**Podcasting as a tool in higher education**

**Online community Link**: www.facebook.com/groups/5002642706494017/

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**Introduction**

In-person classes have played a significant role in ensuring that learning is interactive in which instructors can assess whether students have understood lecture concepts. However, in-person learning alone is limited because learning activities cannot be customized for an individual student for better learning outcomes. For a reason mentioned above, "Enhance Lecture Concepts through Podcasting" is an online community created to reinforce lecture concepts and in-person supplement learning. Besser, Blackwell, and Saenz (2021) define podcasting as distributing audio or video files over the internet allowing users to subscribe to the feeds. Therefore, "Enhance Lecture Concepts through Podcasting" allows instructors or educators to share videos and audio on lecture concepts. It is a useful online community on a Facebook platform that creates an interactive forum for instructors and students. Students can listen to missed lectures, retrieve information during revision, selectively listen to concepts they have difficulty understanding, and ask relevant questions on the topics. Additionally, instructors can send individual students' feedback which can be assessed by the students any time and wherever they are, even as they engage in other activities such as exercising and traveling. Podcasting is essential to better learner outcomes as it supplements in-person classrooms by creating an online classroom where instructors and learners can reap precious educational benefits.

**Background on design and methodology and possible alternate design approaches**

Instructors are greatly concerned with the understanding of concepts by the students, while students would want to be sure they understand all the concepts in the classroom. Any complementary approach followed by an instructor is always a welcome move for the students. Instructors are concerned with customizing lectures to meet various student needs and ensure that those who cannot grasp all the concepts during physical classrooms can be helped elsewhere for better learning outcomes. Online communities are based on voluntary participation and are sustained by recruiting new members. Before ne members can join online communities, they often evaluate the community based on aspects. Some of those aspects include aspects of the community, the people who are already part of the community, and the mechanism and technology that control the community (Cho & Wash, 2021). Accordingly, an online community will thrive well when the technology being used is a common one that is easy to use and is widely used in a given community. The content that is to be shared and whether the technology will help distribute content is a point that should be well considered when creating an online community. Podcasting mainly involves distributing audio files requiring a technology that can support such distribution and where new members can subscribe to the news feeds by using the existing available technology.

Social media is increasing, offering platforms to share information without the constraints of time and geography. The major social media platforms that can create an online community are Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Facebook is the most common and widely used social media platform among these social media platforms. For this reason, Facebook was chosen as the platform through which podcasting will be done. Facebook meets the three available services that a podcast requires for its dissemination. A podcast should have a traditional podcast web host where the MP3 audio files can be stored, a search tool that can enable users to be such for different contents, and the existence of software to consume digital media that has been distributed (Sullivan, 2019). Facebook features make it an ideal platform for podcasting as an academic and learning tool. One of the most critical features of Facebook is that an individual can join a group. Individuals can join groups and become part of the online community with a particular goal. When using podcasting as a tool in learning, a group will be created where students can join and create an interactive online class with the instructors and others students. An online community administrator who is the instructor can create a group for a particular class are invite students to join. Students can also invite other students to join. As a result, the online community will be increasing.

Another feature that makes Facebook an ideal platform for podcasting is that it provides a technological platform where audio media contents can be shared and retrieved at one's convenience. As already stated, podcasting involves the distribution of audio files. Facebook enables users not just to share photos and text messages but to share audio and video files. Facebook features also offers media players for the shared audio files (Giannikas, 2020). An instructor will be able to share audio files from lectures based on the concepts that have been learned in the physical class and make this available to students whenever they require them. Students can download or listen to the podcasts online and play them several times to enhance during revision. Also, Facebook allows the user to utilize notification tools to subscribe to notifications to keep them informed of any updates (Giannikas, 2020). Therefore, students can subscribe to notification updates to ensure that they do not miss any instructor or fellow students' posts. At the same time, Facebook has features that enable direct messaging or sharing of audio files directly to an individual Facebook page. Therefore, instructors can send feedback directly to students who ask personal questions or seek clarification.

"Enhance Lectures Through Podcasting" is an online group that the instructor will control as the group administrator. Students for a particle course that an instructor is currently teaching will be invited to join the group. Also, students can invite their friends once they join the group. During joining the group, the group page will remain 'public and open to students over a given period. Once all the students have joined the group, it will remain closed. This form of access mode switching will avoid random access from any public member apart from the students. On the "Enhance Lectures Through Podcasting" page, the instructor will upload three content materials in audio form to the students. These will generally be informative media files. One of the audios, media, will set the rules and guidelines for using the group and sharing lectures audios. The rules and regulations will act as guidelines to foster the smooth existence of the online community. Another audio document will be a user guide on the way students and the instructor will interact during the semester, how questions will be posted, and disseminated feedback. Lastly, a media file will be posted weekly that reviews the concepts that require clarification and which students show difficulties in understanding.

**Comparison of newly created designs to existing ones**

Facebook podcasting groups have been created for various purposes that compare and differ greatly from the newly created one. Business organizations have created podcasting pages on Facebook to market their brands to increase market share and sales. Individuals and groups have also used Facebook podcasting to create community awareness on certain social aspects that affect a community. Still, podcasting on Facebook has been used to promote healthy behaviors and inform the public about health matters. Educators have also used Facebook podcasting to investigate the effectiveness of using social media platforms to complement learning activities and break the passiveness of learners. Yet others have used Facebook to supply extra learning materials in audio form to students who require extra materials and seek clarification on difficult concepts. "Enhance Lectures Through Podcasting" is a Facebook group that brings together instructors and students to provide an interactive online class where instructors can share short audio materials to clarify concepts taught in class and provide customized feedback to students. It differs from business organization groups that emphasize brand promotion and is similar to educational groups that increase instructor-learner interactions outside the usual physical classroom.

**Design, syllabus objectives, and Conclusion**

"Enhance Lectures Through Podcasting" is aligned to the course objectives in overall ways. Firstly, it provides a platform where students and instructors can fully interact and share ideas on how best physical classroom passiveness can be reversed. Secondly, by choosing Facebook as a platform for the group, many students and instructors will be reached because many use Facebook as a social media platform for communication. Thirdly, the group has a clear vision of ensuring that students and teachers can learn from peers and colleagues as an online community. In summary, "Enhance Lectures Through Podcasting" aims to equip teachers and students with the necessary skills to take advantage of the Facebook features and utilize them for learning and complementing the physical classroom.

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