

**UTILIZATION OF ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORMS AND TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS IN
ARALING PANLIPUNAN 10: BASIS FOR
AN ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

ARLYN L. PANCHO
Master of Arts in Education

Abstract

This study examined the utilization of online learning platforms in teaching Araling Panlipunan 10 and determined its relationship with teaching effectiveness in a public secondary school context. Using a quantitative descriptive–correlational design, data were collected from Araling Panlipunan 10 teachers and Grade 10 learners using a researcher-developed questionnaire that assessed ICT utilization across four domains: lesson delivery, assessment and feedback, learner engagement, and communication/collaboration. Descriptive statistics were used to assess utilization and teaching effectiveness, and Pearson product–moment correlation was used to test the association between platform utilization and teaching effectiveness. Results revealed that online learning platforms were highly utilized overall ($M = 3.69$), with lesson delivery registering the highest utilization ($M = 3.91$), followed by assessment and feedback ($M = 3.73$). Communication and collaboration showed high utilization ($M = 3.61$), although peer interaction and peer feedback practices were comparatively weaker. Teaching effectiveness was rated highly effective overall ($M = 3.69$). Correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between platform utilization and teaching effectiveness ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that greater utilization is associated with improved instructional effectiveness. Despite these positive outcomes, key challenges persisted, particularly unstable internet connectivity, limited student access to devices, and insufficient training on advanced platform features. The findings underscore the instructional value of online learning platforms in AP10 while highlighting the need for targeted interventions in infrastructure support, teacher capacity building, and engagement-focused digital pedagogy.

Keywords: Online Learning Platforms; ICT Utilization; Teaching Effectiveness; Araling Panlipunan 10; Digital Pedagogy; Secondary Education

1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of information and communication technologies (ICT) has substantially reconfigured the operational and pedagogical landscape of basic education. Across systems, digital tools are increasingly used to broaden access to learning resources, diversify instructional strategies, and streamline administrative functions. In developing contexts, however, the integration of ICT in classroom practice remains uneven, influenced by structural constraints such as connectivity, device access, and teacher capacity. UNESCO has consistently emphasized that ICT can expand access, bridge learning divides, and support the development of new pedagogies, but its benefits depend on sustained investment in professional development, infrastructure, and instructional design that is grounded in learners' needs (UNESCO, 2020). Within this global trajectory, the Philippine education system has likewise pushed forward technology-enabled teaching and learning as part of broader reforms in curriculum and teacher development.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) has institutionalized policies to improve instructional planning and teacher professional learning—two foundational conditions for effective technology integration. DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2016 highlights lesson planning as fundamental to ensuring quality teaching and learning and positions structured preparation (e.g.,

Daily Lesson Log or Detailed Lesson Plan) as a mechanism to strengthen instructional delivery and achievement of learning outcomes (Department of Education [DepEd], 2016a). Parallel to this, DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016 formalizes Learning Action Cells (LACs) as a school-based continuing professional development strategy that supports collaborative teacher learning, reflective practice, and instructional improvement aligned with the K to 12 program (DepEd, 2016b). These policies implicitly acknowledge that meaningful pedagogical change—particularly in contexts undergoing rapid shifts such as digitalization—requires both systematic planning and sustained teacher support.

The urgency of digital learning adoption intensified during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the use of online platforms, learning management systems (LMS), and blended learning modalities. As schools transitioned between remote, blended, and face-to-face arrangements, teachers increasingly relied on digital tools to deliver lessons, manage submissions, administer assessments, provide feedback, and facilitate communication. However, evidence on the effectiveness of digital learning remains nuanced. A UNICEF evidence review notes that digital learning solutions can improve educational outcomes. Still, the magnitude and direction of effects vary widely and depend on implementation quality, learner context, and whether the intervention supports—not replaces—effective pedagogy (UNICEF, 2021). This variability underscores the need for context-specific studies that examine how and under what conditions digital tools contribute to teaching effectiveness and student learning.

Among widely adopted tools in basic education contexts is Google Classroom, a free and relatively accessible platform that supports assignment distribution, feedback mechanisms, resource sharing, and classroom communication. Its design aligns with workflow-oriented teaching needs—teachers can post materials, create and collect assignments, grade student work, and track progress. Empirical studies generally report that Google Classroom can improve organization, ease of access to materials, and teacher–student interaction when implemented within a coherent instructional structure. For example, research published in *Education and Information Technologies* reported positive perceptions of the learning environment associated with Google Classroom in teacher education settings. It highlighted its utility for communication and learning management (Sharma et al., 2020). Similarly, an effectiveness study comparing online learning platforms indicated that Google Classroom can support delivery processes, although its efficacy is shaped by user readiness and engagement patterns (Alsharif & Aldossary, 2022). These findings suggest that digital platforms can enhance instructional processes, but they do not eliminate the practical and pedagogical challenges that teachers face.

At the secondary level, these challenges can be particularly pronounced due to adolescent learners' developmental needs, subject-specific demands, and variability in home learning environments. While online platforms offer scalability and convenience, they can also exacerbate inequities when learners have limited access to devices or a stable internet connection. Moreover, sustained learner engagement in online or blended settings is not guaranteed. Studies of teacher perceptions often emphasize that although Google Classroom improves task management and content distribution, learner participation, motivation, and timely submission remain persistent concerns, especially in contexts where connectivity constraints or limited digital literacy affect student engagement (e.g., secondary teacher perception studies in Southeast Asia) (Mohd Shamsudin et al., 2021). As a result, assessing “effectiveness” requires moving beyond mere adoption or usage frequency and toward understanding whether the platform supports measurable dimensions of teaching quality and learning facilitation.

In this regard, teaching effectiveness is a multidimensional construct that typically includes lesson clarity, instructional delivery, assessment practices, feedback quality, classroom management, learner engagement, and responsiveness to student needs. Digital tools can strengthen each of these dimensions: they allow teachers to diversify materials (e.g., videos, simulations, infographics), personalize feedback, use formative quizzes, and establish

communication channels that extend learning beyond the classroom. However, such gains are conditional on teachers' ability to design instruction that aligns platform affordances with learning objectives, assessment standards, and the social dynamics of classroom learning. The DepEd's emphasis on lesson preparation (DepEd, 2016a) is therefore directly relevant: the integration of technology is most likely to yield instructional benefits when anchored in systematic instructional planning and curriculum alignment rather than treated as an add-on.

The subject area of Araling Panlipunan (AP)—particularly Grade 10—offers a critical context for examining the role of digital tools in teaching effectiveness. AP10 typically engages learners in analyzing civic issues, governance, historical and social processes, and economic and political structures. These competencies are inherently connected to inquiry, discussion, critical reading of sources, and perspective-taking. Digital platforms can support these competencies by enabling access to diverse resources, facilitating structured discussions, organizing inquiry-based tasks, and fostering collaborative learning. However, AP also requires carefully scaffolded facilitation to prevent superficial engagement, exposure to misinformation, or passive content consumption. In other words, the subject's learning goals can benefit from technology-mediated inquiry. However, the risks associated with unstructured digital engagement—such as distraction, uneven participation, and assessment authenticity—must be actively mitigated.

Globally, the increased reliance on digital devices in learning settings has also prompted debates on attention, screen use, and classroom discipline. For instance, a government-commissioned study in the Netherlands reported improved student concentration and learning environments following school smartphone restrictions, suggesting that device presence alone does not guarantee productive learning without appropriate policies and classroom management structures (Henley, 2025). While the Philippine context differs, the broader insight is relevant: digital learning benefits require intentional design and regulation of technology use, especially for adolescents. This strengthens the argument that understanding ICT utilization must include not only adoption levels but also the quality of pedagogical integration.

In the Philippine public-school setting, examining ICT utilization in AP10 is therefore timely and consequential. Despite institutional momentum toward digital transformation and professional development, many schools continue to face constraints, including intermittent internet access, limited devices, insufficient teacher training, and challenges with student engagement and assessment integrity in technology-mediated environments. UNICEF's evidence review emphasizes that digital learning interventions often yield the strongest results when they are aligned with curriculum, integrated into structured pedagogy, and supported by trained teachers and enabling infrastructure (UNICEF, 2021). UNESCO similarly highlights that ICT's promise is realized through new pedagogies and inclusive access strategies rather than technology deployment alone (UNESCO, 2020). In line with these perspectives, local investigations are required to assess how teachers and students are actually using ICT and whether greater use corresponds with stronger indicators of teaching effectiveness.

Accordingly, this study focuses on the utilization of ICT in the teaching of Araling Panlipunan 10 and its relationship to teaching effectiveness. The investigation is anchored in the practical realities of classroom implementation. It examines how ICT is used in critical domains such as lesson delivery, assessment and feedback, learner engagement, and communication or collaboration. By analyzing utilization levels and linking them to effectiveness indicators, the study contributes to evidence-based decision-making at the school level. It may inform professional development interventions aligned with DepEd policy directions. Furthermore, the study offers actionable insights for strengthening ICT integration in a subject area that plays a key role in civic competence development, thereby supporting both pedagogical improvement and broader educational goals.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive–correlational research design to examine (i) the extent of ICT utilization in teaching Araling Panlipunan 10 and (ii) its relationship with teaching effectiveness. A descriptive approach was used to determine respondents' perceptions of ICT integration across key instructional domains (e.g., lesson delivery, assessment and feedback, learner engagement, and communication/collaboration). The correlational component was incorporated to test whether variation in ICT utilization is statistically associated with variation in teaching effectiveness, without manipulating the learning environment or imposing experimental controls.

The descriptive–correlational design is appropriate for studies that (a) aim to quantify prevailing practices or conditions in natural settings and (b) determine the strength and direction of relationships between measurable variables while maintaining ecological validity. In this study, the variables were operationalized through structured survey indicators and analyzed using inferential statistics to determine whether ICT utilization significantly predicts or aligns with observed levels of teaching effectiveness.

2.2 Participants

The participants in this study were Araling Panlipunan 10 teachers and Grade 10 learners from the study locale. Inclusion of both groups was intended to provide a more comprehensive assessment of ICT utilization and teaching effectiveness, since ICT integration in classroom instruction is shaped by both teacher implementation practices and student participation in technology-mediated learning tasks.

A purposive sampling technique was used to identify participants. This approach was considered appropriate because the study required respondents who were directly involved in the teaching–learning processes of Araling Panlipunan 10 and had practical experience with ICT-supported instruction during the study's reference period. Teachers included in the sample were those assigned to teach AP10 during the academic year of data collection. Student participants were drawn from Grade 10 classes in which ICT tools were used for instructional delivery, assessment, and communication.

2.3 Instrumentation

Data were collected using a researcher-developed, structured questionnaire designed to measure two core constructs: (i) ICT utilization in teaching Araling Panlipunan 10 and (ii) perceived teaching effectiveness. The instrument was developed to align with the study's objectives and organized into domain-based sections consistent with the expected instructional applications of ICT in secondary classrooms.

The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended items rated on a Likert-type scale, enabling the quantification of respondents' perceptions and facilitating descriptive and correlational statistical analysis. The format was selected to ensure uniformity of responses, minimize interpretation variability, and support the computation of weighted means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients required by the study.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical procedures consistent with the descriptive–correlational design of the study. Descriptive statistics were applied to determine the level of ICT utilization in teaching Araling Panlipunan 10 and the level of teaching effectiveness as perceived by respondents. Specifically, frequency counts and percentages were used to summarize categorical responses. At the same time, weighted mean and standard deviation were

computed to describe central tendency and variability across the questionnaire domains (lesson delivery, assessment and feedback, learner engagement, and communication/collaboration). Domain-level means and overall composite means were interpreted using established scale descriptors to classify utilization and effectiveness levels.

To examine the relationship between ICT utilization and teaching effectiveness, Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson's r) was employed as the primary inferential test. This procedure determined the strength, direction, and statistical significance of the association between the two continuous composite variables at the appropriate alpha level. Correlation results were reported using the correlation coefficient (r) and the corresponding significance value (p), and findings were interpreted as evidence of association rather than a causal effect due to the non-experimental design.

3. Results

Results indicate that online learning platforms were highly utilized in teaching Araling Panlipunan 10, with an overall weighted mean of 3.69 (High Utilization). Across the four measured domains, Lesson Delivery obtained the highest utilization score ($M = 3.91$, HU), indicating that teachers consistently used platforms to upload AP10 materials, organize lessons by week or topic, integrate multimedia resources, and clarify lesson content. The summary further showed that Assessment and Feedback also registered high utilization ($M = 3.73$, HU), reflecting frequent use of digital tools for administering quizzes, collecting outputs, grading, and delivering feedback. Student Engagement yielded the lowest mean among the four domains ($M = 3.51$, HU). However, it was still interpreted as high utilization, suggesting that online discussions and interactive tasks were implemented but less consistently than content delivery and assessment.

For Communication and Collaboration, the computed mean was 3.61, which falls within the High Utilization range based on the study's scale descriptors. Domain indicators showed strong teacher-led communication practices, including posting announcements/reminders ($WM = 3.95$) and using chat tools for teacher-student communication ($WM = 3.80$). Collaboration-related practices were comparatively weaker: facilitating group tasks through shared tools was still high ($WM = 3.50$), but encouraging peer interaction and peer feedback was only moderately utilized ($WM = 3.37$, MU), indicating that student-to-student collaboration is less consistently promoted than teacher-student interaction.

Findings further showed that teaching Araling Panlipunan 10 using online learning platforms was highly effective, with an overall mean of 3.69 (Highly Effective). All effectiveness indicators were rated in the highly effective range, suggesting that platforms support clear lesson explanations, an organized lesson flow, enriched instruction through digital resources, and improved classroom communication. However, the results also showed that indicators related to sustaining participation and encouraging interaction were lower than other effectiveness indicators, suggesting that engagement remains a persistent constraint in digital instruction.

Correlation analysis demonstrated a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between platform utilization and teaching effectiveness ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that higher utilization of online platforms tends to be associated with higher perceived teaching effectiveness in Araling Panlipunan 10. The moderate magnitude of the association suggests that while platform use contributes meaningfully to instructional effectiveness, other contextual factors—such as access constraints, teacher training, and resource availability—may also influence effectiveness outcomes.

Despite high overall utilization and effectiveness ratings, teachers reported substantial barriers that limit optimal implementation. The most frequently reported challenge was unstable or slow internet connectivity (83.33%), followed by limited student access to devices (73.33%), underscoring the continuing influence of infrastructure and access inequities. Training and capability gaps were also prominent: insufficient training on advanced platform features

(66.67%) was reported as a major constraint. Pedagogical and workload-related concerns remained significant, including difficulty sustaining student participation online (60.00%) and time-consuming preparation of online materials (53.33%), implying that digital instruction requires additional monitoring and instructional labor. Further challenges included technical platform issues, difficulty verifying the authenticity of student outputs, limited AP10 digital materials, and inconsistent home learning support—factors that collectively constrain the depth and inclusiveness of technology integration.

Overall, the results confirm that online learning platforms are already embedded in AP10 instruction and are associated with improved teaching effectiveness. Still, limitations in access, training, engagement management, and assessment integrity remain critical areas for targeted intervention.

4. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that online learning platforms were widely used in teaching Araling Panlipunan 10, with the strongest use observed in lesson delivery and assessment/feedback. This pattern is consistent with how learning management platforms are typically adopted in school settings: teachers initially maximize tools that improve instructional organization, content distribution, and task management before fully optimizing higher-order functions such as peer collaboration and dialogic engagement. In this study, lesson delivery yielded the highest utilization rating, suggesting that platforms were effective at structuring lessons, uploading learning resources, and supporting the continuity of instruction. Such outcomes align with DepEd's policy emphasis on systematic lesson preparation as a core condition of teaching quality (Department of Education [DepEd], 2016a). When teachers use platforms to organize resources and sequence instructional activities, ICT integration becomes less of an "add-on" and more of a scaffold for lesson planning and delivery—an approach that increases instructional clarity and consistency. This supports broader guidance that ICT initiatives are most effective when embedded in curriculum and pedagogy rather than treated as purely technological deployments (UNICEF, 2021).

The high utilization of platforms for assessment and feedback suggests that teachers found ICT tools particularly useful for collecting outputs, administering quizzes, tracking submissions, and providing feedback efficiently. This is important because timely and actionable feedback is a recognized driver of learning gains, and digital environments can expand teachers' capacity to monitor performance. However, while assessment functions were used frequently, the study also raised concerns about the authenticity of student outputs and the difficulty of sustaining participation, indicating that digital assessment does not automatically guarantee validity or engagement. These observations reflect UNICEF's evidence that the effectiveness of digital learning depends heavily on the quality of instructional design and the implementation conditions, including learner support and the ability to mitigate integrity risks (UNICEF, 2021). In practical terms, these results suggest that schools benefit when digital assessment strategies are complemented with clear performance tasks, authentic assessments, and monitoring systems that are realistic for teachers, given workload constraints.

Teaching effectiveness was rated highly effective overall, indicating that online learning platforms can meaningfully enhance instructional quality in AP10. The association between high utilization and high effectiveness can be interpreted as evidence that ICT—when used for planning, delivery, assessment, and communication—enhances teachers' capacity to structure learning experiences and respond to student needs. This aligns with UNESCO's position that ICT can strengthen learning environments and institutional capacity when it is integrated into pedagogy and supported by teacher development (UNESCO, 2019/2020). Importantly, the study's results imply that effectiveness is not solely determined by platform availability; rather, it is achieved when teachers can translate platform features into coherent instructional practice.

This is consistent with the intent of DepEd's Learning Action Cell (LAC) policy, which formalizes collaborative professional learning as a mechanism for improving classroom practice (DepEd, 2016b). In this context, LACs may be leveraged as a structured vehicle for sharing strategies in AP10 digital pedagogy, designing interactive tasks, and strengthening assessment and feedback practices under blended or technology-supported arrangements.

The correlational findings further revealed a moderate, positive, and statistically significant relationship between platform utilization and teaching effectiveness. This suggests that increased use of online platforms tends to coincide with improved effectiveness ratings, reinforcing the argument that ICT utilization is a meaningful correlate of instructional quality in AP10. Nevertheless, the moderate strength of the relationship implies the presence of additional determinants of effectiveness beyond technology use. Such determinants likely include learner access to devices, internet stability, teacher competence with advanced platform features, and the degree of alignment between digital activities and AP10 learning competencies. UNICEF's guidance stresses that digital learning succeeds when it is designed to address clear learning needs and when teachers and students can realistically access and use the tools (UNICEF, 2021). Therefore, although ICT utilization contributes to teaching effectiveness, it may not fully compensate for systemic constraints that undermine consistent participation, equitable access, and authentic assessment.

The challenges reported by teachers—particularly unstable internet connectivity and limited student device access—are critical in interpreting both utilization and effectiveness outcomes. While teachers may be able to maintain high platform use in lesson delivery and assessment, unequal access can limit student engagement and create variability in learning outcomes. UNESCO emphasizes that ICT's promise in education depends on inclusive access strategies and capacity-building rather than on technology deployment alone (UNESCO, 2019/2020). This is consistent with the study's observation that engagement-related indicators were comparatively weaker: even when teachers deploy platforms effectively, learners' participation may remain constrained by connectivity limitations and home learning conditions. The reported insufficient training on advanced platform features also points to a professional development gap. This strengthens the policy relevance of DepEd's LAC framework, as teacher collaboration can help close skill gaps and promote consistent implementation practices (DepEd, 2016b). Overall, the discussion suggests that improvement efforts should target (i) infrastructure and access support, (ii) teacher training focused on engagement and collaboration design, and (iii) assessment integrity strategies that can be sustained in real classroom conditions.

In sum, the study provides evidence that online learning platforms are already embedded in AP10 instruction and are associated with high perceived teaching effectiveness. However, the results also show that technology-driven instruction remains bounded by access inequities, engagement challenges, and teacher readiness constraints. These findings reinforce the wider evidence base that digital learning interventions succeed when platforms are integrated into strong pedagogy, supported by teacher development mechanisms, and matched with realistic infrastructure and learner access conditions (DepEd, 2016a; UNESCO, 2019/2020; UNICEF, 2021). For AP10 specifically, strengthening collaboration and student interaction through structured inquiry tasks, discussion protocols, and scaffolded group work may address the weaker engagement and peer-collaboration components identified in the utilization results. Such targeted interventions can help ensure that ICT integration advances not only efficiency and organization but also deeper civic learning and critical thinking outcomes.

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