Developing Facebook as an Accessible and Inclusive Online Personal Learning Platform: Ubiquity is Key

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Abstract

A myriad of online personal learning (OPL) platforms has been developed over the past few years in order to address the burgeoning demand for avant-garde learning environments. These online learning portals have been developed to engage 21st century learners through interactive media, advanced study tools, and other innovative applications. In the Philippines, however, the use of these popular learning platforms is not fully realized. The challenge lies in the accessibility and inclusivity concerns of these OPL platforms and other related issues such as application restrictions. With this, learners especially from marginalized and differently-abled communities have difficulty accessing popular learning portals. Therefore, this study proposed that Facebook be developed as an accessible and inclusive OPL platform as its impact as a collaborative learning space was greatly realized. This was further supported by related studies and personal experiences of the author as an educator and as an open and distance learner. Facebook, as the most popular online medium today, had undoubtedly become a pervasive global informational hub and thus this study posited that it may be considered as a breeding ground for collaborative learning and knowledge creation. Since educational professionals and system developers were focused on constructing new learning platforms, the potential of Facebook as an OPL platform was deemed overlooked. This paper argued that developing an existing ubiquitous social media platform such as Facebook, can better address accessibility and inclusivity issues rather than building new learning systems which posed more constraints to different types of educators and learners in the Philippine context.

Keywords: *Facebook, online education, e-Learning, learning management system, social media*

Introduction

A myriad of online personal learning (OPL) platforms has been developed over the past few years in order to address the burgeoning demand for avant-garde learning environments. These online learning portals have been developed to engage learners in the 21st century through interactive media, advanced study tools, and other innovative applications. OPL platforms may also be considered as Learning Management Systems (LMS). LMS enables learners to access different course sites and customize the online learning environment.

With the rise of educational modernizations, such as open and distance learning, blended learning, flipped classroom, and virtual classroom, it is important to address the accessibility and inclusivity issues that are posed by popular OPL platforms, like Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo, particularly in the context of the Philippine educational system. Furthermore, it is necessary to explore the potential of ubiquitous social media to be developed as an OPL platform as it will be able to address the digital disconnection experienced by marginalized communities and differently-abled communities in the Philippines.

Established on February 23, 1995, the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU), as published in their official website (https://www.upou.edu.ph), is the first school to lead the offering of open and distance education in the Philippines. UPOU has, indeed, revolutionized open and distance education in the country and its influence is breaking boundaries as the number of online and distance learners have increased phenomenally. The Philippines' Commission on Higher Education (CHED) considers UPOU as the National Center of Excellence in Open and Distance Education. Moreover, the Information Technology and e-Commerce Council designated UPOU as the National eLearning Competency Center of the Philippines. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Digital Opportunity Center also included UPOU's virtual classroom, MyPortal, in the Top 10 Best in e-Practice list.

UPOU uses Moodle as a platform for the MyPortal LMS in offering diploma and non-diploma courses. As the premier university that offers open and distance education, UPOU's use of Moodle gives the LMS platform added prestige. However, there have been accessibility and inclusivity issues encountered with this platform. I have encountered these issues personally as I have finished courses under the UPOU and I am currently enrolled in doctoral studies under the same institution.

As an online learner and also as a teacher who frequently interacts with students online, accessibility and inclusivity are important. Accessibility refers to effortless viewing or retrieval of learning materials and information available online. Inclusivity refers to presenting learning content in different modes to cater to different types of learners, especially the differently-abled. Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo are accessible LMSs, but there is more to improve in that area, considering the situation of the Philippines's Web interconnectivity. As far as inclusivity is concerned, more developments and improvements must be made to cater to differently-abled online users. According to Scott (2018), accessibility is a prerequisite for an inclusive Universal Design for Learning (UDL):

> An accessible learning environment is a necessary first step to a more inclusive experience for all students. By addressing accessibility issues upfront, instructors can also move towards implementing UDL principles in their courses. The UDL guidelines emphasize providing students with multiple means of representing learning content, of engaging with course content and each other, and for expressing their understandings. Accessible content is characterized as flexible and usable. It can be quickly transformed into different formats like audio and HTML, supporting instructors to represent learning content in diverse ways and allowing students to engage with content using different modalities and devices.
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> These kinds of personal needs and preference settings are also a point of emphasis in the IMS Global Learning Consortium accessibility standards. Interoperability, for example, can allow for preference settings to be applied across the LMS experience without interruption. With a robust analytics architecture, instructors can make informed recommendations to students about the kinds of content and activities that might work best for them, and offer students more options in exploring different learning pathways.

In the Philippines, however, the use of these newly-developed learning platforms like Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo is not fully realized. The challenge lies in the accessibility and inclusivity concerns of these new OPL platforms and other related issues such as application restrictions. We have to consider that these OPLs are easily accessed by learners in highly technologically

advanced communities in different parts of the globe. Some developing communities may have access to these OPLs, but it would be limited to the cities or to families who have the means to avail of prepaid or postpaid Internet packages. In developing countries like the Philippines, good connectivity or access may only be easily acquired by those who belong to the more privileged communities. There is, therefore, a digital divide that exists and this is a deterrent to equal access to online learning opportunities. Most learners, especially in marginalized communities, have difficulty accessing these popular learning portals due to, for instance, the cost of mobile Internet usage. They depend on free Wi-Fi access points but most of the time, connectivity to these spots are limited due to the high volume of users.

In addition, it was recently reported by the Department of Education (DepEd) (Alcober, 2018), that 74% of Philippine public schools do not have Internet connection yet. Only 26% of the 46,000 public schools nationwide have access to the Internet. In spite of this, the government is putting its efforts in providing Internet connection to all public schools. According to DepEd Undersecretary Alain Pascua, the government allotted an initial budget of Php 1 billion for this year for Internet connectivity. Pascua claims that this budget is too small as it can only cater to 10,000 schools. Some cities in the Philippines already have Internet connection so the priority lies in the remote or far-flung areas of the country. The poorest schools or "outskirt schools" are the first to receive the Internet connectivity service. Likewise, DepEd has also distributed 462,114 computer packages to about 35,241 schools. This has benefited 14,289,301 students and 451,118 teachers.

On a related note, Department of Information Communication Technology (DICT) acting Secretary Eliseo M. Rio is eyeing to install 8,000 Wi-Fi hotspots across the Philippines this 2018. Two public biddings were done for the project and the budget for this project is Php 1.6 billion. The Act Establishing the Free Internet Access Program In Public Places in the Country and Appropriating Funds Therefor (RA 10929) signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte aims to provide free Internet access in public places such as parks, hospitals, schools and government offices, and terminals. DICT is eyeing to have 200,000 access points by year 2022. Rio claims that this project is "the biggest free Wi-Fi deployment in the whole world". Moreover, it was reported that a Wi-Fi's access point's "size, speed, and bandwidth allocation will depend on the size of the site and the number of concurrent users in the area. Some Wi-Fi access points like universities will have 100 Megabytes (MB) of allocation while other spots will have 10 to 20 MB (Alama, 2018). The Philippines' status as of the moment is still far from the ideal situation in terms of Internet connectivity, but, at least, gradual changes are being seen that are necessary to reach the ideal state. The ideal is for everyone, regardless of societal class and location, to have free and unrestricted access to these OPLs for continuous and more meaningful learning.

Since Filipinos are reportedly the most active social media users, developing Facebook as an accessible and inclusive OPL can instantly attract many users, especially those who belong to marginalized and differently-abled communities, to take advantage of greater online learning opportunities.

Objectives

This research paper discussed the issues and possibilities of popular OPL platforms as observed and experienced first-hand. This study also explored the potential of developing Facebook as an accessible and inclusive OPL which was known as Facebook Classroom in the context of the Philippine online classroom. It proposed the collaboration of the Philippine government, the two major telecommunication networks Smart Communications and Globe Telecom, the Facebook Management, application developers, educators and students to develop Facebook as an OPL platform. It also recommended to further make the medium accessible and inclusive in order to cater to a wide range of learners. This paper also probed the challenges of developing Facebook as a potential accessible and inclusive OPL system, giving primary focus to the Philippine educational context.

Review of Related Studies

The potential of developing Facebook as an accessible and inclusive OPL platform is supported by previous studies that realize the impact of the ubiquitous social networking site to different sectors of the global nation. This further solidifies the foundation for this social media platform's classroom function to be developed to reach a wider variety of learners.

According to Rojas-Kramer, Esquivel-Gamez, & Garcia-Santillan (2015), Facebook, as a social networking site, was not primarily designed to manage learning experiences. It was built to establish interactions which aimed to connect family and friends worldwide. It was merely used for socializing purposes until new ideas and trends in society transformed the identity and function of Facebook. The establishment of Facebook became a popular platform for business opportunities and of course, innovative opportunities in the educational sector.

Facebook established itself as a social networking site in 2004 and as it gained much traction, it became a global phenomenon that helped people create connections like never before. Facebook greatly aided businesses and various organizations in reaching the global market. With Facebook's powerful impact in engaging people from different backgrounds, it was not surprising that it built a collaborative space for educators and students. Casey & Evans (2011) believed that social networks played an important role in various learning institutions today. Facebook, as the most popular social networking site, attracted many students and it became a platform for collaboration. Moreover, digital literacy was a prerequisite to further engagement in social networks. This entailed awareness about the different functions that Facebook possessed, as well as the awareness of Internet jargon that was encountered as one engaged in online correspondence.

Digital literacy was actually recognized as a key factor in economic development as this involved skills that were linked to educational opportunities and employability ("The Philippines Places Digital Literacy at Centre," 2018). Digital literacy was expected to be high for the digital natives who were born into a world already filled with numerous technological advances and had access to social networking sites that not only contain entertainment content but also informational or educational content.

Dolphy (2015) also discussed the advantage of social network sites as a research-based pedagogical technique (RPT). It was observed that teachers were able to easily incorporate and

share multimedia through these social network sites. This, therefore, provided "a rich content experience that accommodates learning styles and preferences." Moreover, social network sites also "provided a collaborative learning environment that was not bound by time constrictions, allowed for informal learning opportunities to increase, and supported active knowledge construction through interaction with experts as well as peers" (Dolphy, 2015). This further supported the thrust of open and distance learning programs that were growing in number especially that Facebook, as a learning space, cultivated a discursive atmosphere.

According to Eteokleous (2012), it was noted that because of the use of social networking sites, lecturers were able to continuously connect with their students. Students also benefited from these sites as it improved their collaborative activities, such as: informing and updating them about assignments and upcoming events; providing useful links and samples of work outside of the classroom; sharing educational material and even providing some general information. In addition, social networking sites helped students stay in touch with their classmates - they helped each other with their class assignments or examinations, addressed any questions and concerns, and collaborated on assignments and group projects. The frequent use of social networking sites by students and the sites' unique collaborative features (Web 2.0 tools) allowed for the development of beneficial educational contexts and was pedagogically promising to both educators and students. The social networking environment engaged students in a new and innovative way. Social networks enhanced communication, collaboration, sharing, student motivation, effective learning, and the classroom climate by offering students opportunities to come "virtually closer" to their educators and classmates. The study began to fill the gap that exists in the literature on whether social networking sites can promote, enhance, and support the teaching and learning process. It demonstrated the educational benefits of social networking sites by using them for either educational purposes and/or creating special educational interest groups.

Compared to popular LMSs like Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo, there was much greater interaction in social networking sites such as Facebook, as this social medium was like a one-stop shop that let users take advantage of private communication through Facebook Messenger, and at the same time, a more public feature which is the Facebook wall where users can share different content and collaborate with others. In addition, the Facebook Groups function helped organize different social groups. This made Facebook a much more practical choice for educators and learners as they only used one application to access personal and educational content.

Furthermore, in Eteokleous's (2012) study regarding the use of social networking sites which employed a mixed method approach in studying the responses of 232 students from five universities in Cyprus (University of Cyprus, Technical University of Cyprus, University of Nicosia, European University, and Frederick University), it was found out that "Education" was one of the important reasons why students logged into Facebook. This showed that students recognized the "potential educational value of the social networking sites, giving the positive message that it was possible to educationally exploit social networking sites." The study also revealed that social networking sites such as Facebook increased the likelihood for teacher-student and student-student interaction. Because of the pervasiveness of Facebook, students easily connected with their teachers even if they were outside the four walls of the classroom.

Facebook's ubiquity was, indeed, a powerful force in engaging people into discussion that was why its classroom mode or function should be developed to cater to different kinds of learners.

With the proliferation of gadgets and gizmos, the world was within one's reach. In the recent Digital in 2018 report this January, it was noted that the number of the world's Internet users already surpassed the 4 billion mark. This became possible due to the influx of more inexpensive smartphones and mobile data plans. The number of social media users in 2018 reached an astounding 3.196 billion which was up 13 % year-on-year (Kemp, 2018). With this figure, it was imperative that Facebook's classroom function be developed in order to create more accessible and inclusive online environments for learners in the Philippines.

Methodology

The study employed qualitative research methods to observe and analyze issues with popular OPLs like Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo amid the digital divide in the Philippines. It served as significant foundations to support the development of Facebook as an accessible and inclusive OPL platform. The situations observed in the current and previous classes I experienced as an online learner and educator and data from related studies were used as bases for the construction of this study. Since Facebook is a ubiquitous social media platform popular even in students, the use of the Facebook Groups function as an LMS for each of my classes was also used as foundation for developing this research. Since I started handling college courses in 2015, I noted observations from my experiences in handling 21 Facebook Groups created to be used as an LMS. With this, observations and recommendations for the development of Facebook's classroom function were deemed necessary. This paper argued that developing an existing ubiquitous OPL platform, such as Facebook, can better address accessibility and inclusivity issues rather than developing popular LMSs or building new LMSs which pose more constraints to different types of educators and learners in the Philippine setting. I also included further discussion in the incorporation of additional study tools in Facebook to make the system's overall classroom function a viable platform for more online personal learning opportunities. Furthermore, I proposed that this accessible and inclusive OPL platform to be developed be called Facebook Classroom.

Results and Discussions

Issues and Possibilities of Popular OPL Platforms

One of the most popular learning management systems, Blackboard, Inc. founded by Stephen Gilfus, Daniel Cane, Michael Chasen and Matthew Pittinsky in 1998 (Leibovich, 1999) was a revolutionary learning application which has greatly developed into an award-winning digital platform for learning. It garnered the 2018 IMS Global Learning Impact Award for outstanding achievement in the arena of Educational Accessibility and Personalization. The Blackboard application enabled students to keep track of their coursework with the use of study tools to maximize learning. It alerted students with coursework assignments through the calendar incorporated in the application. It also enabled students to engage with their instructors and their fellow classmates through online discussion and private messaging functions. This platform allowed students and teachers to share different types of content that were helpful in supplementing lessons. The application also gave feedback to students on their academic performance through quizzes or tests as well as other graded activities within a course. It was also beneficial to teachers as they were able to keep track of each student's progress. The different study tools helped teachers in creating, administering, and marking tests easily. Blackboard described its systems as "striking, clean, accessible, efficient, and engaging." It presented itself as modern, open, simple, and

powerful.

Another breakthrough in the arena of LMS is Moodle which was established in 2002 by founder and CEO Martin Dougiamas. Moodle was a free and open-source LMS and it was also one of the popular platforms used in online education today (Rogers, 2009). Much like Blackboard, it provided a learning space for students to engage in discussion through forums and messaging functions. It also had a function that reminded students about upcoming deadlines to help them keep track of their coursework progress. Through the Moodle platform, students were able to submit assignments online and teachers are also able to create, administer, and mark online tests. Although Blackboard possessed a much more sophisticated system, Moodle had the potential to perform the functions that its contender offered as long as it could address the needs of its learners by updating the system with the current technological advances in online education. Moodle described its system as a "single robust, secure and integrated system to create personalized learning environments."

Edmodo, founded by Crystal Hutter, Jeff O'Hara, and Nic Borg, was an innovative LMS which debuted in 2008. This platform provided a free social network for a large number of educators. Since then, it had catered to 36 million teachers and students from over 220,000 schools. Its system allowed third-party developers to help users take advantage of their applications on the Edmodo platform (Wan, 2014). Similar to Blackboard and Moodle, Edmodo enabled students to keep track of their coursework activities through notifications. Edmodo's design was similar to that of Facebook's features. It enabled teachers to easily post assignments, create, administer, and mark tests. Students were able to engage with their classmates and teachers through online discussion as one would do in Facebook. The system presented a simple and user-friendly interface compared to Blackboard and Moodle. Edmodo described their platform as a "safe, customizable digital classroom."

These OPL platforms operate under a social constructivist environment (Rogers, 2009) wherein knowledge about different ideas was created and developed as interactions were formed. This was evident in class interactions and also in discussion forums in online learning spaces (Lynch, 2016). Having these OPL platforms contributed to the development of student learning through online discussions and content sharing. Teachers were also able to develop students' critical thinking skills through a question prompt. The variety of ideas that students generated through these platforms were astounding as these would have been impossible in the traditional classroom setting. With these developments in cyberspace, learning was, thus, revolutionized. Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo, indeed, changed the way students learn and the way teachers facilitate learning. The different learning and study tools incorporated in these online personal learning platforms catered to the 21st century learners who were tagged as digital natives. Just as products and services should be customer-oriented to satisfy its clients, these OPL platforms needed to be constantly improved to satisfy its users.

Looking at the context of the Philippine classroom, considering learners who are from marginalized and differently-abled communities, an issue with these popular OPL platforms was that students were not able to download these applications because of limited Internet access. On the contrary, if they were able to connect to the Internet, some students sacrificed other applications in order to accommodate new OPL applications needed for their particular subject. Other times, other students did not want to delete other applications and refuse to download the new OPL application. In some instances, when students were able to download the required OPL platform, there was less interaction in the discussion forum because some mobile gadgets have

compatibility issues with the application. Other than that, the use of OPL platforms like Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo became a hassle as students needed to switch applications when interacting with classmates. It was much easier to reach others through Facebook or Facebook Messenger. This was, indeed, an evident scenario from what I experienced as an online learner using Moodle for my doctorate classes. My classmates and I communicated more frequently in Facebook and Facebook Messenger rather than in Moodle. Moodle became the site for posting and submitting assignments while Facebook and Facebook Messenger served as the quick-response medium we used when we had queries about our assignments or whenever we had group works. This could be avoided if all these functions were incorporated in a ubiquitous and widely-used application.

If Facebook were to be developed as an OPL platform, it would lessen the instances of switching applications just to accomplish certain coursework tasks. If Facebook had the study tools that were available in popular OPL platforms or LMSs, learning will be much more convenient for students and it will also be helpful for teachers' facilitation of classes. Moreover, since Facebook is ubiquitous in almost all students' gadgets, it is a viable platform that can be developed as accessible and inclusive OPL for the Filipino learner.

Facebook as an Accessible and Inclusive OPL Platform

Related research on the use of social networking sites such as Facebook proved the practical advantage of this platform if it were developed as a potential accessible and inclusive OPL platform. Facebook, as the most popular online medium today, undoubtedly became a pervasive global informational hub and thus, it was considered as a breeding ground for collaborative learning and knowledge creation. While educational professionals and system developers were focused on constructing new learning platforms, the potential of Facebook to be utilized effortlessly as a learning space was deemed overlooked.

In order to address the accessibility and inclusivity issues in online learning, I propose for the development of an existing and ubiquitous online medium, Facebook, into an OPL platform to benefit marginalized and differently-abled communities, primarily in the Philippines. Moreover, according to We Are Social's Digital 2018 Report, the Philippines earned the top rank in the greatest amount of time on social media. Filipinos were reported as the most active social media users, that they spent almost 4 hours on social media every day (Kemp, 2018). This information gave us all a stronger foundation to take advantage of Facebook's ubiquity and engaging power to develop it as an online learning space for Filipino learners. Facebook's ubiquitous nature was seen as the key feature that makes it a viable platform for educational learning environments.

Since the Philippine government was gradually working on providing information and communication technologies (ICT) resources to public schools, and at the same time, working on the country's Internet connectivity, I believe that the major telecommunication networks Smart and Globe can help alleviate the accessibility and inclusivity issues in online learning. Facebook had coordinated with mobile networks such as Smart and Globe to be able to provide discounted or free mobile data access to Facebook and Facebook Messenger to its users. Given that both telecommunication networks provide an array of mobile data packages, the free data service was a suitable foundation for Facebook to operate as an accessible and inclusive OPL platform. In the free data feature of Facebook, users were able to view online posts that came in the form of text. Users who were on free data mode were not able to view photos and videos but part of the proposal implied that efforts will be done by the government and major telecommunication networks in collaboration with Facebook management to address this issue, especially that this will benefit marginalized and differently-abled communities.

The use of Facebook Groups in facilitating classes had immensely helped in class management. It also encouraged more students to engage in online discussion. In my experience in organizing 21 Facebook groups for all my classes since 2015, I noticed that students were able to view my posts easily and quickly.

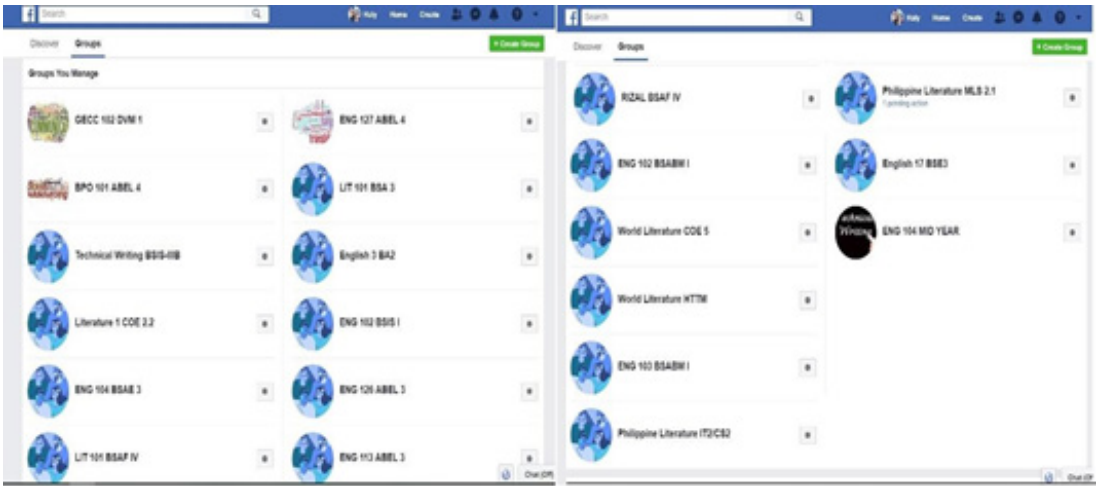

Figure 1. Facebook groups created for learning management

There was little to no objection when I required students to join the Facebook groups I created because they already had the Facebook application installed in their mobile devices and they visited the website frequently. There was almost no complaints or problems from students on access to the Facebook groups I created for each class. In addition, students were able to respond to my posts with minimal issues and the application greatly engaged the learners to discuss ideas through the comments section of each post. I also observed that student responses were often quicker in Facebook. Furthermore, students were able to use the private messaging function of Facebook Messenger to reach their mentors to ask queries, to give information about certain academic or personal matters, or to submit an assignment.

In the perspective of an educator, sharing of information was much easier to do in Facebook since I did not have to switch applications when I accessed it using my mobile devices. It was also easy to post information using the desktop version as familiarity with the platform was already established. I was able to create a work-life balance in just one application. I was able to post updates anytime and in any place as long as there was decent Internet connection. It had been very helpful in information dissemination especially when there were urgent announcements to be posted. Most of my students were able to access my posts and were able to inform their classmates who were not online. I was able to post different content such as text, photos, videos, or links easily. Students appreciated the Facebook group function as they were able to check for updates easier and they were able to have an organized learning space. In that case, retrieval of information or study materials posted in the group was much easier.

With accessibility and inclusivity issues of the popular LMSs or OPL platforms like Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo, it was better to develop Facebook, an existing and ubiquitous medium that was already proven effective at reaching a wide range of learners, especially in the Philippine setting. The plan was to develop Facebook's classroom mode, which may be simply called Facebook Classroom, to feature study tools and applications that would be at par with popular

LMSs like Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo. This was, of course, going to be possible with the intervention of the government and the private telecommunication sectors such as Smart and Globe that will provide the free data feature for Facebook Classroom. Moreover, it was proposed that Facebook Classroom be developed to be more inclusive in order to cater to differently-abled learners. This meant that Facebook Classroom will also feature an inclusive mode which will help learners with visual impairments, hearing impairments, navigation difficulties, and overstimulation issues ("Web Accessibility and Making Your Website Disability-Friendly," 2017).

Some key areas that Facebook Classroom should include are calendar notifications for upcoming deadlines, to-do lists, test creation, administration and marking functions, assignment submission bin, journal, gradebook, and discussion forum function.

Facebook Classroom's Challenges

On the other side of the spectrum lay the challenges and drawbacks of using a social networking site as a platform for proposed online LMS called Facebook Classroom. Developing Facebook as an accessible and inclusive OPL platform was found to pose some risks like any other online social medium. Facebook's pervasiveness was also deemed as its weakness as it became a vulnerable target for online threats and security issues such as hacking and identity theft.

Another challenge that the proposed OPL platform may face is the probability that Facebook Classroom notifications pop-ups may trigger anxiety and stress which may prompt students to ignore the notification. This may become a case of Pavlovian classical conditioning as they associate the Facebook Classroom notification to impending tasks to complete. In addition to this, since the OPL platform was proposed to be incorporated within a social networking site, students may be distracted in their accomplishment of assignments as they may be tempted to spend more time on their personal Facebook and Messenger accounts that feature posts and messages from their friends.

Given the status of the Philippines wherein most schools were not yet fully connected to the Internet and Wi-Fi hotspots were yet to be installed in different parts of the country, maximizing the use of the proposed Facebook Classroom may be hindered. The government sectors, particularly the DICT, in partnership with the two major telecommunication agencies Smart and Globe, should work together to be able to provide free data access to learners of the Facebook Classroom in order to accommodate students from different communities, most especially those from marginalized communities. When the accessibility of Facebook Classroom is well-established, the inclusivity function or inclusive mode of the OPL platform will be next in line to be developed. The need for an accessible and inclusive online learning space will call the attention of the Facebook management and also application developers, and experts who work with differently-abled learners. This will ensure that the Facebook Classroom is built to provide better user experience for different types of online learners.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, the accessibility and inclusivity of the popular OPL platforms such as Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo were not yet fully realized in the Philippines as there was a digital divide that exists within the society. Unless the government sectors and major telecommunication sectors continued to improve their efforts in paving the way to provide free data access for the Filipino people, especially those from the marginalized communities, more learning opportunities were in store for the a diverse group of learners.

Rather than utilizing Blackboard, Moodle, and Edmodo, and other LMSs that posed accessibility and inclusivity issues, it was proposed that an existing ubiquitous OPL platform such as Facebook be developed to cater to diverse groups of learners. Rather than building new learning systems which posed more constraints to different types of educators and learners, it was recommended to develop Facebook instead as this platform is proven to reach a wide range of users even in the global level and its familiarity among online learners made the application or website contribute to its user-friendliness. The proposed name for this OPL platform was Facebook Classroom. Facebook's ubiquitous nature was, indeed, proven to engage a large network of online learners, thus, it built a stronger foundation for the development of Facebook Classroom.

Developing Facebook as an OPL platform offered many advantages as this medium provided an avenue for quick feedback in student-student interactions, student-teacher interactions, and teacher-teacher interactions. Furthermore, it was recommended to incorporate additional study tools in Facebook Classroom to improve the system's overall classroom function to make it a viable platform for more online personal learning opportunities. Facebook Classroom shall also feature an inclusive mode which will help learners with visual impairments, hearing impairments, navigation difficulties, and overstimulation issues as they engage in online academic pursuits. The development of Facebook Classroom would most certainly change the online learning culture as it will attract many educational groups or institutions to take advantage of this free service which is hopefully going to be worked out by the Philippine government and major telecommunication networks in partnership with Facebook management. Facebook is a highly practical choice for educators and learners as they will only use one application to access personal and educational content. On the other hand, Facebook, like any other online social networking site, faces security threats, but this can be overcome by increasing the efforts in enhancing its security and safety features.

Therefore, Facebook is a potential OPL platform that poses more practical advantages than the popular and newly-developed OPL systems. Learners who use Facebook as an OPL medium may have some issues with the application, but the benefits of developing it as an OPL platform outweigh its disadvantages. With previous studies proving the great impact of Facebook as an effective learning space, it is highly recommended that Facebook Classroom be developed as an accessible and inclusive OPL platform to cater to a diverse group of learners, primarily in the Philippines.

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