

E-PLATFORM: A BOON FOR TEACHERS AND LEARNERS IN 21st CENTURY

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Abstract

In recent years it is very different to think about teaching and learning without the contributions of ICT. Basically ICT is present in each and every activity that includes data collection, knowledge and information process, assessment and evaluation. ICT plays vital role in education and has special relevance in the instructional module, assisted by Learning Management System (LMS), like Moodle. There are many e-learning environments in our academic institutions, but currently free resource Moodle for e-learning course management system attracts new users day by day. This paper majorly focuses on a few of the advantages and modules which would recommend Moodle to be utilized for better teaching and learning process.

Introduction

ICT could be an effective tool for educational transformation and reform. Some previous studies have revealed that an appropriate use of ICT can raise educational quality and connect learning real life situations. Learning is a continues lifelong action where learners modify their expectations by gaining knowledge, which differs from traditional approaches. As time pass by, students will have to expect and be willing to seek out new sources of knowledge. Skill in operating ICT will be an essential requirement for both teachers and learners. ICT assists to strengthen access to education. Through ICT, learning can take place anytime and anywhere. For example online course materials could be accessible at any moment.

Teleconference class would permit bot teacher and learner to communicate simultaneously with comfort and convenience. Based in ICT, there would be no longer dependence particularly on printed materials. Multiple resources are rich on the Internet, and knowledge could be gained through audio sounds, video clips, and visual

presentations and so on. ICT helps to convert a teaching centered environment to learner centered environment one. Since learner are dynamically engaged in the learning process in ICT class room. They are authorized by the teacher take decisions and plans. ICT therefore gives both teacher and students with enough educational qualities and potentials.

Tradition and Innovation in ICT and Teaching

In the period of past few years, the widened use of PCs and the Internet allowed us to make many modifications in human daily activities and collaborative in the transformation process leading from the society of industry and society of knowledge. Among many instruments some played a really vital role in education. There are two phase would could be easily recognized. In the first one ICT is majorly used for enhancing the individuals' learning features. The latter one that recent and centered one on ICT use, in the period teachers had to accept situated and collaborative teaching and learning strategies, build communities of learners (CoLs), it also helps students to organize in enhancing problem finding and solving which leads improve the zone of proximal development. These transformations bring about changes not only in teachers duties but also whole environment of the school and students' role in it. The ICT would help professors and readers and all kinds of teachers to find solutions to different leaning problems by introducing new tools for analysis and continuous monitoring of students' and teachers' learning process.

What is E-Learning Platform

E- learning platform could be defines as an information system that universities, schools, and institutions can utilize in teaching learning process that will have the following features, be a content management system (CMS); guaranteeing the contact to educational materials for the student and teacher; a learning management system (LMS) where the employ of learning objects makes simpler the learning of a given topic; computer-supported collaborative learning system (CSCLS) which makes easier the use of collaborative and situated teaching/learning strategies; and construct a practical community of students, tutors, and professors making use knowledge management (KM) strategies. A software system intended to generate a virtual teaching and learning environment through which it is possible to carry training courses, conducted and monitor them and contact a series of services and preparations. In general, a platform is a basic technology, on which other technologies are designed and if these technologies are prepared with tools that allow the making of effective learning environments, we can speak of e-learning platforms, inside of which the issuing of learning modules as well as the management and monitoring of skills.

In this context it can be said that LMS (learning management systems) as application platforms that facilitate the condition of e-learning courses and LCMS (learning content management systems), platforms that straight manage the contents.

E-learning platforms

Piotrowski (2010) says that an e-learning platform indicates a system, which provides incorporated and integrated support for six various activities: delivery, communication, creation, collaboration, organization and assessment. In a technical perspective, there are various types of LMS, some of them indicating commercial solutions (such as Blackboard/WebCT) and others open-source solutions (such as Moodle). Regardless of the type, a few studies opened the existence of advantages on utilizing e-learning platforms. Yet, their adoption is a part of some challenges to the institutions as well as a suitable alternative of the technologic platform. Concerning open-source solutions, there are a few studies that identify the Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) as the good used platform in higher education, as well as the most simple to use.

Moodle platform

Moodle (modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment) is a free e-learning software platform, first developed to enable educators to generate online courses to support contact and collaborative creation of learning content. It offers different opportunities for the 'teacher' to transform from being 'the source of knowledge' to being a facilitator and role model in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills (Moodleroom, 2012). The moodle e-learning platform (MEP) has various features that recommends its use applicable in education and training. The Moodle symbolizes one of the most commonly used open-source e-learning platforms that enables the creation of a course website making sure their access only to reregistered students. This platform permits the exchange of information among users geographically dispersed, through mechanisms of synchronous (chats) and asynchronous communication (discussion forums). In a functional perspective, it has easily configurable features, allowing the creation of student assessment processes (quizzes, online tests and surveys), as well as managing their tasks with their timetable, besides offering a wide variety of complementary tools to support the teaching and learning process.

According to the classification presented by Blin, F., M. Munro (2008), the Moodle platform is characterized by a set of functionalities grouped in two different classes: resources and modules. Resources represent instructional materials that are generally formed in digital formats and then uploaded to the platform. Web pages, PowerPoint files, word documents, flash animations, video and audio files represent some examples of these resources. Modules are components formed via Moodle in order to provide interaction among students and teachers towards manipulation and content transformation. In this context, the Moodle platform provides several modules, such as Database, Lessons, Assignments, Workshops, Chats, Forums, News, Glossary, Wikis, Choice, Quiz, Survey, Feedback, SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model) and External tools. Regarding the activities of the learning platforms present a classification based on six classes: Creation, Organization, Delivery, Communication,

Collaboration and Assessment. Table 1 presents these activities, their correspondence to the modules, and a brief description based on some of the features that are possible to perform with them.

Activities and Modules of the Moodle Platform

Activity	Module	Description
Organization	Lessons	symbolize a set of ordered topics summarizing the instructional materials and permit the entrée to them through the particular link
Delivery	Assignments	permit teachers to gather work from students allow teachers to estimate the student's work and give feedback including grades, in a private mode allow students to upload assignment files
	Workshops	symbolize a peer assessment activity with several options , allow students to present their work via an online text tool and attachments
Communication	Chats	permit synchronous conversation
	Forums	symbolize a communication tool where students and teachers can swap ideas by posting observations
	News	symbolize a particular forum for general announcements ; permit teachers to attach posts and to mail emails
Collaboration	Glossary	permits generating and preserve a list of definitions [19]; represents a mechanism for mutual activities that can be limited to entries made by the teacher
	Wikis	permit users to approved collaborative Web pages ; offer space for collaborative job
Assessment	Choice	permit teachers to ask questions and specify multiple choice answers ; represents a helpful mechanism to motivate thinking about a topic
	Quiz	permit teachers to plan and build quizzes with a diversity of questions, with unusual types of answers, such as multiple choice, true/false, short response
	Survey	permit teachers to collect feedback from students by means of prepackaged questionnaires
	Feedback	permit teachers to generate surveys to gather feedback

Advantages of Moodle

- learning can happen in the absence of a teacher
- The Moodle platform presents a rapid check of the homework
- Information provided is quite, clear, brief
- presents efficiency and profitability
- offers flexibility
- Moodle course platform permits discussion groups for the teachers' groups
- Homework could be allotted to the students' levels of knowledge

- Moodle course platform presents a good monitoring activity
- In information transmission the Moodle platform gives accurate speed
- clever for their own course to work at home is an advantage
- decreases conflicts among/with peers,
- Gives an increase of the autonomy

Conclusions

In terms of innovative strategies and tools that would be useful for new and experiences teacher is Moodle which is one of the welcoming and reasonable tool to encourage SDL(Self Directed learning).this due to when Moodle is operated properly, it can stimulate students' interest and motivation to be keenly participated in their educational journey. Moodle helps students to have a chance to engage ion course beyond the limits of the formal class room hours. Moodle also assists to positively change the competition to "succeed as an individual" that regularly manifests among the learners and instead it fosters collaborative learning through its ability to strengthen the group learning. The abilities of Moodle such as increasing access to the course, supporting shared formation, mastery and of knowledge are very crucial in any leaning classroom. The cooperative learning that evolves through communicative nature of online resources such as Moodle, encourages achievement of the higher students, collaborative culture, self-reliance and lifelong learning skills. Available literature and our experience with regard to use of ICT in teaching learning process show and support that Moodle can be a suitable e-learning tool that could be useful to improve students' pre class preparation, post class preparation, active learning and over all motivation for learning.

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