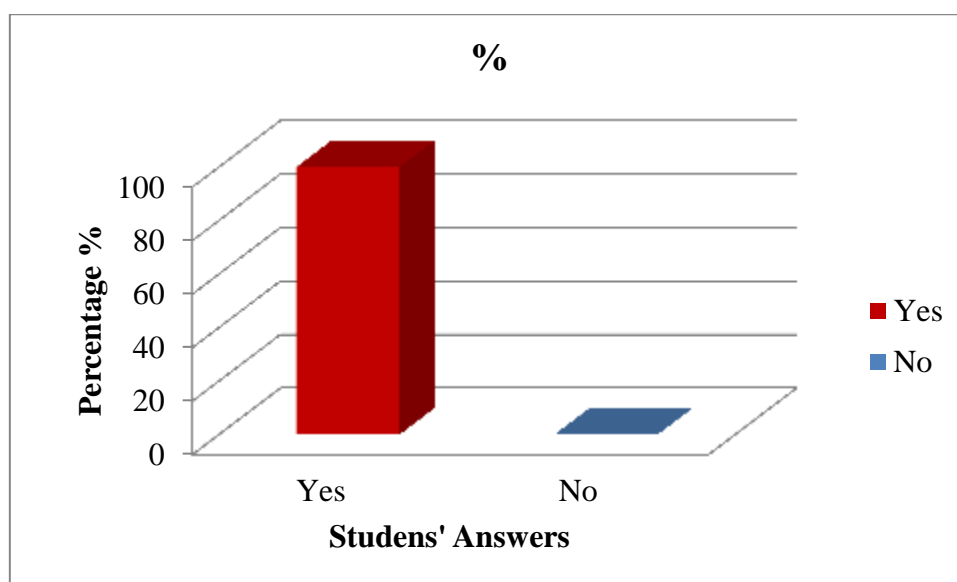


Figure 3.15: Students' Attitudes about the Evaluation of Information from Blogs

The figure shown above presents that the vast majority of blog users evaluate the information they collect from the blog.

- If yes, why do you evaluate the information?

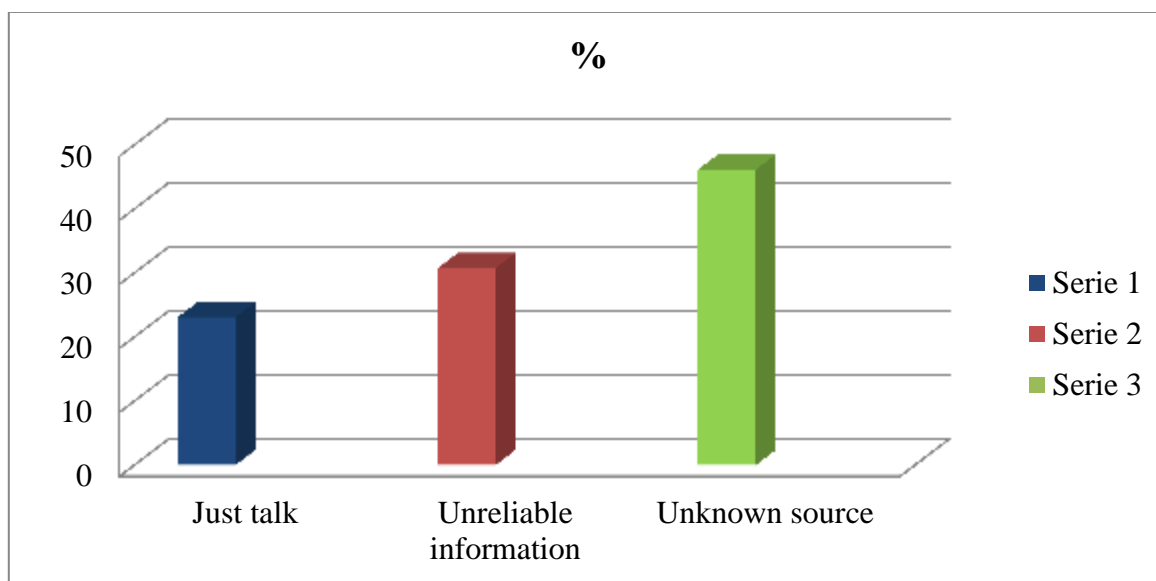


Figure 3.16: Student' Reasons of Evaluating Information from Blogs

As indicated above in the figure, the majority of students (46, 15%) evaluate the information they take from the blog because they think the content of the blog is unknown source while the other (30, 76%) see it unreliable information. 23, 08% of students think that blog content may be just talk this is why they evaluate the information from the blog.

Question 4: Which features of the blog you use most to gather information to write literature review?

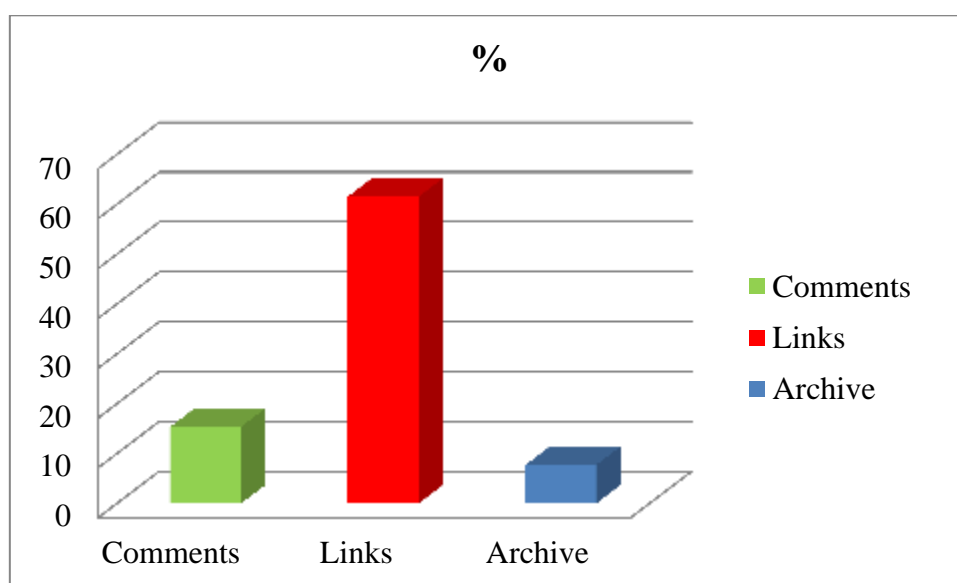


Figure 3.17: Students' Usage of Blog Features to Gather Information

As seen in the figure above, a big majority of the students (61, 54%) use links while gathering information from the blog, 15, 38% use comments and the remainder 7, 69% look in the archive feature for the information.

Question 5: Do you believe that blog contribute to the development of your writing literature reviews?

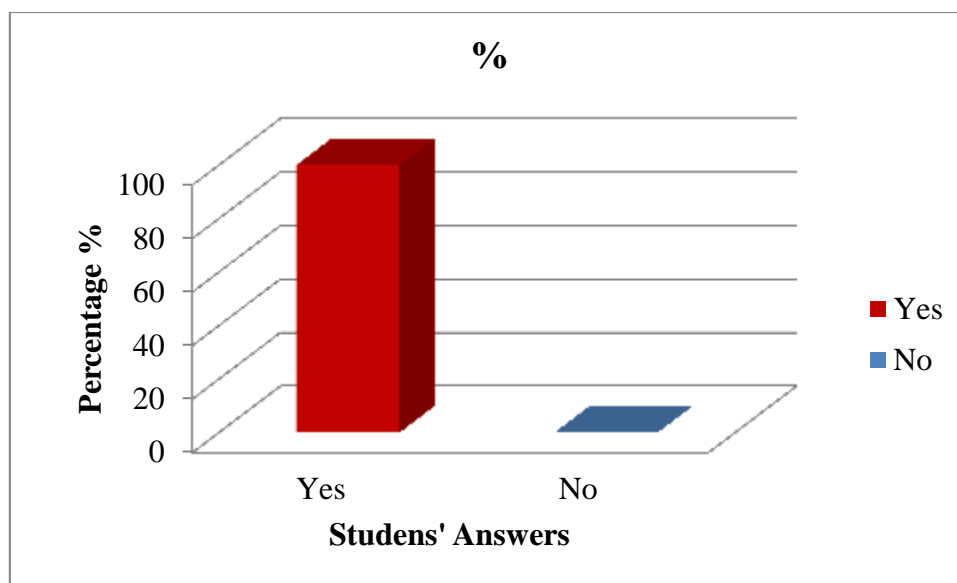


Figure 3.18: Students' Attitudes about the Contribution of a Blog in Advancing Literature Reviews Writing

Depending on the graph above, all the students (100%) agree that the blog contributes to the development of their writing literature review.

Question 6: In your opinion, what are the benefits of using a blog in writing literature reviews?

Students' answers differentiate from one to another. However, they state that blog has a lot of benefits; it can provide them with multiple links of sources that help them directly go to the source, it offers them with a space to see others opinion about a certain topic which helps them in their writing. In addition, they claim that they found relevant information they need and couldn't access the original source, it helps them to find links easily which gives them a chance to gain time and do their work quickly.

3.6.1.2. Interpretations of the Results

The data collected reveals that 100% of students propose that they know blog and define it nearly as researchers and dictionaries define it, which is evidence that they are well familiar with the emergence of new technologies and blog especially. None of the students have a blog and participate blogging as an author of the blog, but the majority 61,54% participate as bloggers through reading the blog post and 38, 46% of them through commenting, this reveals that the readers of blogs have an effective role with the blogs' content. Moreover, Entering blog community has several reasons; the vast majority of the students have educational or research purposes to visit blog community because they see the blogs as an available source for their studies. Also, this shows why the majority of them have been visiting blogs for a long time mainly more than 4 years, they visit it daily, and they stay on it for more than 3 hours in one visit; this proves that they are totally active in blog community and they are interested in blogging, their interest is differentiated in which 38, 46% of them are interested in educational blog.

Concerning writing literature reviews during the research process, students see this process an important part in doing research in which 42, 3% of them think that because they must demonstrate the weakness and strength of other's data source and emphasize the originality of their works which means that they know what they are doing in writing their review of literature. Additionally, it has been noticed that the majority of students (53, 84%) emphasize the limitations of existing knowledge in writing literature reviews to identify the gaps in their works to give a suggested solution for this gap. This reveals that the students know that they need to identify the gap from the current knowledge, and give a suggested solution that the work based on. Furthermore, all of the students (100 %) know that they cannot put their personal opinion in their literature reviews, this shows that the students are familiar with reviews' writing that require them to be objective. Based on students' answers in

Q4, lack of sources, if the sources are reliable or no and the structure of writing literature reviews are the difficulties they faced while doing their literature review, and all of them agree that technology can facilitate this process where 92, 3% of them see both blogs and website as appropriate tools to that, this view confirm that the student able to use such technologic tool “blog” to facilitate their literature reviews writing.

For integrating technology in writing literature reviews and especially blog, most of the students propose their causes of using blog in educational context which 46, 15% of them see it as a source of information, while 38, 46% of them see it not only as a source of information, but it helps them in their field and improves their skills as well, which proves that they used blogs in their research process. Moreover, the second question tended to elicit information about the use of a blog as a relevant source for collecting information; the majority sees it as an appropriate tool for this process particularly through using features. The majority of the students (61.54%) use links to gather more relevant information and sources, and 15, 38% of them use comments to get feedbacks and links as well; it means that they have open minds toward the use of blog features when doing their research. Although, all of the participants indicate that they evaluate the information from the blog because the content is (46, 15%) unknown source or have unreliable information, this shows that they know that many blogs’ owners post their personal thoughts and opinions. More importantly, all of them agree that the blog helps them in their literature reviews writing and they illustrate some advantages such as provides links of sources.

In the overall, the majority of students are interested with such technical tools “blogs” to advance their research works, their answers prove that use of the blog as a research tool is useful and very helpful in facilitating literature reviews writing.

3.6.2. Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire, on the other hand, consists of two main parts. Part one is for personal information. Part two is about teachers' attitudes toward the use of the blog as a research tool to write literature reviews. The questionnaire is an open question, requiring the teachers to answer, and give an explanation about their views.

3.6.2.1. Analyses of the Results

Part One: Personal Information

This part is about given personal information about the teachers that are selected in this research. This part consists of four main questions which are, the first two questions are about the gender of the teachers and their age. While, (Q3) is about their teaching domain, and (Q4) is about their level. These questions enabled us to choose the appropriate sample for the study.

1 - Gender:

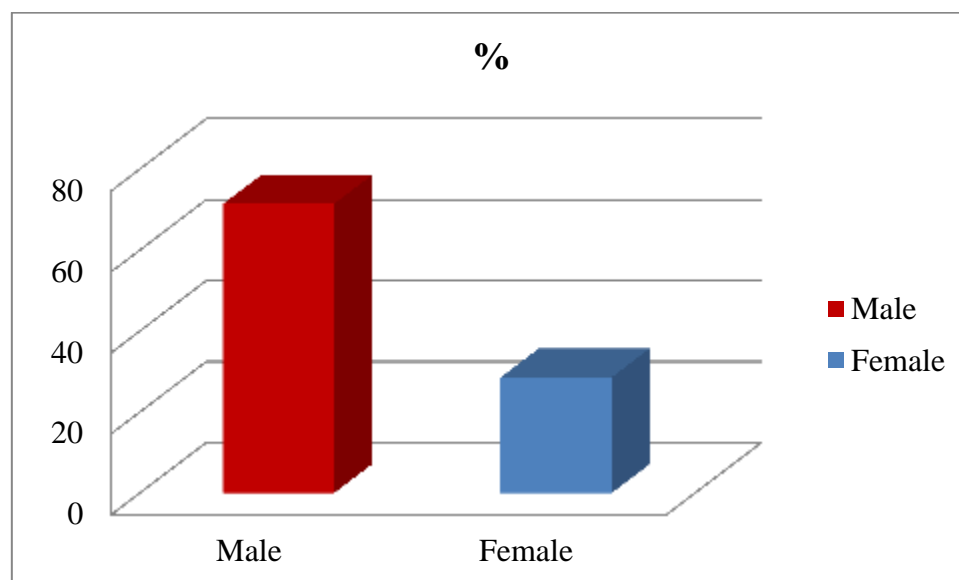


Figure 3.19: Teachers' Gender

The figure above reveals that 71, 43% of the teachers are male and 28, 57% of them are female.

2-Level:

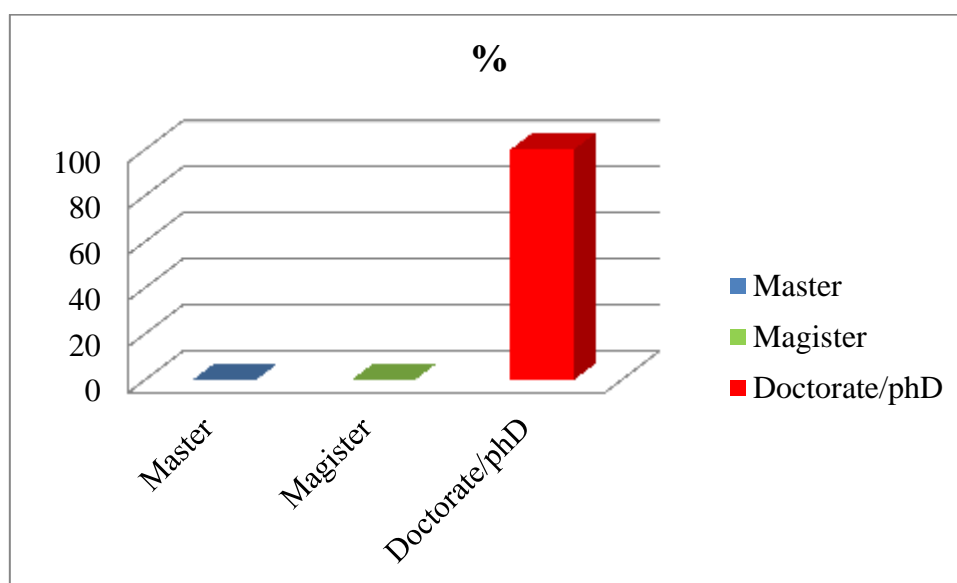


Figure 3.20: Teachers' Level

As seen in the graph above, all of the teachers (100%) have a doctorate/PhD.

Part Two: Blogs and Literature Reviews Writing

Question 1: As a teacher, for which reason you visit the blog?

For this question, the teachers state that there are several reasons to visit the blogs. Most of them visit the blog to learn more about their field of study and to look for specific information of their interest. While little of them notice that they visit it only because they can easily access information about a particular topic at any time.

Question 2: what are the blog features you use in gathering information?

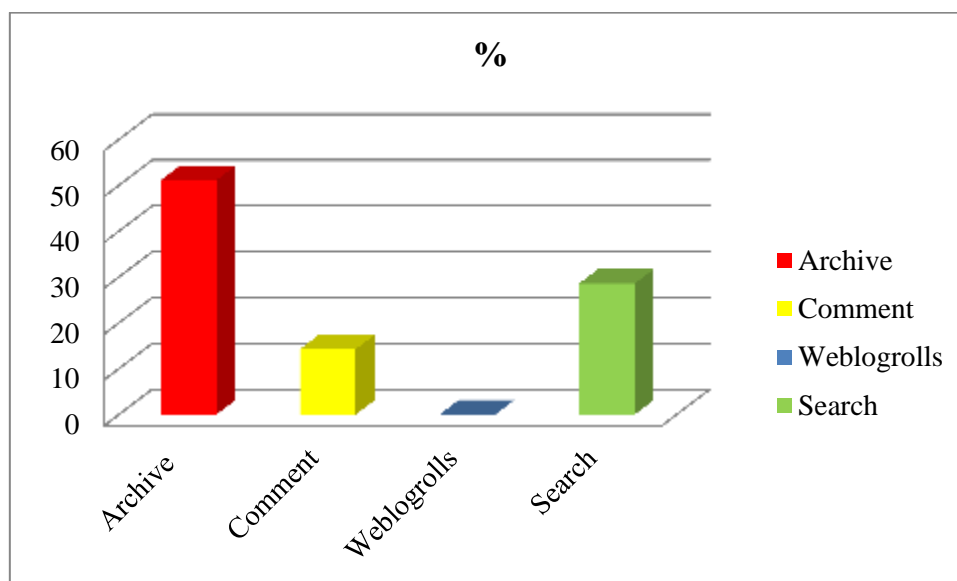


Figure 3.21: Teachers Usage of Blog Features to Gather Information

Considering the data presented in the figure, the majority of the teachers (51, 14%) use archive feature, 28, 57% of them use the blog search feature and teachers with a percentage of 14, 28% use the comment feature.

Question 3: What do you believe about using blog by the researchers to facilitate their literature reviews writing?

The answer of this question is divided between two opinions. the first half, they agree on using blog by the researchers to facilitate their literature reviews writing, their views based on that from using blogs the researchers can find relevant information, and exchange their thoughts to get new ideas or experiences that use in their writing literature reviews. The second half, they state that the researchers cannot use a blog to facilitate their literature reviews writing because they see blogs as unreliable sources, and has no credibility.

Question 4: In your opinion, what are the benefits of using a blog in writing literature review for researchers?

For this question, the answers took one direction which is all teachers agree on the benefits of using a blog in writing literature review for researchers are through using blog the

researchers can find the relevant sources easy and faster to write their literature reviews, they can take advice ,and important information to develop their research work.

Question 5: Do you think that researchers should take an active role in using a blog to write literature review?

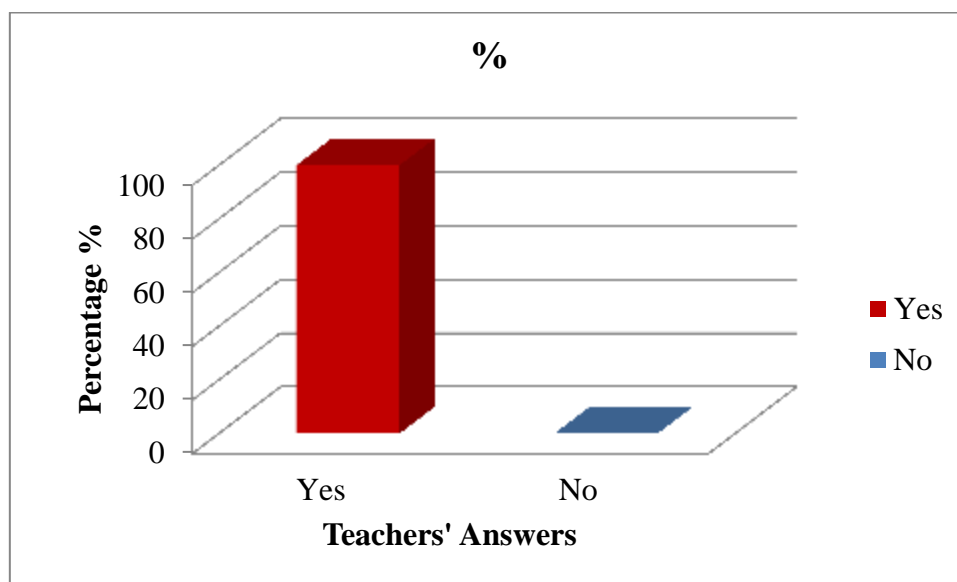


Figure3.22: Teachers' Perspectives about the Use of Blog by Researchers

Clearly indicated above, the entire teachers recommended that the researchers should take an active role in using blog during their research process to write literature review.

3.6.2.2. Interpretations of the Results

First of all, the teachers' samples reveal that males are dominant over females by percentage 71, 43% males and 28, 57% females that are back to the fact that males are more interested in mathematics and Computer science field, and most of them have Doctorate level. Regarding the teachers' experiences with the use of blogs in their research works, most of the teachers who participate stated that they have several reasons for using blogs such as to learn more about their field of study and to look for specific information of their interest, this is an evidence they are more concentrated on finding information and knowledge that blogs provided. The majority of them (51, 14%) use the archive feature to collect information, this shows that archive helps them to find the specific information they look for and has been

posted time ago in the blog, and were saved in the archive. Moreover, through their answers about Q2, many of them believe that the blog is very useful in writing literature reviews through exchange ideas or information; their views prove that they used blogs in their research process to write literature reviews. Moreover, all of the teachers agree that the blog provides several benefits to the researchers to write their literature reviews in an easy and fast way, and they recommended that researchers should take an active role in using the blog to write literature reviews. Their experiences with blogging prove that blogs are an effective tool for doing a research and writing the literature reviews in particular.

On the whole, the teachers' perspectives toward the use of blog as a research tool was positive, since the use of such technological tool can help both teachers and students to facilitate their literature reviews writing through give them an opportunity to exchange, interact, share, and communicate with others to collect information, to discuss different views, and to get the relevant sources that they may use in their literature reviews writing.

3.7. Results of the Hypotheses of the Study

The results of the present research work for both questionnaires ascertain the hypotheses of the study. The findings from the questionnaire of students prove that blogs can be used as an effective tool to gather literature and to write their reviews. As well students' questionnaire with findings of teachers' questionnaire confirm the second hypothesis where the teachers and students may be satisfied by using the blogs on their research process. Moreover, the students' answers support the third hypothesis of that blog may facilitate the way of finding the sources that are used in the literature reviews' writing. Generally, the results obtained from the two questionnaires confirm the validity of the proposed hypotheses.

3.8. Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter presents the empirical phase of the current study. The results deduced from the analysis of questionnaires have confirmed the proposed hypotheses. The

results demonstrate that blogs are commonly used as a research tool to write reviews and are totally effective in gathering literature. Moreover, the findings reveal that both teachers and students are satisfied by using the blogs on their research process. It allows them to get feedback and notes from other researchers about their topic which helps them in their writing of literature reviews. Overall, the use of blog facilitates writing literature reviews through providing sources in a short time.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This research has been intended to investigate the effectiveness of using the blog as a tool of research to write literature reviews, and to provide a brief overview about the importance of utilizing blog in writing literature reviews. The main purpose of this research is to shed light on the use of blog in pedagogical context and in research particularly, and to support the use of this modern technology by the researchers in gathering information and get new or different sources that may adapt with their topics.

This study is divided into two main parts: theoretical and practical. Essentially, the theoretical part is dedicated to provide enough information about the main variables of this research: blogs and literature reviews writing. The practical part is committed mainly on the use of blogs to write literature reviews. This part is divided into two sections: the research methodology and results' analyses and interpretations. The research methodology pursued in this research study includes two questionnaires one for the students and the other one for the teachers. The second section discusses the analyses and interpretations of the results.

This research was undertaken at Amar Thelidji University in Laghouat – Algeria. The chosen populations were Master Two students of English Department and some teachers of Mathematics and Computer Science Department. Both questionnaires are designed for the purpose of investigate and explore teachers and students attitudes toward the use of a blog as a tool to gather literature and write reviews.

The analysis of the findings obtained from the questionnaires reveals that both teachers and students are familiar with the use of blog in the research process. The majority of them strongly agree with the idea of integrating a blog as an effective tool to facilitate the writing process of literature reviews.

The data collected provides the following findings:

- Blog is the most appropriate tool among all ICT tools.

- Blog is an effective tool in the research process.
- Blog is a potential tool that makes literature reviews writing easy.
- Most of the students and teachers use blogs to facilitate their literature reviews writing.
- Blogging helps the researchers to find relevant sources.

Finally, we may conclude that blog has a considerable achievement in gathering information and sources to write literature reviews. The results of the study indicated that the students and teachers' attitudes towards blogging were positive. Also, the results indicated that the students can implement blog not only on the communication or discussion with others or the fun purpose, but they can use it in their research careers and academic studies to advance their literature reviews writing where it attracted students' attention to consider it as a new way to search for the information. Furthermore, the teachers agree with the effectiveness and appropriateness of blogs as a research tool. The results indicated that their views were optimistic toward the blog use to gather literature to write reviews. This revealed that the teachers who were accustomed to using the traditional way for gathering information to write their literature reviews, believe that this new way searching may have a good effect in their literature reviews' writing. Both students and teachers as academic researchers agree that the use of a blog can improve and facilitate the literature reviews writing process. In addition, from using blogs they can find the relevant sources or information about their topic in any field of study, and make it as an easy task without any waste of time to search for relevant sources.

In the last point, we found that the researcher can use blogs to write literature reviews through owning their personal blog, the researchers should open a blog and put their interesting topics, then use the features of a blog like links, comments and archives to gather the relevant information and different sources that can help them to write literature reviews

without any hard effort. Appendix 4 shows screenshots of how Easy Writing blog that we opened facilitates literature reviews writing. In the last point, we recommend the researchers in the future to use blogs in their research process and especially in writing literature reviews.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Blog features

The screenshot shows the ESA Columbus Blog homepage. The header includes the ESA logo, the title 'Columbus Blog', and the subtitle 'STS 122 brings ESA research laboratory to ISS'. Below the header, there are language selection options (English, Deutsch, Français) and the ESA Columbus logo. The main content area displays three blog entries. The first entry is titled 'NASA managers are now in a huddle' and includes a photo of people in a control room. The second entry is titled 'Shuttle Atlantis at sunset last night' and includes a photo of the shuttle at sunset. The third entry is titled 'Now troubleshooting' and includes a text report. The right sidebar contains a search box, a list of categories (Columbus CC, Columbus science, General, Launch countdown), a blogroll of related blogs, a list of ESA blogs, related links, and RSS feeds for English and German. Annotations with arrows point to various elements: 'Title of blog' points to the header title; 'Date of blog post' points to the date of the first entry; 'Blog post' points to the photo of the control room; 'Title of blog entry' points to the title of the second entry; 'Search' points to the search box; 'Categories' points to the category list; 'Blogroll' points to the list of related blogs; 'RSS feeds' points to the RSS feed links; and 'Comment feature' points to the 'Add comment' link of the third entry.

Annotations in the image:

- Title of blog
- Date of blog post
- Blog post
- Title of blog entry
- Search
- Categories
- Blogroll
- RSS feeds
- Comment feature

“Coloumbus Blog Screenshot.” *Space in Images*, 3 Nov. 2007,

www.esa.int/spaceinimages/Images/2007/12/Coloumbus_blog_screenshot.

Appendix 2

Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

The following questionnaire is proposed in order to prepare Master Dissertation. We would be grateful if you could answer frankly and truthfully these questions which we aim to get some information about your use of a blog and how helps you in writing literature reviews.

Please, read carefully the questions and put a cross (X) in the appropriate box. Give a full answer whenever necessary.

Part One: Blogging

1- Do you know what is a blog?

Yes No

- If yes, what is it?

.....

2- Do you have a blog? Or just you follow others blog?

Yes, I have No, I follow others blog

- How do you interact with blog content?

Post an entry Comment Read blog post

3- What make you visit blog? Look for:

Fun Education/ research Social purposes

4- How long have been visiting blogs?

Less than one year 2 to 3 years More than 4 years

5-How many times you visit blogs?

Daily Weekly Monthly Once in year

- the time you lasted on one visit:

1 hour 2 hours more than 3 hours

6- Which type of blog you visit more?

News Education Personal

- Another one,

Part Two: Writing Literature Reviews

1- Why writing literature reviews is important?

- Just to collect information from different sources and write it.
- To take general views without any critical assessment.
- To emphasize the originality of your work.
- To demonstrate the weakness and strength of other's data sources.

2- Why do you emphasize the limitations of existing knowledge in writing literature reviews?

- To identify gaps in your work To Investigate other's work
- To build evidence for your research
- To promote the value for your work

3- Do you need to put your personal opinion when you write literature reviews?

Yes No

4- What are the difficulties you faced in writing literature reviews?

.....

.....

5- Do you think that use of technology can facilitate writing literature reviews?

Yes No

6- Which tools you think are more appropriate in facilitating writing literature review?

Blogs Websites Social networking sites

Appendix 3

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

The following questionnaire is proposed in order to prepare Master Dissertation. We would be grateful if you could answer frankly and truthfully these questions which we aim to get some information about your use of a blog and how helps you in writing literature reviews.

Please, read carefully the questions and put a cross (X) in the appropriate box. Give a full answer whenever necessary.

Part One: Personal Information

1 - Gender: Male Female

2-Level: Master Magister Doctorate/PhD

Part Two: Blogs and Literature Reviews' Writing

1-As a teacher, for which reason you visit the blog?

.....

.....

2 -What are the blog features you use in gathering information?

Archive Comments Weblogrolls Search

3-What do you believe about using blog by the researchers to facilitate their literature reviews writing?

.....

.....

4-In your opinion, what are the benefits of using a blog in writing literature reviews for researchers?

.....

.....

5-Do you think that researchers should take an active role in using a blog to write literature reviews?

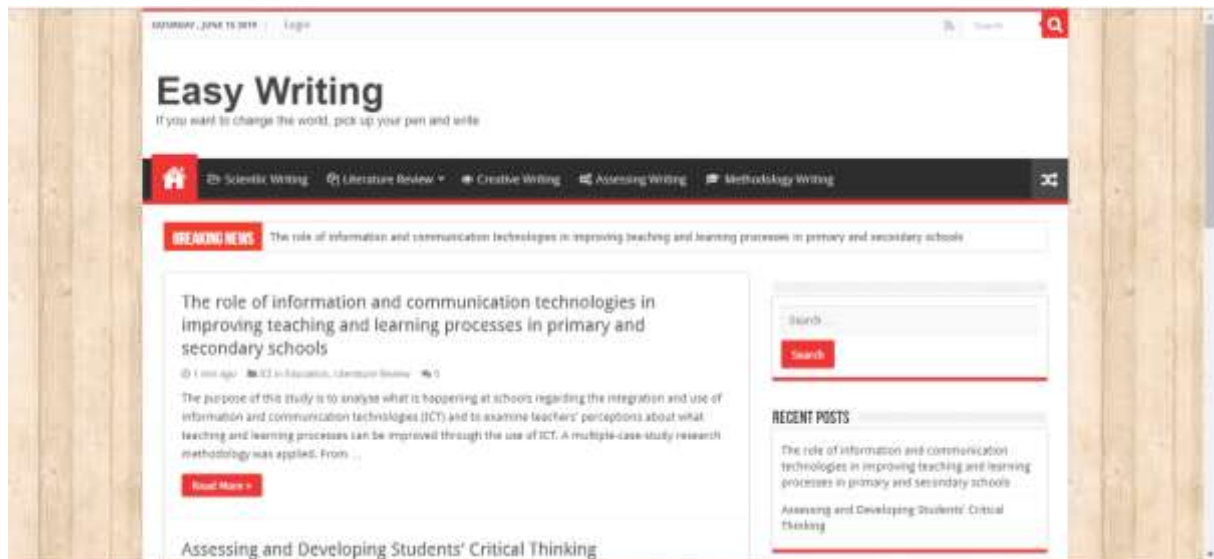
Yes

No

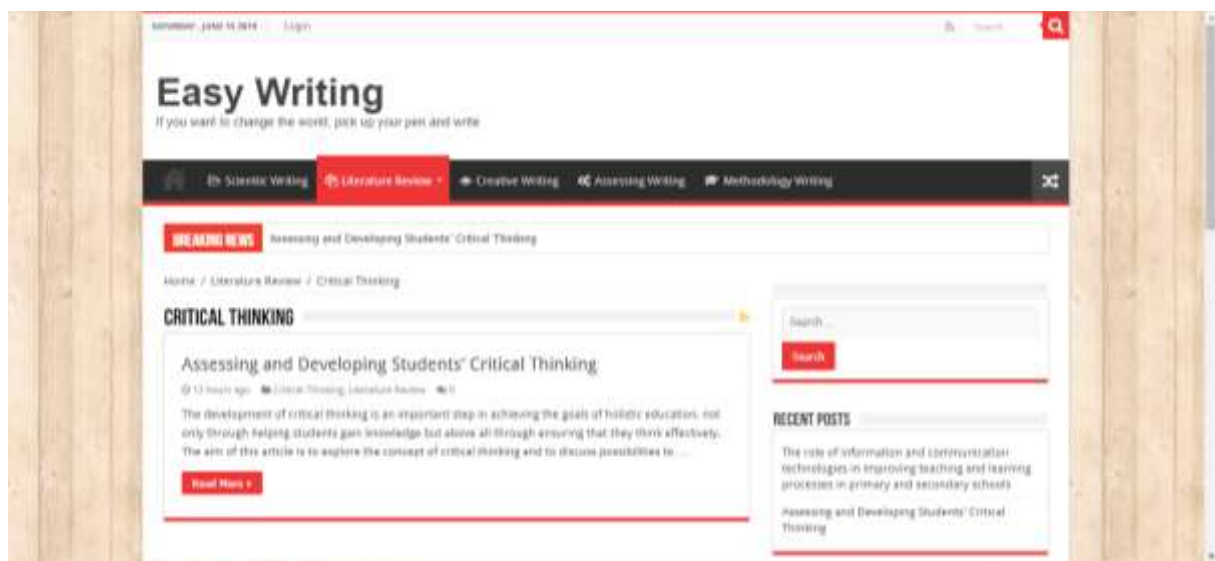
Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix 4

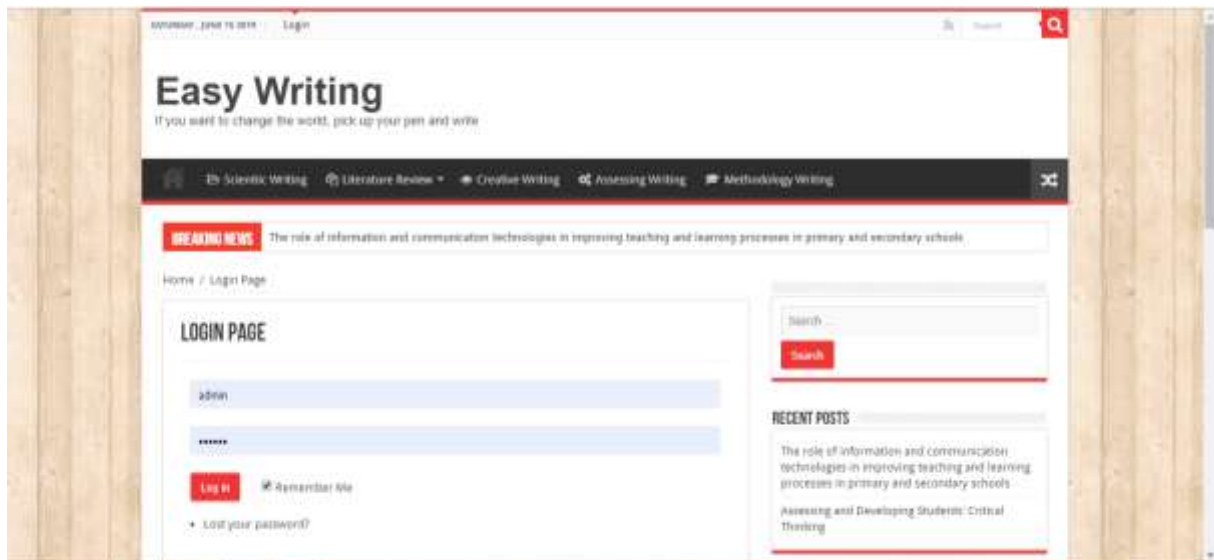
Easy Writing blog Screenshots



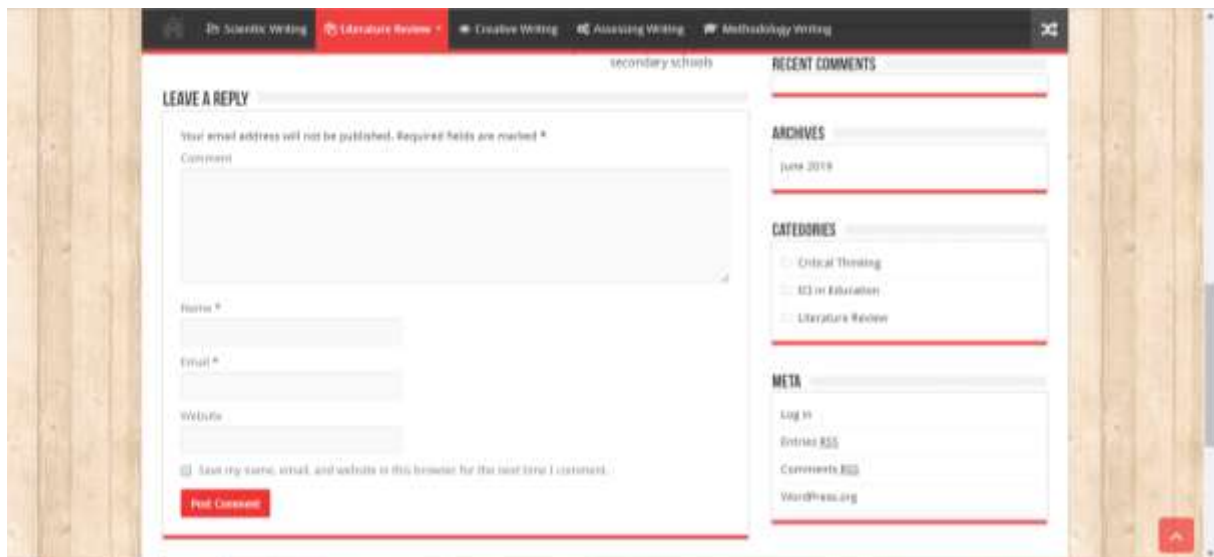
Main Interface of the Blog



Category and Sub Category in the Blog



Login Interface



Comments Interface under the Posts

Résumé

Le présent document a pour objectif d'étudier l'utilisation des blogs en tant qu'outil efficace d'organisation et présentation d'informations. Il cherche à déterminer si le blogging peut-il être utilisé comme un outil de recherche pour rassembler des informations? Et quelles sont les perceptions des enseignants et des étudiants vis-à-vis de l'utilisation des blogs dans la rédaction des états de l'art ? Les participants sélectionnés représente 10% du totale, 13 étudiants de Master 2 du département d'anglais et 7 enseignants du département de mathématiques et d'informatique de l'Université Amar Thelidji - Laghouat ont été choisis au hasard en tant que participants qui représente 10% du total. La méthode descriptive a été adoptée et les données ont été recueillies au moyen de deux questionnaires. Les résultats démontrent que le blog est un outil efficace pour rassembler et organiser les travaux antérieurs faits sur un sujet. Les enseignants et les étudiants sont satisfaits. L'utilisation de blogs facilite le processus de rédaction des états de l'art. À la lumière des résultats obtenus nous recommandons vivement l'utilisation du blog comme un outil scientifique.