

BUKA Conference abstracts

Inclusive ODeL for Lifelong Learners in Upland Environmental Governance

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Inclusive Open and Distance e-Learning from a learner's perspective evolves in presence, participation and learning. Presence is at the core and is a vital component of inclusive learning, and the learner's participation and engagement in the activities surrounds the core. Finally, the outer core consists of the recognition of the learner's achievements and satisfaction of needs. This graduate course on upland environmental governance was delivered in an ODeL Learning Management System (LMS). Students came from diverse professional backgrounds and this diversity was important in their group work as they were bringing into their discussions their own life and work experiences, thus enriching others' appreciation for applying concepts and theories into practical work or life situations particularly in the assessment of upland environmental governance. The value of "presence" and respect for varying views and experiences was further emphasized by establishing respectful "rules of engagement" during discussion fora and other class interactions for a safe learning environment. Adaptive and personalized approach to learning was adopted by allowing students to choose specific upland governance issues applicable to their work and field of specialization. As a final course assignment, the students presented their 15-minute assessment of environmental governance via Zoom, with the aid of Powerpoint as a visual tool. Students went through the process of analyzing policies, determining who and how these policies were formulated and implemented, and assessed governance institutions, structures, and processes using a governance assessment framework. Their diverse professional backgrounds provided varying lens of identifying governance gaps and issues as well as practical solutions. Learners' feedback provided areas for self-reflection and improvement of the course for the teacher and realization for the students that "it takes a community to build on environmental governance."

Enhancing Inclusivity through Technology: Pedagogical Approaches for Addressing Diverse Learners' Learning Styles

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This concept paper explores the role of technology in promoting inclusivity in education by implementing pedagogical approaches that address learners' diverse needs and learning styles. The paper focuses on the utilization of technology tools, specifically a Learning Management System (LMS) for teaching and learning and the university portal containing comprehensive learner support information. Teaching students with a variety of learning styles is necessary for their learning growth in universities. Traditional methods often do not address each learning style of the learner. However, with the diverse needs of learners, choosing the right pedagogical approach for diverse learning styles through technologies sometimes can be difficult. By leveraging these technologies, educators can create flexible learning environments and pedagogical approaches that cater to the unique requirements of diverse learners and their learning styles. This paper discusses how the integration of technology facilitates the implementation of varied pedagogical approaches and ultimately fosters inclusivity in educational settings. The discussion of this paper provides practical insights and recommendations for educators and higher institutions to leverage technology effectively to

enhance inclusivity in education and maximise learning for university students by taking into account various pedagogical approaches and students' learning styles.

Webinar as an Alternative to Face-to-Face Teaching in High School: Benefits, Challenges, and Issues

Luisa Almeda

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This research paper focuses on the experiences of senior high school students who participated in an online learning program on digital literacy program. The 10-week program, which was organized by University of the Philippines Open University in cooperation with a private telecommunication company, was primarily delivered through webinar. Data were collected through an online survey questionnaire. The respondents pointed out the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges/issues they encountered as well as suggestions on how to make teaching and learning via webinar can be more interesting and engaging. The survey results also showed that majority of the respondents believed that webinars can be a substitute tool for teaching-learning when holding face-to-face classes is not possible provided that certain conditions are taken into account, such as using the a platform that is easily accessible to all students since not everyone has access to powerful Internet connection and ICT gadgets; conducting shorter sessions, should not be more than 60 minutes; allocating more time for teacher-student engagement; and make lecture more dynamic (use of multimedia presentations and avoid too much talking heads). The students also believed that there are certain courses/subjects that can be better taught via webinars while other courses are better taught face-to-face. The results of the study can be used to help improve/maximize the potential of webinars and other online tool for teaching and learning. Given the various public health, environmental, political, and economic changes that happen globally, it is still a challenge to keep the students engaged in their new learning, thus there is a need to continuously assess learning platforms and to develop solutions to be able to provide quality education even during uncertain times.

Promoting Collaboration in InFlex Modality: A case on teaching History of Mathematics

Joneil Medina

The goal of mathematics education in the Philippines is the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills of the students. The pandemic however, posed a serious challenge in implementing strategies that would promote 21st century skills among unprepared students. This paper aimed to present the mathematics instructor's experience in promoting collaboration in the time of the pandemic among pre-service teachers, utilizing the innovative and flexible (InFlex) modality. As action research, this paper describes the implementation of Modular Collaboration Projects and Study Groups to promote collaboration. Utilizing local research outputs on interdisciplinary contextualized project-based units, collaborative problem solving, and communication patterns, these mechanisms of implementing collaborative activities in online and distance learning modality was devised. Purposive sampling is employed in the collection of student data. Preliminary survey results of the student experiences yielded some types of students' mechanism of decision making and collaboration that are termed additive; goal-oriented and consultative. Students also expressed the role of the teacher in the collaboration activity and the challenges encountered. The implementation of the Modular Collab Projects amidst the challenge of connectivity and the pandemic through the establishment of Study Groups and multiple communication channels encouraged students to achieve the module outcomes.

Exploring Inclusive Assessment Practices: A Study of Online Assessment at Open University Malaysia

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Assessment in education serves multiple objectives, with measuring performance often considered a key indicator of effective assessment practices. However, the true essence of educational success lies in fostering inclusivity. This research paper delves into the imperative aspect of inclusion within the realm of assessment, surpassing conventional classifications of disability or social equity groups. It underscores the significance of acknowledging and accommodating diversity across multiple dimensions. The primary objective of this study is to assess the extent to which online assessment practices at Open University Malaysia embrace inclusivity. The research will investigate six fundamental elements that underpin inclusive assessment: multiple modalities, variety and choice, transparency, integrity, flexible arrangements, and accessibility. A survey instrument was employed to collect data from a sample of 100 undergraduate learners. By analysing the survey findings, this study aims to shed light on inclusive assessment practices and contribute to the development of effective assessment designs.

Collaborative Learning in Open and Distance Education

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Collaborative learning is an educational method where individuals work together to learn a concept or idea, a process or method, or an output. Learning together is believed to provide for deeper understanding from various perspectives from peer to peer or peer to teacher interactions. Furthermore, it develops higher order thinking, interpersonal communication and leadership skills. Collaborative learning can be mediated by technology and this approach was utilized in this graduate course on environmental planning and management. Learners were from different backgrounds (geology, forestry, chemistry, education, architecture, governance, etc) who were grouped together to complete a collaborative project as part of their authentic assessment. The groups were free to choose a topic related to environmental planning and management (climate change, biodiversity conservation, pollution, mangrove restoration, sustainable development, etc) with a specific sector in the society as a target audience. They were free to use various media (ebooks, infographics, websites, social media groups, journal article, etc.) for their output. Each member of the group shared their knowledge and perspectives on the chosen topic and helped develop their final output. Since the students were all employed in various parts of the Philippines and overseas, they used video conferencing platforms and social media (Facebook) to meet regularly. They were also provided with a dedicated google drive for each group to create their own project folders to use as a repository of materials for their project. Each group was encouraged to upload/share their group outputs in an exclusive facebook group for the course and also on their personal social media accounts to increase views. In addition, the students were also encouraged to critique other groups' outputs. Students benefited from an active, social, and relevant technology-mediated collaborative experiences to inclusive education.

Building a Community of Practice: The case of the Flutter/Dart Learning Community

Anthea Velasco

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A “Community of Practice” built on purpose, people and practice provide digital access and inclusivity to a wide audience with similar background and interests. Born out of a simple project for an undergraduate course on Information and Communication Technology for Development, the Learning Flutter/Dart Community of Practice came to existence in 2018. It is a public group created on a social media platform which attracted some five hundred developers in its first week. At first it was not really intended to be used for a specific purpose, other than as a “requirement” for the course, but eventually evolved into something dynamic, beneficial and relevant.

Flutter, through the Dart language, is a cross-platform development framework that promises one code base delivering both iOS and Android applications. It was still in beta being a merely few months old coding framework when the Community of Practice (CoP) was created in February 2018. It was immediately populated with enthusiastic developers from around the world trying to learn this promising coding framework. The CoP became a venue for mutual learning, real-time discussions of new features and their possibilities, sharing of tutorials, free courses and other related links and a repository of resources for members to utilize and experiment on. At some point, the CoP became a reliable recruitment page for people who are looking for developers and for developers looking for employment opportunities.

In the last five years, this Community of Practice has attracted some 52,800+ members most of whom are still actively engaged in mutual sharing and learning. The CoP has also evolved into a self-governing, self-monitoring group maintaining mutual respect and professional environment. Community of Practice such as this group is a way to close the digital gap by providing access to information, human and other resources.

Student Engagement in an Online Learning Management System in an INFLeX Modality

Roxan Consolacion

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This research study aimed to explore the factors influencing student engagement in an online learning management system (LMS) within an innovative flexible learning modality (INFLeX). This study aimed to determine student engagement using the institute Online Learning Environment (MOLE) in an InFLEx Modality among first-year College of Education students. This also validates the impact of the institute-wide training on designing courses in blended learning modality on student engagement. The study employed a quantitative survey using a questionnaire through Google Forms, and data gathering was done online. A sample of 420 undergraduate students enrolled in a blended learning course utilizing an LMS was recruited for the study.

Data revealed that students generally reported actively engaged in online Learning Environment, Active Learning, and Collaboration in the online LMS. However, Online Academic Relevance, and Online Social Interaction appeared to be passively engaging. The findings also indicated that Online Learning Environment, Online Active Learning, and Online Academic Relevance have significant relationships to student grades.

Additionally, students identified Discussion, Forums and Messages as very useful application tools while feedback, Survey, Email Archive, Checklist and Chat Rooms were somewhat useful. Furthermore, students engaged in an online learning environment, online active learning, and online academic relevance tend to have higher grade point averages. By addressing the identified factors and exploring other application tools, educators and institutions can create more effective online learning experiences that maximize student engagement and improve learning outcomes.

Learner and Tutor Perceptions of Community of Inquiry in Online Learning

Jasmine Emmanuel

Abstract not available

Sustaining Engagement in a Blended Learning Environment

Amelia Buan

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This study aimed to determine the factors that sustain engagement in a blended learning environment. Descriptive quantitative design with qualitative support was used to investigate the experiences of the students in a blended learning classroom. The study was conducted to 123 students from a State University in the Philippines. They were enrolled in a course delivered in a blended learning environment for one semester. The Moodle platform was the learning management system employed in the virtual classroom. The participants were asked to determine their preferred and actual learning experiences in a blended learning environment in the survey. Moreover, they were asked to reflect on critical moments in the blended learning where they are most engaged or distanced as learners. The results revealed that the students preferred learning experiences in a blended learning environment are closely met in the actual experience. In addition, this study identified three factors that sustain engagement in the blended learning environment namely: interactivity, relevance and connectedness.

Improving skills through InFLeX Faculty Mentoring and Certification (IFMC) Program

Cenie Malabanan

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This paper presents the training framework of the faculty mentoring program at MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, and how the workshops were conducted after the lecture series. The Center for Pedagogical Innovations (formerly called the MSU-IIT Center for Elearning - MICeL) conducted the InFLeX* Faculty Mentoring and Certification (IFMC) Program. The IFMC Program was initiated to capacitate faculty members and supports the implementation of flexible learning modality of the university. It aimed to develop a pool of facilitators for InFLeX modality among faculty members through a 16-hour training module (with 1-hour online lecture and 3-hour face-to-face workshop) by gaining skills on open educational practices. Before each weekly workshop, participants attended a 1-hour online lecture that was delivered by Dr James Brunton. A total of 4 modules for this program were participated in every other week by faculty members from different colleges of MSU-IIT. The four modules focused on the following: 1. Integrating OER/OEP in teaching and learning process: Guidelines and overview, 2. OER/OEP development processes for teaching activities, 3. Utilising OER/OEP for student engagement, and 4. Open Pedagogical Approaches to Assessment. The 3-hour face-to-face workshops were participated in by two faculty members from each department of every college whereby techniques, and strategies on creating Open Educational Resources (OER) were enhanced. After completing the 4 modules, these trained faculty members conducted echo training and workshops in their respective colleges. This presentation details the training framework, and how the mentoring workshops in the different colleges were rolled-out.

* InFLeX - Innovative and Flexible Learning and Teaching Strategies

The power of Open Educational Practices: Facilitating systemic institutional change through a structured online lecture series

James Brunton

Co-authors: Amelia T. Buan, Cenie V. Malabanan

This presentation will report on an initiative in Mindanao State University: Iligan Institute Of Technology (MSU-IIT), the Philippines, which sought to upskill staff members in the area of Open Education and Open Educational Practices (OEP) as part of wider efforts to promote greater equity and inclusion in higher education. Specifically, this presentation will focus on the approach taken by Dr James Brunton in delivering a lecture series on a number of different aspects of Open Educational Practice. Dr Brunton was visiting professor at MSU-IIT in 2021/2022 as part of these efforts to improve staff understanding of open education and OEPs, and provide them with a framework and practical tools for engaging in different OEPs. In the autumn of 2021 James delivered two lectures on Open Educational Practices (1. Go open! An introduction to open educational practices; 2. The power of open: What can open educational practices do for us?) and a public lecture (Using an open pedagogy assessment to teach students about knowledge production in society). In the spring of 2022 Dr Brunton delivered four train-the-trainer lectures/workshops on how to engage staff in Open Educational Practices, in order that earlier work could then facilitate more systematic change in the institution. These four lectures/workshops were: 1. Integrating OER/OEP in teaching and learning process: Guidelines and overview, 2. OER/OEP development processes for teaching activities, 3. Utilising OER/OEP for student engagement, and 4. Open Pedagogical Approaches to Assessment. This presentation will present key aspects of the approach taken to communicating to attending staff about: Open Education and OEPs; the potential benefits to staff, students, the institution, and society from engaging in OEPs; and the barriers against engagement in OEPs.

Development process and learning design: challenges, solutions and beyond

Prakash V. Arumugam

Abstract not available

Local Cellular Network: Advancing Digital Access to Student in Remote Area

Daryono

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Internet access is still a privilege for UT's students living in remote areas of Indonesia, many of them encounter difficulties in accessing UT's online services due to lack of a reliable internet access. This has widened the discrepancies of online learning equality among UT's students. To address this inequality, the development of a local hotspot area to enable UT's students in remote areas to access UT's online support services is mandatory. This local hotspot service is beneficial for UT students as it gives them access to online learning experiences that are expected to increase their study success. As most remote areas have limited infrastructure, including power supply and bandwidth, there needs to be a minimum requirement of the local hotspot services to provide access to UT's Online support services. It also further develop a learning design model that needs to be adapted to support a low bandwidth capacity. By using a Moodle platform service, the online support services are designed with adaptive features. The adaptive features of this learning management system include: discussion fora, formative test feedback, student learning progress, and collaborative applications

Promoting Openness and Active Participatory through OUM Local Pilot under the BUKA Programme

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As an open university, the university is committed in fostering openness and active participation in addition to the culture of lifelong learning in ensuring access and equity. In this research paper, the dimension of openness and active participation that is built into the delivery of the Local Pilot Project at Open University Malaysia under the BUKA Programme is explored. The work analysed here is focused on the delivery part of the capacity building project: (i) Self-instruction Learning Materials; (ii) Focus Group Sessions; (iii) Skill-based Workshops; and (iv) Creation of Open Educational Resources. The learning outcomes within a course is spelled out in the learning materials and supported through content and instructional design strategies. The acquisition of learning outcomes is also supported through the focus sessions, skill-based workshop (Canva and Creative Commons Licenses). The proof of the achievement of the learning outcomes is ensured through the experience of developing and delivery of an open educational resource in the participants classroom as well as writing of a case-study to document their learning process. Findings from these efforts are used to further improve the capacity building programme which will continue to be used in other programmes. This paper also provides practical insights and recommendations for educators and institutions in the embodiment of the culture of open education.