
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Exploring Seasoned Higher Education Teachers' Experiences with Learning Management Systems

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| ABSTRACT

This study examines the experiences of seasoned higher education educators in utilizing Learning Management Systems (LMS). Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the study explored educators' perceptions, challenges, opportunities, and strategies related to LMS integration, as well as its perceived impact on student learning. Ten experienced instructors from private universities in the Central Visayas region of the Philippines participated in semi-structured interviews and a focus group discussion. The findings identified three predominant perceptual orientations towards LMS: enthusiastic embrace, apprehensive rejection and pragmatic neutrality. Key challenges identified included technical infrastructure, pedagogical adaptation, uneven student digital competencies and student engagement in online settings. Conversely, key opportunities cited included adaptability, resource efficiency, data-informed instruction and continuous professional development. Successful integration strategies included gamification, collaborative discussion forums and formative assessment through interactive quizzes. The study concludes that a clear understanding of the spectrum of educator experiences is key to enabling inclusive, student-centered LMS integration in higher education.

| KEYWORDS

Seasoned Educator, Learning Management System, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, Distance Learning, Technology Integration

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The rapid evolution of higher education has increasingly compelled institutions to integrate digital technologies into teaching and learning practices. Among these technologies, Learning Management Systems (LMSs) have evolved into multifunctional platforms that can deliver course content, facilitate communication, assess, and engage students in virtual environments (Sanchez et al., 2024). With students increased digital fluency, the use of LMS has become not only an option but an institutional imperative.

However, while this momentum is reflected in literature that suggests a persistent disconnect exists between institutional expectations and ground-level implementation (Learning Management System in Education: Opportunities and Challenges, 2019), the adoption rates among experienced educators remain uneven. Many instructors who have been fine-tuning their traditional pedagogical approaches to best serve face-to-face learning for decades are ambivalent or resistant to LMS, a phenomenon that deserves systematic investigation.

LMS had been shown to improve instructional efficiency and be beneficial to teachers and students in large-enrollment courses by Lonn and Teasley (2009). However, Bousbahi and Alrazgan (2015) reported pockets of resistance to LMS use, suggesting that availability of technology does not necessarily translate to meaningful adoption. Rich-feature platforms such as Canvas are often underused, serving as repositories of content rather than interactive pedagogical environments, as reported by Kite et al. (2020).

The literature identifies two major challenges for teachers: a lack of ability to implement online teaching methods and a strong belief that face-to-face teaching is superior (Kite et al., 2020). Addressing these challenges requires not only technical training but also an appreciation for the lived experiences, motivations, and concerns of teachers who have built their professional identities on traditional pedagogy.

This study contributes to this understanding. It aims to illuminate why some teachers warmly embrace LMS, others categorically reject it, and others adopt a more nuanced middle ground, by examining the voices of experienced practitioners – those with a minimum of fifteen years' teaching experience. The study used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to understand the deeper meanings that these educators attach to their experiences with LMSs, rather than just the surface-level challenges and opportunities that they experience. The goal is to produce evidence-based recommendations that can help institutions and educators move towards more effective, inclusive, and pedagogically sound LMS integration.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Features of Learning Management Systems

Learning Management Systems provide a wide range of tools to assist instructors and students in online and blended learning settings. One of the key benefits they offer is the promotion of flexible, asynchronous learning, allowing students to access course materials from any location with internet access, thus eliminating geographical and temporal barriers in the learning process. LMS platforms also enhance student engagement through interactive content, multimedia resources, and communication tools such as discussion forums (Chung et al., 2013).

According to Chung et al. (2013), the five major categories of LMS features are sharing of course material, student assessment, evaluation of courses and lecturers, facilitation of class discussions, and computer-based learning development. These features make LMS a complete instructional ecosystem, rather than a simple file-sharing tool. Furthermore, the data analytics features embedded within most LMS make it possible for educators to track individual student progress, identify areas of difficulty, and customize instructional interventions, thus supporting a data-driven pedagogical approach.

However, Araka et al. (2020) cautioned that the features are not necessarily well utilized. Students tend to underutilize the interactive tools embedded in LMS for online learning, highlighting the need for intentional instructional design and educator support to leverage the pedagogical affordances of these platforms.

2.2 Advantages of Learning Management Systems

The benefits of LMS for higher education are well-documented. In an empirical study tracking eight years of system usage logs, Rhode et al. (2017) showed that the LMS was very flexible in providing support for interactive learning on various devices and was very suitable for blended learning approaches. The LMS played an important role in lightening the administrative workload for teachers that included grading, taking attendance, and posting announcements so that they could focus on more meaningful teaching activities.

LMS provides equal access to learning resources and promotes independent study, enabling students to learn at their own pace, in different ways (learning styles), and at different times (different schedules). Discussion forums, peer review tools and collaborative workspaces have brought social dimensions of learning that are often lacking in the online context (Garrison et al., 1999). However, a common paradox identified by Araka et al. (2020) is that LMS features are designed to promote active engagement. Still, students tend to use them only at a surface level, demonstrating a disconnect between potential and practice.

2.3 Challenges in Learning Management System Implementation

The implementation of LMS is not without significant challenges. For instance, the review by Alenezi (2018) showed that technological barriers such as lack of compatibility, inconsistent software updates, and limited technical support were significant barriers to effective use of LMS. In resource-limited educational contexts, financial constraints may further reduce the ability of institutions to purchase, customize, and support LMS platforms, thereby exacerbating equity concerns about access and quality.

A major obstacle is the resistance of educators. Teachers who have been accustomed to traditional pedagogy may see the transition to the LMS as a barrier rather than a facilitator (Alenezi, 2018). Other obstacles affecting students were reported by Araka et al. (2020), including insufficient instructor feedback, inadequate peer collaboration, and a lack of automation tools to

accelerate the learning process. Cavus (2013) states that hidden costs, complex interfaces, and interoperability issues pose challenges for traditional LMS evaluation techniques, making it difficult for institutions to make the correct decision about the platform.

Another quality assurance issue is the continuing effort to ensure that LMS content is current, accurate, and aligned to pedagogical objectives. LMS repositories without systematic content review processes run the risk of becoming repositories for outdated material that work against rather than with student learning.

2.4 Overcoming Barriers to LMS Adoption

Research identifies several strategies for addressing barriers to LMS adoption. Uzorka et al. (2023) noted that institutional incentives, training, and technical support can enhance LMS engagement. Similarly, Kite et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of sustained professional development in strengthening educators' technological competence and pedagogical capacity to use LMS effectively.

Change management principles can also be relevant: involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, fostering a culture of collaborative innovation, and acknowledging the legitimacy of educators' concerns may help to reduce resistance and achieve institutional buy-in. Strategic budget planning and resource allocation may mitigate cost-related barriers. At the same time, quality assurance mechanisms such as peer content review and continuous improvement cycles may help to maintain the pedagogic relevance of LMS materials over time (Araka et al., 2021). Cavus (2013) suggested computer-aided methodologies as effective tools for LMS evaluation, especially in developing countries where LMS adoption is still in its early stages.

3. Methodology

This section discusses the research design, the context of the study, participant selection, research instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis approach used in the study.

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design grounded in phenomenological inquiry was utilized for this study. The methodological approach employed was Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), consistent with the study's purpose of exploring the lived experiences of experienced instructors in their interactions with the LMS. IPA was selected because it allows the researcher to access and interpret the first-person, subjective accounts of the participants, thus generating rich, detailed insights into how individuals understand and make sense of significant experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2007). This approach is especially appropriate for capturing the complexity and range of perspectives of educators on the adoption of technology in higher education contexts.

3.2 Study Context

Data were collected in the Central Visayas region of the Philippines, which is characterized by a gradual yet uneven trajectory of LMS adoption. Over the past eight years, local universities have adopted various LMS platforms and have undergone multiple system transitions, indicative of the fluid and evolving nature of educational technology in the region.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a turning point, forcing institutions that had previously only adopted LMS to rapidly and fully move to fully online instruction. This sudden transition drew attention to the strengths and weaknesses of the region's digital educational infrastructure and provided a unique context to study the experiences of educators. Due to restrictions on in-person contact during the pandemic, all data collection was conducted through online platforms. Thus, the need for LMS literacy and adoption in the regional higher education landscape was even more pressing.

3.3 Participants

Participants were selected purposively, the primary criterion being at least fifteen years of continuous teaching experience in higher education. This criterion was chosen intentionally: veteran educators, who have been shaping and reshaping their pedagogical approaches over the course of decades of face-to-face instruction, are a notably important—though under-examined—demographic in the LMS adoption literature. Their insights reveal the confluence of pedagogical identity and technological transformation in a manner distinct from that of novice instructors.

A total of ten educators from private universities in the Central Visayas region participated in the study. Pseudonyms were assigned to protect participant confidentiality. The demographic profile of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Participants

	Pseudonym	Age	Years of Teaching	Type of University
1.	Tisoy	63	25	Private University
2.	Tibo	54	23	Private University
3.	Jigger	52	21	Private University
4.	Enrique	46	15	Private University
5.	Melanie	49	19	Private University
6.	Marissa	49	19	Private University
7.	Joselito	56	23	Private University
8.	Gloria	51	21	Private University
9.	Joey	56	23	Private University
10.	Jovanni	55	22	Private University

3.4 Research Instruments and Data Gathering Procedure

A semi-structured interview protocol was developed in English to guide the data collection process. The instrument was reviewed and validated by three research experts to ensure that the questions were appropriately aligned with the study's IPA framework and research objectives. In accordance with Smith and Osborn's (2007) IPA guidelines, the interview protocol was designed to establish rapport and allow the researcher flexibility to probe areas of particular significance to individual participants. The ordering of questions was intentionally non-prescriptive, permitting the interview to follow the natural trajectory of each participant's account.

Four open-ended questions were posed to each participant (see Appendix 1). All interviews were conducted online, accommodating participants' preferences for platform (e.g., Zoom, mobile applications) and scheduling. A subsequent focus group discussion, conducted via Zoom, brought all ten participants together to validate, elaborate upon, and triangulate the individual interview data. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. All interviews and the focus group discussion were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. As all participants responded in English, no translation was required. Data were stored securely on password-protected devices accessible only to the primary researcher.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the five-step IPA protocol outlined by Smith and Osborn (2007):

- (a) Immersive reading. Each interview transcript was read and reread multiple times to achieve deep familiarity with participants' accounts. We made notes in the margins of the transcript of significant, interesting, or striking statements.
- (b) Thematic linkages. Emerging themes were listed with the transcripts and subsequently grouped according to conceptual linkages. Clusters were cross-referenced with the original transcripts to ensure completeness and accuracy.
- (c) Construction of a Thematic Table The clustered and labeled themes were then structured in a thematic table, with each theme clearly illustrated in the verbatim data and not subject to researcher bias.
- d. Development of a master list of themes. As analysis progressed across all cases, a consolidated master list of themes was produced that captured patterns across the participant group.
- (e) Report writing. Themes were translated into narrative accounts and supported by verbatim participant excerpts to ground the analysis in participants' own words and to substantiate the researcher's interpretations.

3.6 Trustworthiness and Rigor

Several measures were taken to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings. Credibility was supported through methodological triangulation: the focus group discussion allowed participants to validate, elaborate on, and, where necessary, challenge themes generated from their individual interviews. Dependability was addressed through the systematic, stepwise application of Smith and Osborn's (2007) IPA protocol, in which emergent themes were repeatedly cross-referenced against the original transcripts to preserve an auditable trail from raw data to final themes. Confirmability was supported by the involvement of multiple members of the research team in reviewing the thematic table and master list of themes, reducing the influence of

any single researcher's interpretive bias. Transferability is supported through thick description and verbatim participant excerpts throughout the Results and Discussion sections, allowing readers to assess the applicability of the findings to their own contexts.

3.7 Reflexivity

Consistent with the double hermeneutic at the core of IPA, the researchers recognize that the findings represent an interpretation of participants' own interpretations of their experiences. All five members of the research team are current higher education practitioners, holding faculty and program coordinator roles at the University of the Visayas, and several are licensed professional teachers with doctoral or graduate-level training in education. This insider positioning facilitated rapport with participants and contextual understanding of the pedagogical concerns being described but also carried the risk of over-identifying with participants' accounts. To manage this, initial coding was conducted independently by individual members of the research team before themes were discussed and reconciled collectively, and interpretations were continually checked against the verbatim data rather than the researchers' own assumptions about LMS use.

4. Results and Discussion

In-depth analysis of interview and focus group discussion data yielded five overarching themes: (1) perceptions of LMS, (2) challenges in LMS adoption, (3) opportunities afforded by LMS, (4) strategies for effective LMS integration, and (5) the impact of LMS on student learning experiences. Below, we discuss each theme with representative quotes from participants.

4.1 Theme 1: Perceptions of Learning Management Systems

The sample participants demonstrated significantly varied attitudes towards LMS, reflective of the diverse experiences and professional identities within the group. Three main perceptual types were identified: eager adoption, hesitant resistance, and pragmatic neutrality.

4.1.1 Positive Perception

Many participants viewed the LMS as a transformative tool that enhanced instructional efficiency and fostered student engagement. They emphasized its capacity to promote organizational coherence, communicative flexibility, and expanded pedagogical possibilities. Tisoy, Tibo, and Jigger articulated this positive orientation in the following ways:

"LMS has been a game changer for me, especially after teaching for over 20 years traditionally. It's like a breath of fresh air. Now, I can relax more. I complete modules, send announcements, provide face-to-face help when needed, create assessments, and collect scores. Teaching has become much smoother."

"I love that LMS lets me teach using my phone. It's so convenient. I can connect with my students from home or while on the move. It's really flexible."

"LMS is fantastic because it keeps everything together. We can track teaching and learning all in one spot. No more dealing with papers and emails. It makes managing and grading student work much easier."

These accounts align with Rhode et al. (2017), who emphasized educators' appreciation of LMS flexibility and effectiveness, and with Lonn and Teasley (2009), who documented the time-saving benefits of LMS use in large courses. Taken together, the participants' reflections suggest that positive LMS perceptions are closely tied to its capacity to streamline instructional management while expanding opportunities for flexible teaching and learning.

4.1.2 Negative Orientation

Conversely, some participants expressed apprehension toward LMS adoption, citing perceived technological inadequacy, infrastructure limitations, and concerns about the erosion of face-to-face pedagogy. Melanie, Marissa, and Gloria articulated this resistant orientation in the following ways:

"I am near retirement, and I do not think I have enough time to learn the Learning Management System. I prefer the traditional way."

"It seems useful, but I am not confident about my technology skills or the internet connection at home and in school. Our school's internet is weak, so not all students and teachers can use the platform effectively."

"Because of LMS, students are no longer interested in participating in face-to-face discussions. They are confident that they can score high on online examinations at home without supervision. There is a risk of cheating."

These responses are consistent with the barriers identified by Kite et al. (2020) and Alenezi (2018), particularly the role of infrastructure deficits, limited technological confidence, and pedagogical identity in shaping resistance to LMS adoption.

4.1.3 Neutral Perception

A third group of participants acknowledged the potential value of LMS but remained uncertain about their readiness and capacity to make full use of these tools. Joey's account, for instance, illustrates this pragmatic stance:

"I see the potential of LMS, and it might free up time for other work and extra income. However, arranging my topics on the platform is time-consuming. Maybe I can get it done by the end of the semester when I have more time."

This balanced position reflects what Bousbahi and Alrazgan (2015) described as conditional acceptance, wherein users recognize the value of LMS while weighing it against practical constraints, time demands and competing professional priorities.

Collectively, these divergent orientations toward LMS reflect the central assumptions of technology acceptance theory. Davis's (1989) foundational Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) identifies perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as key determinants of an individual's intention to adopt technology. Scherer et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis of 114 TAM studies involving more than 34,000 teachers confirmed that these constructs remain robust predictors of technology adoption across educational contexts. In this study, enthusiastic participants who emphasized convenience and time savings reflected high perceived usefulness and ease of use. Conversely, apprehensive participants' concerns about infrastructure and technological confidence suggest lower perceived ease of use compounded by external barriers. Beyond acceptance constructs, Lai and Jin (2021) found that teachers' professional identity orientations significantly shape the nature of their technology integration. This finding resonates with the present study's emphasis on veteran educators' pedagogical identity as a lens through which LMS adoption is interpreted. Similarly, Liu and Geertshuis (2021) extended this identity perspective to LMS adoption among university academics, reporting that adoption was strongly associated with the perceived compatibility between LMS use and participants' professional self-concept. This insight echoes the pragmatic and resistant orientations identified among participants in the present study.

4.2 Theme 2: Challenges in LMS Adoption

The participants identified four types of challenges as barriers to their engagement with the LMS: technical infrastructure barrier, pedagogical adaptation, differences in students' digital literacy, and student motivation. These challenges shaped not only how participants used the platform but also how confidently and consistently they integrated LMS into their teaching practice.

4.2.1 Technical Infrastructure Challenges

The respondents identified technical infrastructure challenges such as unreliable internet connection and platform incompatibility. These challenges affect real-time communication and content delivery, causing considerable frustration among teachers and students. Tibo, Jigger, and Marissa said:

"The migration from Moodle to Canvas is not smooth because not all features are compatible."

"Some features don't work on mobile phones. Students might need a PC or laptop."

"I'm not even that good at using the internet much more with LMS."

These accounts are consistent with the documented technological barriers as the primary obstacles for the implementation of LMS in resource-limited settings by Alenezi (2018).

4.2.2 Adapting to New Teaching Methods

The transition from traditional face-to-face pedagogical practices to LMS-mediated instruction necessitated that teachers rethink their teaching strategies, reorganize course materials, and develop new assessment approaches. For many veteran instructors, this transition was perceived as cognitively and professionally demanding. Gloria and Tisoy expressed:

"While it's nice to think of using LMS, sometimes I feel lost when actually using it, not knowing what to do next."

"It's good that other schools do it already, and I think we should too. It seems like the new normal way to do classes."

4.2.3 Unequal Student Digital Literacy

Another domain of challenge for educators was the heterogeneity of their students' digital literacy. Disparate access to devices and connectivity and different degrees of technological familiarity created differential learning experiences that challenged instructors' capacity to deliver equitable online instruction. Melanie and Giovanni shared:

"I think I need more training on how to use the LMS, because I had a meeting on my training day."

"I need more time to learn all the features. Perhaps I'll try them out during the semester break."

4.2.4 Student Motivation in Virtual Settings

The absence of physical presence and the diversion of digital stimuli posed substantial motivational hurdles. Participants highlighted that maintaining student engagement in digital learning environments demanded deliberate pedagogical interventions that extended beyond simply conveying information. Enrique and Joselito observed:

"While most students prefer major exams to be conducted on the platform, some lack interest in reading modules or visiting the platform. Perhaps they're distracted by entertaining apps on their phones."

"To keep students engaged, we need more interactive lessons. "Some students can't live on PowerPoint presentations alone, unless they're the academic types who have to keep their marks up"

The technical infrastructure challenges reported by participants mirror findings from Ndibalema's (2022) systematic review of online learning transitions in developing-country higher education institutions, which identified unreliable internet access and low institutional readiness as the most persistent obstacles to sustained digital adoption. Similarly, the disparities in student digital competencies observed by participants align with van de Werfhorst et al.'s (2022) analysis of the digital divide in online education, which found that unequal access to devices, connectivity, and prior digital experience continues to stratify students' readiness for technology-mediated learning even where institutional resources are comparable. Together, these findings suggest that the challenges identified in this study are not unique to the Central Visayas context but reflect broader structural inequities documented in the international literature on LMS and online learning adoption.

4.3 Theme 3: Opportunities Offered by Learning Management Systems

Alongside these challenges, participants identified several opportunities that LMS afforded for improving their teaching practice and enriching student learning experiences. These opportunities were evident in the platform's capacity to support flexible instruction, efficient resource management, pedagogical innovation, data-informed decision-making, and continuous professional growth. For participants, these affordances positioned LMS not merely as a digital requirement but as a potential catalyst for more responsive and learner-centered teaching.

4.3.1 Flexibility and Customization

LMS allowed educators to customize the content and methods of instruction to meet the varied needs of their students. The ability to customize instruction, supported by analytics that monitor the progress of each student, allowed teachers to practice more flexible, student-centered instruction. Tibo and Jigger commented:

"I can be more creative than ever. I can present the lesson the way I want if I have enough time."

"I think I am better or different from the other traditional teachers in that I am more in favor of the advanced technology in education."

4.3.2 Efficiency in Time and Resource Management

Participants recognized that LMS greatly reduced the administrative burden of instruction—facilitating dissemination of content, grading, and reaching students—and released cognitive space for higher-order instructional tasks. As Jigger and Tisoy noted:

"I can save time. I can access a lot of resources by searching on the internet, like Google or YouTube, then post them on the platform."

"I can save time; I just need to copy the platform from my colleague because we work on the same subjects."

4.3.3 Pedagogical Enhancement

Certain instructors were able to improve their teaching toolkit and design more engaging and interactive learning experiences with the use of LMS tools such as discussion boards, multimedia tools, and formative quizzes. As Melanie and Jovanni said,

"Sometimes, having students watch a YouTube video can give them a clearer understanding of the topic."

"I can talk about things on a high level; I can give instructions when I'm not in the classroom."

4.3.4 Data-Driven Instruction

LMS platforms embedded analytics dashboards that provided educators with the ability to track student performance in real time, identify patterns of difficulty, and make evidence-based instructional adjustments. Enrique and Gloria articulated this opportunity:

"With data-driven teaching, I can track how students are performing and adjust my lessons accordingly, making sure they get the support they need to succeed."

"Reviewing student data helps me to see patterns and trends in their learning that I can use to improve my teaching strategies for better outcomes."

4.3.5 Continuous Professional Development

Some participants identified LMS engagement as a catalyst for their professional development, viewing the platform as a space for continuous learning, peer collaboration, and professional renewal. Jigger and Tisoy shared this perspective in the following ways:

"LMS makes me feel like an advanced teacher, and I think I am growing professionally in my chosen field."

"With LMS, I can be as competent as other advanced university teachers."

The data-driven instruction opportunities described by participants reflect what Long and Siemens (2011) term the capacity of learning analytics to "penetrate the fog" of uncertainty in instructional decision-making, allowing educators to move from intuition-based to evidence-informed teaching. Participants' accounts of using LMS dashboards to track performance and adjust instruction accordingly are consistent with the broader shift toward data-informed pedagogy documented in the learning analytics literature. However, as several participants noted, the value of this opportunity depends heavily on educators' capacity and confidence to interpret and act on the data available to them.

4.4 Theme 4: Strategies for Effective LMS Integration

Participants identified three main strategies they had found effective for maximizing the pedagogical value of the LMS.

4.4.1 Gamification

The incorporation of gamification elements like competitive challenges, point systems, and reward-based achievements was viewed as a potent method to boost student engagement and motivation. Joey and Marissa observed:

"Adding gamification to education brings a fun and competitive aspect that really engages students and makes learning more fun."

"Gamification fosters a dynamic learning environment that drives student participation and encourages them to strive for success via the gamified elements of the curriculum"

4.4.2 Collaborative Discussion Tools

Participants found that the systematic application of LMS discussion forums and peer review tools successfully fostered critical thinking, collaborative knowledge construction, and disciplinary discourse across various subject areas. As Gloria and Jovanni noted:

"Encouraging collaborative discussions within the classroom setting allows students to exchange ideas and collaborate, leading to a deeper comprehension of the subject matter."

"Through collaborative discussions, students are involved in interactive and meaningful learning environments that not only develop their communication skills but also promote mutual learning."

4.4.3 Interactive Formative Assessment

Immediate automated feedback from practice quizzes was considered a useful approach for improving conceptual understanding and motivating students to self-regulate their learning. Gloria and Melanie commented:

"Interactive quizzes are a fun way to learn and help students remember things better as they are involved in the learning process."

"Interactive quizzes as a part of the learning experience not only assess students' knowledge but also reinforce key concepts, making it a valuable tool for effective learning."

The integration strategies identified by participants are well supported in the broader literature. Huang et al.'s (2020) meta-analysis of 30 independent studies found a small-to-medium positive effect of gamification on student learning outcomes, lending empirical weight to participants' enthusiasm for gamified elements such as point systems and rewards. Likewise, participants' use of discussion forums to foster critical thinking and collaborative knowledge construction reflects the Community of Inquiry framework advanced by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (1999), which identifies cognitive presence, built through sustained dialogic engagement, as central to deep learning in text-based online environments. Finally, participants' reliance on interactive quizzes for formative assessment is consistent with Morris, Perry, and Wardle's (2021) systematic review, which identified low-stakes quizzing as one of the most consistently effective feedback strategies available in higher education, even though the evidence base for many other forms of technology-based feedback remains comparatively limited.

4.5 Theme 5: Impact on Student Learning Experiences

Overall, participants noted that purposeful integration of the LMS resulted in gains in three areas of student learning: mastery of subject matter, depth of inquiry, and the development of collaborative skills.

4.5.1 Enhancement of Subject Mastery

Practice quizzes with instant feedback and modular content delivery were observed to improve students' understanding of the course content and their confidence as learners. Melanie and Marissa noted:

"Enhancement of mastery through LMS enables students to achieve a more thorough understanding of the subject matter, which in turn elevates their confidence and increases their performance."

"LMS makes it easier to master the material as students can practice, get instant feedback and take control of their learning journey, leading to a more enriched educational experience."

4.5.2 Encouraging Deep Exploration

Discussion forums and peer review tools were identified as facilitators of deeper analytical engagement, especially in humanities and social science courses where critical inquiry and dialogic learning are central pedagogical objectives:

"In-depth exploration through LMS, especially discussion forums and peer review tools, encourages thorough understanding and in-depth discussions, enhancing the learning experience."

"LMS encourages a lot of exploration and discussions among the students. It improves students' capacity to explore the subject matter in depth and conduct a comprehensive analysis. It creates a more interactive and engaging learning environment."

4.5.3 Building collaborative skills

Collaborative activities mediated through LMS were found to foster students' ability to work together, learn from peers and develop collective knowledge:

"The development of collaborative skills through LMS not only facilitates teamwork but also enriches the learning experience by enabling students to learn from each other."

"LMS provides opportunities for collaborative skill development. It helps students to work together effectively. It improves their ability to collaborate and engage in a more interactive and cooperative learning environment."

These perceived gains in subject mastery, depth of inquiry, and collaborative skill development are broadly consistent with Vo, Zhu, and Diep's (2017) meta-analysis of 51 effect sizes, which found a small but reliable positive effect of blended learning on student performance at the course level in higher education, with stronger effects in disciplines that combine structured content delivery with interactive engagement. This convergence between participants' lived experience and the quantitative meta-analytic literature strengthens confidence that the LMS-mediated strategies described in this study yield real, if modest, benefits for student learning rather than merely reflecting participants' enthusiasm.

5. Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the sample consisted of ten educators purposively drawn from private universities in a single region, the Central Visayas, Philippines; while this sample size is appropriate for the idiographic, in-depth focus of IPA, it limits the transferability of the findings to public higher education institutions or to other geographic and cultural contexts. Second, the study relied on self-reported accounts gathered through interviews and a focus group discussion, which are subject to retrospective recall and social desirability bias, and were not triangulated against observational or institutional data such as actual LMS usage logs. Third, all participants met a minimum threshold of fifteen years of teaching experience; the deliberate focus on veteran educators means the findings should not be generalized to early-career or mid-career instructors, whose relationship with LMS adoption may differ substantially. Fourth, the interview protocol, while reviewed by three research experts for alignment with the study's IPA framework and objectives, was not formally pilot tested before data collection. Closer inspection of the protocol also reveals two design imperfections common in early-stage qualitative instruments: one item combined two related but distinct constructs within a single question (challenges and opportunities were asked together in Question 2), and two items presupposed successful integration of LMS into teaching (Questions 3 and 4), which could, in principle, have discouraged participants from voicing negative or resistant experiences. In practice, participants such as Melanie and Marissa nonetheless offered candid accounts of hesitancy, anxiety, and resistance in response to these items, suggesting that the overall framing of the protocol did not foreclose critical responses; a more neutrally worded and pilot-tested instrument, however, might have elicited an even fuller range of perspectives and reduced the interpretive burden placed on participants to disentangle compound questions. Finally, as with all IPA research, the analysis is interpretive by design, and while steps were taken to strengthen trustworthiness, the resulting themes reflect the research team's situated interpretation rather than an objective or exhaustive account of participants' experiences.

6. Conclusion

This study sheds light on the rich and varied lived experiences of veteran higher education educators in engaging with Learning Management Systems. Through the lens of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the study revealed three distinct perceptual stances – enthusiastic adoption, apprehensive resistance, and pragmatic neutrality – each shaped by a complex interplay of pedagogical identity, technological self-efficacy, and institutional context. The challenges experienced by the participants, including constraints in technical infrastructure, the need for pedagogical adaptation, issues around student digital literacy, and motivational barriers, reflect broader trends reported in the international literature. At the same time, the opportunities they identified, particularly around personalization, efficiency, data-driven instruction, and professional development, highlight the potential of LMS to serve as powerful vehicles for pedagogical renewal when thoughtfully implemented and adequately supported.

These findings can be situated within two complementary theoretical traditions. First, the perceptual variation identified through IPA maps onto technology acceptance theory (Davis, 1989; Scherer et al., 2019), in which perceived usefulness and ease of use, shaped by infrastructure, training, and institutional support, jointly determine whether an educator moves toward enthusiastic, pragmatic, or resistant engagement with LMS. Second, and more distinctively, the study extends the emerging literature on teacher professional identity and technology adoption (Lai & Jin, 2021; Liu & Geertshuis, 2021) by demonstrating, through rich first-person accounts, how veteran educators' sense of pedagogical self is not a peripheral factor but a central lens through which LMS integration is negotiated. Future researchers seeking to build on this study may find it useful to test these qualitative patterns quantitatively, for instance, by examining whether professional identity orientation moderates the relationship between perceived usefulness and sustained LMS use among experienced faculty cohorts.

Importantly, this study highlights the non-linear and non-uniform ways in which veteran teachers take up LMS, shaped by decades of professional experience, beliefs about good teaching, and material conditions of practice. Policies and programs that fail to consider this complexity are at risk of generating superficial compliance rather than meaningful pedagogical change.

7. Recommendations

Drawing from the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made for institutions and educators: Firstly, the institutions need to focus on contextualized, continuous professional development programs that are not only on technical LMS skills but also on the pedagogical design principles that support effective online instruction. The training should be responsive to the specific needs and concerns of experienced educators.

Second, investment in infrastructure is essential. The equitable and effective use of the LMS requires reliable internet and device access, which institutions operating in resource-constrained contexts need to address before the LMS can be expected to be used consistently.

Third, it is critical to foster a culture of collaborative practice that encourages and supports educators to share effective LMS strategies, co-create course materials, and engage in peer mentoring on digital pedagogy.

Fourth, evidence-based strategies such as gamification, data-driven instruction, and collaborative discussion tools should be identified as tools for improving student engagement and learning outcomes in LMS environments and embedded in institutional professional development offerings.

Fifth, institutions should position LMS as a platform to build upon and extend meaningful pedagogy, not as a replacement for it. This distinction is especially important when working with educators who are invested in the relational aspects of face-to-face teaching as part of their professional identity.

Finally, professional development initiatives should be designed around the principles of andragogy (Knowles, 1980), which hold that adult learners engage most effectively when training is self-directed, experience-based, and immediately applicable to their own practice. Consistent with Amemasor et al.'s (2025) systematic review of teacher professional development programs, LMS training for veteran educators should favor hands-on, mentorship-based formats over generic one-time workshops, and should be paired with the kind of sustained institutional support that Zhao et al. (2020) found to be a significant predictor of technology self-efficacy and innovative use among higher education staff.

8. Implications

The outcomes of this research have significant implications for educational policy, institutional leadership, and pedagogical practice. In terms of policy, the results highlight the necessity to acknowledge and address the diverse experiences and perspectives of educators within the frameworks for LMS adoption. A uniform approach to digital integration is unlikely to yield equitable or sustainable outcomes.

The study points to the need for technical support to institutional leaders, in addition to pedagogical guidance and change management strategies, for the implementation or expansion of LMS platforms. Closing infrastructure gaps and investing in specific professional development are not secondary considerations, but essential prerequisites for successful technology integration.

For educators, the study confirms that the move to LMS-mediated instruction, though fraught with challenges, is a real opportunity for professional growth and pedagogical enrichment. The move to student-centered, data-informed, and collaborative learning environments that LMS can support has the potential to enhance the quality of instruction and the depth of student learning. However, realizing this potential requires institutional commitment, peer support, and a willingness to engage critically and reflectively with new pedagogical possibilities.

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Appendix 1

Research Instrument

1. How do you, as an experienced higher education teacher, perceive Learning Management Systems in relation to your teaching practices?
2. What challenges and opportunities have you encountered in using Learning Management Systems in your teaching?
3. What strategies have you personally used to integrate Learning Management Systems effectively into your teaching practices?
4. Can you describe a specific instance in which you integrated a Learning Management System into your teaching, and how this affected your students' learning experiences?