

Lecture 6

Online Learning Platforms and Learning Management Systems (LMS)

A. Introduction

The advent of the internet in the late 20th century marked the beginning of online distance education. The initial endeavors may be traced back to the 1980s, employing rudimentary computer networks. Yet, it was not until the 1990s that progress in internet technology facilitated the creation of increasingly intricate online learning systems. The introduction of platforms such as Blackboard and WebCT in the late 1990s brought about a significant transformation in remote education. These platforms enabled the online distribution of course materials, facilitated communication between instructors and students, and facilitated online evaluation. This established the basis for the extensive acceptance of online distance education, which has subsequently developed into a multifaceted and vibrant domain.

Online distance learning has garnered recognition and praise during the COVID-19 pandemic because it has proven effective in ensuring uninterrupted education despite the limitations imposed by physical constraints.



Image 1: *Philippine children are left behind by poor distance learning* (Source: Beltran, 2021: Online)

Education institutions globally swiftly embraced internet platforms to provide content remotely, assuring students could sustain their studying from home. This experience showcased the durability and efficiency of online learning, resulting in heightened acceptance and acknowledgment of its role in education.

Online education complements classroom instruction with flexibility, accessibility, and scalability. Students may access resources and learn at their own pace since it accommodates different learning styles and schedules. Using online tools and other technology-based resources is imperative to effectively carry out this educational modality. Therefore, in this lecture, we will explore and

discuss how to maximize the use of a learning management system (LMS) to undertake online distance learning seamlessly.

Lecture 5 Conclusion

Adaptive technologies revolutionize education by tailoring learning to various needs and interests. They give students individualized support and challenges to boost engagement, retention, and mastery. Personalized learning maximizes performance, helping students succeed in changing educational situations.

B. Lecture Objectives

After this lecture, you are expected to:

1. Illustrate how online distance learning cued the advancement of learning management system (LMS) tools;
2. Describe the features and functions of an LMS applied in basic education schools; and,
3. Explore some of the most commonly used LMSs in the world.

C. Lecture Content

1. The Impact of Learning Management System (LMS) in Modern Educational Modalities

A learning management system (LMS) is a tool to streamline the management, documenting, monitoring, reporting, and delivery of educational courses or training programs (Bilbao et al., 2019). It is a centralized platform where educators or trainers may produce, oversee, and distribute information to learners. LMSs commonly include functionalities like course administration, evaluation tools, communication tools (such as discussion forums or messaging), progress monitoring, and reporting capabilities. An LMS facilitates the efficient organization and delivery of instructional information, catering to various learning settings such as academic institutions, corporate training, and others.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, using various LMSs has become a standard teaching-learning modality. Therefore, teachers today must be adept at using LMS, among other educational technological adaptations. Likewise, the following impacts will guide teachers in utilizing an LMS to facilitate the achievement of learning outcomes and standards.

Global Reach – Overcoming geographical limitations by providing education and training to individuals worldwide, regardless of their location. This worldwide coverage enhances the availability of education, particularly for persons residing in distant or underprivileged regions.

Multimedia Integration – Enabling the incorporation of many forms of multimedia, such as movies, interactive simulations, virtual reality encounters, and gamified activities. These varied multimedia materials improve involvement and understanding, accommodating various learning preferences.

Real-Time Feedback – Prompting feedback on assignments, quizzes, and assessments allows learners to obtain timely assistance and help from instructors. The immediate exchange of feedback fosters engagement in the learning process, enhances skills acquisition, and facilitates ongoing enhancement.

Adaptive Learning Paths – Utilizing adaptive learning algorithms to customize learning routes according to individual learners' strengths, limitations, and learning rates. Adaptive learning enhances concept acquisition and long-term retention by constantly modifying information and difficulty levels.

Resource Optimization – Enhancing resource efficiency through the digitization of instructional resources, resulting in reduced paper usage and decreased administrative costs. This enhanced efficiency enhances educational projects' sustainability while reallocating resources for investment in high-quality teaching and learning experiences.

Social Learning Communities – Creating environments that promote the development of social learning communities where learners can engage, cooperate, and exchange knowledge with their peers and instructors. Features such as discussion boards, wikis, and social media integrations facilitate dynamic engagement and cooperative resolution of problems.

Mobile Learning. Enabling mobile learning (m-learning) by allowing learners to use smartphones, tablets, or other mobile devices to access course materials and engage in activities. This adaptability allows for learning while on the go and takes advantage of the widespread use of mobile technologies.

2. Necessary Features and Functions of an LMS in Basic Education

A learning management system (LMS) is an essential instrument in the 21st century for upgrading teaching and learning processes. The usefulness of this system resides in its capacity to surpass conventional limitations, allowing educators to provide tailored, multimedia-rich education to learners worldwide. An LMS creates an environment that supports active learning, collaboration, and continuous development by increasing accessibility, scalability, and real-time feedback. Furthermore, using adaptive learning technology and analytics enables educators to customize lessons, maximize resources, and improve learning outcomes. Amidst a time marked by technological advancements and continuous learning, an LMS is crucial in modernizing education, promoting diversity, and equipping learners for success in the knowledge-based economy.

As such, teachers should be well abreast of the features and functions of an LMS to perform the teaching and learning experiences seamlessly.

- a. Course Management:** Allows educators to create, organize, and manage course materials, including syllabi, lesson plans, assignments, and assessments.
- b. Content Authoring:** Enables the creation and customization of multimedia-rich learning content, such as text documents, videos, presentations, quizzes, and interactive simulations.
- c. Student Enrollment and Management:** Facilitates the enrollment of students or learners into courses, groups, or programs, as well as managing user profiles, permissions, and access levels.
- d. Assessment and Grading:** Provides tools for creating and administering assessments, quizzes, surveys, and exams, as well as for grading, providing feedback, and tracking student progress.
- e. Communication and Collaboration:** Offers communication tools, such as discussion forums, messaging, announcements, and notifications, to facilitate interaction and collaboration among learners and instructors.
- f. Progress Tracking and Reporting:** Allows educators to track learner progress, participation, and performance through analytics dashboards, reports, and data visualization tools.

- g. Mobile Compatibility:** Supports access to learning materials and activities on mobile devices, ensuring flexibility and convenience for learners who prefer to engage on smartphones or tablets.
- h. Integration with External Tools:** Integrates with external tools and services, such as learning analytics platforms, content repositories, video conferencing systems, and learning management system interoperability (LTI) compliant tools.
- i. Customization and Branding:** Enables customization of the LMS interface, branding, themes, and configurations to align with institutional or organizational branding guidelines and user preferences.
- j. Accessibility and Compliance:** Ensures compliance with accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG) and regulations (e.g., ADA) to accommodate learners with disabilities and promote inclusive learning experiences.
- k. Security and Data Privacy:** Implements robust security measures to protect user data, ensure confidentiality, and prevent unauthorized access or data breaches.
- l. User Support and Training:** Provides user support resources, documentation, tutorials, and training materials to assist administrators, educators, and learners navigate and use the LMS effectively.

3. Some Popular LMSs

The utilization of an LMS dramatically improves the accessibility and inclusivity of the process of teaching and learning. LMSs facilitate the dissemination of educational materials by offering a centralized platform. This eliminates the limitations imposed by geographical location, allowing individuals from various backgrounds to access educational resources at their convenience, regardless of their location. In addition, they can handle a wide range of multimedia formats and material kinds, catering to various learning preferences and requirements. Accessibility features such as closed captioning, screen readers, and alternate text alternatives guarantee that impaired learners may easily access instructional resources.

In addition, LMSs provide asynchronous communication and collaboration, enabling learners to engage in conversations, group projects, and peer feedback exchanges at their preferred speed and convenience. They provide customized learning paths and adaptive functionalities that accommodate individual learning preferences and aptitudes, fostering active participation and achievement for all learners.

With these imperatives, software developers have created online digital platforms to cater to the technological advancements in education and increase the accessibility and inclusivity levels of teaching and learning.

Here are the five of the most popular LMSs that many schools have used today:



Image 2: Moodle Logo
(Source: moodle.com:
online)

Moodle is an open-source LMS widely used in educational institutions and organizations worldwide. It offers a range of features for course management, assessment, communication, and collaboration. (<https://moodle.com/>)



Image 3: Canvas Logo
(Source: instructure.com:
online)

Canvas, developed by Instructure®, is a cloud-based LMS known for its user-friendly interface and customizable features. K-12 schools, higher education institutions, and corporate training programs use it. (<https://www.instructure.com/canvas?domain=canvas>)



Image 4: Blackboard Learn
Logo (Source: anthology
.com: online)

Blackboard Learn is a comprehensive LMS educational institution and corporation used for course delivery, content management, assessment, and communication. It offers a suite of tools for creating online learning experiences.

(<https://www.anthology.com/en-apac/products/teaching-and-learning/learning-effectiveness/blackboard-learn>)



Image 5: Schoolology Logo
(Source: schoolology.com:
online)

Schoolology is a cloud-based LMS popular in K-12 schools and districts. It offers features for course management, collaboration, assessment, and integration with educational resources and tools. (<https://app.schoolology.com/login>)



Google Classroom

Image 6: Google
Classroom Logo (Source:
google.com: online)

Google Classroom is a free LMS developed by Google for schools and educators. It integrates seamlessly with Google Workspace (formerly G Suite) apps and offers features for assignment distribution, communication, and collaboration within the Google ecosystem. (<https://classroom.google.com>)

D. Conclusion

Utilizing a learning management system (LMS) improves teaching and learning by enabling individualized, easily accessible, and collaborative experiences, maximizing efficiency, and promoting ongoing improvement in educational results.

E. References

- Beltran, M. (2021). *Philippine children are left behind by poor distance learning* [Online Image] [Accessed on April 10, 2024] <https://asia.nikkei.com/Life-Arts/Life/Philippine-children-are-left-behind-by-poor-distance-learning2>
- Bilbao, P.P., Dequilla, M.A.C.V., Rosano, D.A., & Boholano, H.B. (2019). *Technology for teaching and learning 1: OBE-, PPST-, and ICT competency-based*. Quezon City, Philippines: Lorimar Publishing Inc.