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**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MULTIMEDIA STUDIES**

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**DISTANCE ELEARNERS' ACCEPTANCE OF PODCASTING AS A TOOL FOR  
LEARNING**

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15 August 2024

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**Acceptance Page:**

This paper prepared by **KIARA MARIE DOLORES S. LACAP** with the title: **“DISTANCE ELEARNERS’ ACCEPTANCE OF PODCASTING AS A TOOL FOR LEARNING”** is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Course.

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## **Biographical Sketch**

Kiara Marie Dolores S. Lacap, born on December 8, 1998, in Caloocan City, Philippines, spent much of her childhood in Sta. Maria, Macabebe, Pampanga. She attended Maranatha Christian Academy of Manila for primary school and Jesus Mary Joseph Montessori School in Macabebe, Pampanga, for secondary education. There she excelled in performing arts and graduated with top honors.

Her academic journey led her to Centro Escolar University, where she initially pursued a B.S. in Business Administration Management with a specialization in Service Management for BPO (2015–2016). Following her passion, she transferred to the Lyceum of the Philippines University, focusing on B.S. in Business Administration with a major in Marketing Management (2016–2017).

In 2020, she embarked on a transformative path at the University of the Philippines-Open University, diving deep into multimedia studies. She discovered her love for multimedia, particularly podcasting and voice recording, and is aspiring to empower and inspire others through these creative mediums.

## **Acknowledgement**

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## **Abstract**

Many learning institutions have integrated podcasting into the teaching of their courses. However, despite its growing utilization as a teaching and learning tool, studies on its efficacy and acceptance among distance eLearners remain largely unexplored. This paper investigated the acceptance of podcasting as a learning tool among undergraduate distance eLearners at the University of the Philippines Open University. Using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework, the study assessed the students' attitudes toward podcasting's impact on distance education, focusing on its perceived advantages, disadvantages, engagement factors, ease of use, and usefulness. It employed a quantitative research design and utilized survey methodology. Forty-four (44) students in the Multimedia Studies program participated in the study. The structured, self-administered questionnaire, available online and distributed via group chats and Facebook pages, was used to collect data. Results revealed that students view podcasting as a flexible and accessible tool that enhances learning and offers benefits such as intellectual stimulation, convenience, and accessibility. However, there are also some challenges, which include the absence of visual content and dependence on internet connectivity. Suggestions for improvement include enhanced audio quality in podcasts, more engaging content, and interactive features. The study also revealed that podcasting is well-accepted by the participants, with the majority of them agreeing that podcasts are both useful and easy to use for academic purposes. These insights are valuable for educators and content developers seeking to optimize podcasting as a learning tool and provide a foundation for further research and practical application in distance education.

**Keywords:** distance education, podcasting, technology acceptance model, TAM, eLearning, learner engagement, distance eLearners, multimedia studies

## I. INTRODUCTION

### **Background of the Study**

Distance education has revolutionized the way individuals access higher education, offering unprecedented flexibility and accessibility to learners around the globe. (Moore & Kearsley, 2012). With the rapid advancement of digital technologies, institutions and educators continually seek innovative methods to enhance the learning experience of distance learners and provide effective learning tools. (Simonson, et al., n.d.). One such technology with promising potential is podcasting.

Podcasting has emerged as a viable medium for delivering educational content to learners, especially those who are geographically dispersed or have limited time to study. Its audio-based format offers flexibility and convenience, enabling learners to access instructional materials anytime and anywhere while using less data or bandwidth than video materials.

The University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU), recognized as a leading institution in open and distance education within the country, advocates for the utilization of technology-enhanced learning methods that can provide educational opportunities to a wide range of students, including those who may not be catered to by traditional educational systems (UP Media and Public Relations Office, 2020). Through its UPOU Networks platform ([networks.upou.edu.ph](http://networks.upou.edu.ph)), the university offers free access to a wealth of multimedia resources, including podcasts, aimed at enriching learning experiences. Topics covered include the following: health, ASEAN culture, environment, public management, ICT for education, cyber security, thesis writing, and data privacy, among others. Aside from these UPOU-produced

podcasts, some courses also incorporate publicly available open educational resource podcasts when necessary or appropriate.

As the popularity of podcasting in academia grows, it becomes essential to investigate its acceptance and efficacy as a learning tool, particularly among distance eLearners. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework developed by Fred Davis in the late 1980s provides a theoretical lens for understanding individuals' acceptance and adoption of new technologies. Central to TAM are two primary constructs: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) (Davis, 1989).

Perceived usefulness refers to the degree to which individuals believe that a particular technology will enhance their performance or productivity, while perceived ease of use refers to the extent to which a person perceives a technology as easy to use (Davis, 1989).

Ultimately, leveraging TAM can help educators and institutions tailor strategies to enhance the integration and effectiveness of podcasting in distance learning environments, eventually contributing to improved educational experiences for learners.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the growing utilization of podcasting as a tool for teaching and learning in distance education, a significant gap remains in understanding the level of acceptance among distance eLearners.

This study sought to provide insights into the acceptance of podcasting among distance eLearners and offer recommendations for optimizing its use as a learning tool in distance education contexts.

Specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of podcasting as a learning tool, as experienced by distance eLearners?
2. What are the factors that contribute to making podcasting interesting and engaging to distance eLearners, and conversely, what factors or challenges deter them from using podcasts?
3. What is the level of perceived usefulness of podcasting among distance eLearners for academic purposes?
4. What is the level of perceived ease of use of podcasting for academic purposes among distance eLearners?
5. What are the students' suggestions on how to further improve the development and production of podcasts for use in teaching and learning?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To know the advantages and disadvantages of podcasting as a tool for teaching and learning as experienced by distance eLearners.
2. To identify the elements that contribute to making podcasting interesting and engaging for distance eLearners, as well as the factors that deter students from using podcasts as a tool for teaching and learning.

3. To assess the perceived usefulness of podcasting among distance eLearners for academic purposes as perceived through the lens of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).
4. To investigate distance eLearners' perceptions of the ease of using podcasting for academic purposes.
5. To provide recommendations for optimizing the use of podcasting as a tool for teaching and learning in distance education contexts, based on the findings of the study.

### **Significance of the Study**

While there is existing international research on podcasting acceptance, studies of such in the Philippines are notably scarce, particularly concerning the relationship between podcasting and distance learning as well as students' acceptance of this medium. Given that cultural and environmental contexts can vary between countries, research findings from other nations may not fully reflect the situation in the Philippines. Therefore, conducting this research study would help bridge these knowledge gaps specific to the Philippine context. By generating insights into how podcasting is perceived and accepted in the local educational landscape, it will enrich our understanding of podcasting's role in distance learning within the Philippine context.

Furthermore, the findings of the study will offer valuable guidance to educators and producers of podcast-based instructional resources in the Philippines. Understanding students' acceptance of podcasting and its potential benefits and challenges can help educators and producers tailor their approaches to create podcasts that effectively facilitate learning.

## **Limitations of the Study**

The participants of the study are distance eLearners at UP Open University under the Bachelor of Arts in Multimedia Studies, belonging to Batch 2020 and 2021. Thirty percent of the total population of these two batches, who are still enrolled in the degree program by the 2nd semester of 2023-2024, served as the target respondents. As they have been in the university longer, they were assumed to have more exposure to listening to podcasts for their studies. The result of this study may only be true for these batches of students. However, the results of the study can offer valuable insights, laying the groundwork for future research on the topic.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The growing popularity of podcasting has spurred numerous research studies on its effectiveness in distance education as well as learners' perceptions and acceptance of podcasting as a tool for learning.

Smith (2019) investigated the impact of incorporating podcasting into online courses on students' engagement and motivation in distance learning environments. The study found that students who had access to podcasts showed higher levels of engagement and motivation compared to those who did not have access. Podcasts were found to be effective in delivering course content and enhancing student learning experiences in online courses.

Jones (2020) explored students' perceptions regarding the usefulness, challenges, and impact of podcasts in distance education settings. The study revealed that students perceived podcasts as valuable tools for learning. They cited benefits such as increased accessibility to course materials, enhanced engagement, and flexibility in learning delivery.

Similarly, Patel (2018) investigated students' perceptions of podcasting in online education, revealing positive attitudes towards its convenience and accessibility for distance learning purposes. The study found that students appreciated the flexibility of podcasting as a learning tool, allowing them to access course materials anytime, anywhere. Podcasts were perceived as effective supplements to traditional course materials, enhancing the overall learning experience for online students.

These results collectively suggest that podcasting holds promise as an effective tool for distance education, offering benefits such as increased engagement, improved

learning outcomes, and enhanced accessibility to course materials.

While the aforementioned research underscores the benefits of integrating podcasts into distance education, it is likewise imperative to acknowledge associated criticisms and areas for improvement.

Khechine, Lakhali and Pascot (2013) identified technical challenges, including difficulties in podcast creation or downloading due to the varying internet speeds of students. Another concern was the lack of social interaction, with students feeling isolated. Additionally, students found some podcasts overly lengthy and unengaging.

In response to these, educators can provide troubleshooting guidance and optimize podcast files for easier downloading. Exploring alternative content delivery methods can enhance accessibility for students with diverse internet speeds. Promoting social interaction through discussion forums and live Q&A sessions fosters engagement and a sense of community. Shortening podcast episodes and incorporating interactive elements tailored to course objectives can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. By addressing these challenges, educators can harness the full potential of podcasts to enrich distance education experiences.

## **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

### **Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**

This study utilized the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). TAM provides a theoretical framework for understanding and predicting users' acceptance and adoption of technology. Developed by Fred Davis in the late 1980s, TAM has been widely used in various fields, including education, to examine individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards technology adoption. (Davis, 1989).

TAM has the following key components:

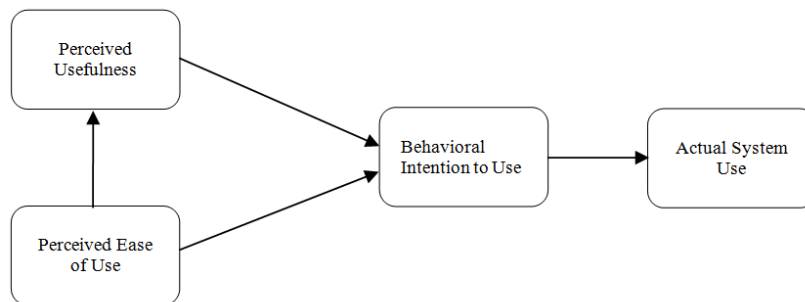


Figure 1. Fred David's Technology Acceptance Model (as adapted by Habibian Naeini, Fatemeh, and BalaKrishnam, 2012).

**Perceived Usefulness (PU):** This refers to the degree to which a person believes that using a particular technology will enhance his or her performance or productivity in achieving specific goals. In the context of podcasting as a tool for teaching and learning, distance eLearners' perceptions of the usefulness of podcasts for accessing course materials, lectures, and supplementary resources will influence their acceptance of this technology.

**Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU):** Perceived ease of use refers to the extent to which a person believes that using a technology will be free from effort or cognitive strain. It encompasses factors such as ease of learning to use the technology, clarity of instructions, and user interface design. Distance eLearners' perceptions of the ease of accessing and navigating podcasting platforms, as well as the usability of podcasting tools, will impact their acceptance of podcasting as a tool for learning.

**Behavioral Intention (BI):** Behavioral intention represents the willingness or inclination to use a technology based on an individual's perception of its usefulness and ease of use. According to TAM, behavioral intention is a direct determinant of

actual technology usage behavior. In the context of this study, distance eLearners' intentions to use podcasting for academic purposes will be influenced by their perceived usefulness and ease of use of podcasting technology.

**Actual Use (AU):** This refers to the extent to which individuals engage in the real-world use of a technology. It is influenced by factors such as intention to use, external factors, and contextual variables. In the context of podcasting as a tool for learning, actual use would involve distance eLearners accessing and utilizing podcasted lectures, course materials, tutorials, and other educational resources.

In the study examining distance eLearners' acceptance of podcasting as a tool for learning, TAM provides a theoretical framework for investigating the factors influencing distance eLearners' attitudes and behaviours towards podcasting adoption (Davis, 1989). By assessing distance eLearners' perceptions of the usefulness and ease of use of podcasting, as well as their behavioural intentions and actual usage behavior, the researcher can gain insights into the acceptance and utilization of podcasting technology in distance education contexts. This understanding can inform strategies for promoting the effective integration of podcasting into distance learning environments and improving the overall learning experience for distance eLearners.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of podcasting (independent variables) can positively influence distance eLearners' acceptance of podcasting (dependent variable). Distance eLearners who perceive podcasting as beneficial and easy to use are more likely to accept and adopt it for academic purposes.

Additionally, the advantages and disadvantages of podcasting and the level of engagement with podcasting (independent variables) may moderate the relationship between perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and acceptance of podcasting. For example, distance eLearners who perceive more advantages and fewer disadvantages of podcasting and who are more engaged with podcast content may exhibit higher levels of acceptance of podcasting.

### **Operational Definition of Terms**

Further definitions of the following terms are provided operationally:

**Podcasting:** For the purpose of this study, podcasting refers to the creation, distribution, and consumption of audio content over the internet, typically in the form of episodic series that can be downloaded or streamed on various devices. In the context of tools for learning, podcasting encompasses the use of audio-based materials for delivering course content, lectures, and supplementary resources to distance eLearners.

**Distance eLearners:** These are individuals enrolled in educational programs that are delivered remotely, typically through online platforms, without the need for physical presence in a traditional classroom setting. In this study, distance eLearners specifically refer to students enrolled in the Multimedia Studies undergraduate degree program offered by UPOU.

**Acceptance:** In the context of this study, it refers to the willingness of distance eLearners to utilize podcasting as a tool for learning. It encompasses factors such as attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and intentions related to the use of podcasting for accessing educational content.

**Perception:** This refers to the way in which distance eLearners interpret and make sense of podcasting as a tool for learning. It includes their subjective views, beliefs, and understandings of the benefits, drawbacks, and relevance of podcasting in their learning experience.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

This study employed a quantitative research design. Quantitative research is a methodological approach used to systematically collect and analyze numerical data to investigate relationships, patterns, and trends within a population or sample (Creswell, 2009). It involves the use of structured surveys to gather quantifiable data, which can then be analyzed using statistical techniques to draw conclusions and make generalizations about the population being studied (Neuman, 2013).

#### **Data Collection Tool**

A structured questionnaire was developed to gather insights from distance eLearners regarding their acceptance of podcasting as a learning tool. Data collection was conducted through an online, self-administered questionnaire distributed to participants who voluntarily agreed to take part in the study. Before the main survey, the questionnaire was pre-tested with two BAMS students from the same batch. The feedback obtained from the pre-testing was used as a guide to refine and improve the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into multiple sections to address various aspects of the research objectives. The first section includes demographic questions to gather information about participants' backgrounds, such as name, age, educational level, and prior experience with podcasting. These demographic variables provide valuable context for analyzing the survey responses and identifying potential patterns or trends among different participant groups.

The second section includes multiple-choice questions with options and reasons related to the advantages and disadvantages of podcasting. This section aims to capture distance eLearners' perspectives on the benefits and drawbacks of using podcasts for educational purposes. Additionally, options were provided to further know the elements that encourage or discourage learners when listening to podcasts, allowing for a nuanced understanding of their experiences.

Following this, another section was developed to collect information regarding their perception of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) constructs: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), using Likert-scale statements. This section aims to gauge learners' attitudes towards the usefulness and ease of use of podcasting technology in the context of learning. By employing the TAM framework, the questionnaire can assess the factors influencing distance eLearners' acceptance of podcasting.

Overall, the questionnaire was designed to elicit comprehensive feedback from distance eLearners, allowing for a thorough exploration of podcasting as a learning tool. By incorporating a mix of multiple-choice questions and Likert scale items, the questionnaire tried to capture a wide range of perspectives while ensuring ease of completion for participants.

### **Sampling Procedure**

This study used the non-probability sampling method, specifically volunteer sampling, an approach where the participants are chosen based on their willingness to contribute their thoughts and experiences and are qualified to participate in the survey (Murairwa, 2015).

## **Respondents of the Study**

The respondents of the study are students in the Bachelor of Arts in Multimedia Studies degree program enrolled in the second semester of 2023-2024 and belonging to batches 2020 and 2021. They were chosen as respondents because it is believed that since they have been in the university for three to four years, they have been exposed and have used podcasts as learning materials. Thirty percent (30%), or 70 individuals out of the 232 enrolled students, are the target respondents. However, since participation in the survey was based on voluntary sampling, only the 44 respondents who agreed to participate were included in the study.

This response rate, while lower than initially anticipated, still provides valuable insights into the acceptance of podcasting as a learning tool among distance eLearners. The voluntary nature of participation ensured that the data collected reflected the genuine perspectives of those who were interested and willing to share their experiences. Despite the smaller sample size, the data gathered from these 44 respondents was analyzed to identify trends and patterns that could inform future research and implementation strategies for podcasting in educational contexts.

## **Data Gathering Procedure**

A digital advertisement was created to invite participation and call for responses. This advertisement highlights the qualifications of the respondents and emphasizes the importance of their input to encourage survey participation.

To maximize the reach and effectiveness of the digital advertisement, it was strategically shared across relevant online communities frequented by the target respondents. The advertisement was designed to be visually appealing and

informative, providing clear instructions on how to participate in the study. This approach aimed to increase visibility and engagement, ensuring that the invitation to participate reached as many eligible students as possible.

The survey questionnaire was distributed via Facebook Messenger using Google Forms. Respondents received a digital invitation and message inviting them to complete the survey, along with a link and QR code to access the questionnaire. Likewise, reminder messages were sent to encourage participation and ensure a higher response rate. These messages include a deadline for completing the questionnaire. Responses collected from the survey were compiled and stored securely for analysis. To ensure confidentiality and privacy, responses were anonymized. Response rates were monitored, and any issues or concerns raised by respondents were addressed promptly.

### **Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using frequency or count measures alongside percentages. Participants' perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of podcasting as a tool for learning were evaluated using the Likert scale.

In analyzing the Likert scale, the researcher used the following weights:

- Strongly Agree (SA) = 5
- Agree (A) = 4
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (N) = 3
- Disagree (D) = 2
- Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1

Likert scale mean results were interpreted according to the following range:

- Mean result = 4.21 - 5.00 = SA
- Mean result = 3.41 - 4.20 = A
- Mean result = 2.61 - 3.40 = N
- Mean result = 1.81 - 2.60 = D
- Mean result = 1 - 1.80 = SD

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Research Participants' Demographic Characteristics

Forty-four (44) respondents participated in the survey. Of these, forty (40) respondents (90.9%) are from the BAMS batch of 2020, while four (4) respondents (9.1%) are from batch 2021. Most participants are between 20 and 25 years old (95.4%). The oldest respondent is 41 years old (2.3%). [Table 1]

**Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

Demographic characteristics	Number	%
<b>Batch</b>		
2020	40	90.9
2021	4	9.1
<b>Age</b>		
20	2	4.5
21	7	15.9
22	22	50
23	5	11.4
24	2	4.5
25	4	9.1
27	1	2.3
41	1	2.3

### 4.2 Research Participant's Access to and Use of Podcasts

Podcasts are a prevalent learning resource among the research participants. A significant majority (88.6%) of participants reported using podcasts as learning material in their courses, while (11.4%) indicated that they had not utilized podcasts.

[Table 2]

**Table 2. Participants' Use of Podcasts as Learning Material**

Learning Material	Number	%
Yes	39	88.6
No	5	11.4

Understanding the primary devices participants use to access podcasts provides valuable insights into their technological preferences for learning. Most of the respondents (68.2%) use laptops and desktop computers to access and listen to podcasts. Mobile phones are also significant, with (20.5%) opting for this portable option. Four respondents (9.1%) indicated that they have not yet used podcasts as learning material. [Table 3]

**Table 3. Participants' Primary ICT Devices for Listening to Podcasts**

ICT Device	Number	%
Laptop/Desktop Computer	30	68.2
Mobile Phone	9	20.5
No	4	9.1
Tablet	1	2.3

Understanding the internet connectivity choices of participants in accessing podcasts reveals varying preferences. The majority of the respondents utilize Wifi (90.9%), followed by a small percentage using cable (4.5%). [Table 4]

**Table 4. Participants' Internet Connectivity Preferences for Podcast Listening**

Internet Connection	Number	%
Wifi	40	90.9
Cable	2	4.5

Mobile Data	1	2.3
Don't Use Podcasts	1	2.3

When asked about technical experiences encountered when listening to podcasts, respondents reported frequent issues with "internet connectivity," including "slow internet," "buffering," and "signal loss." Many mentioned problems with "audio quality," such as "muffled voices," "background noise," and "poor sound." Issues with "incomplete downloads" and "corrupted files" were common. There were also difficulties in "navigating segments" and instances of "lagging."

#### **4.3 Research Participants' Experiences and Challenges in Course-Required Podcast Production**

Thirty-eight (38) students (86.4%) reported having produced a podcast as a course requirement, while six (6) students (13.6%) indicated they had not. [Table 5]

**Table 5. Podcast as a Course Requirement**

<b>Course requirement</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	38	86.4
No	6	13.6

When producing podcasts, there are several things that can be challenging. These challenges are listed in Table 6.

**Table 6. Challenges Encountered by Participants During Podcast Production**

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of place/space appropriate for podcast recording	30	35.29

Lack of equipment to use	17	20
Difficulty in writing a script	15	17.65
Lack of application/software to use	10	11.76
Lack of skills needed	9	10.59
Others	4	4.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>a</sup>Multiple responses

Since audio quality is very important, more than one-third (35.29%) of the respondents cited lack of place or appropriate space as the main challenge in podcast production.

In the 'Others' section, four (4) research participants specified their challenges as follows: noise, time constraints for a group activity to create a podcast, lack of training in speaking, specifically proper delivery and intonation, and time consumption, especially in post-production of the audio.

#### **4.4 Participants' Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Podcasting for Learning**

Students were asked to select multiple responses regarding their perceived advantages and disadvantages of using podcasts for learning. Their responses were categorized according to themes. [Table 7 and Table 8]

**Table 7. Participants' Perceived Advantages of Using Podcasting for Learning<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Advantage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b><i>Flexibility</i></b>	139	51.9

<i>Enable personalized learning experiences. The learners can control the pace and timing of their learning, they can pause, rewind, or replay, they can listen to the learning material anytime, anywhere (36)</i>		
<i>A convenient alternative to reading text-based materials (35)</i>		
<i>Allows a learner to do other things while listening to podcasts, such as doing household chores, exercising, or commuting (35)</i>		
<i>Portable, making them easy to carry and access on-the-go. (33)</i>		
<b>Intellectually Stimulating</b>	75	28
<i>Enhances active listening skills, including comprehension, critical thinking, and analysis (30)</i>		
<i>Makes learning enjoyable and stimulating (29)</i>		
<i>Aids in information retention and memory consolidation (16)</i>		
<b>Accessibility</b>	54	20.1
<i>Inclusive for students with disabilities, as many podcasts offer accessibility features such as transcripts, captions, or audio descriptions (29)</i>		
<i>Cost-effective compared to purchasing physical textbooks (25)</i>		
<b>Total</b>	268	100

<sup>a</sup>Multiple responses

The study participants perceived flexibility (51.9%) as the best advantage of using podcasts for learning, citing that they can control the pace and timing of their learning. Likewise, they found that it is intellectually stimulating (28%), saying that it enhances their listening skills, comprehension, and critical thinking. These findings

echo similar insights drawn from a respected source. According to Recordings & Recordings (2024), podcasts stimulate listeners intellectually through audio, improving memory retention and comprehension. Additionally, podcasts are easily accessible, providing a wealth of knowledge at listeners' fingertips. They serve as flexible educational tools, broadening learning possibilities and converting spare moments into productive learning opportunities.

**Table 8. Participants' Perceived Disadvantages of Using Podcasting for Learning<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Disadvantage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b><i>Non-visual Content Limitations</i></b>	114	52.29
<i>Lacks visual components (38)</i>		
<i>Learners with hearing impairments will be at a disadvantage - no transcript or subtitle are given as alternative (31)</i>		
<i>Challenging to navigate and review compared to written materials (26)</i>		
<i>Lacks the structured format found in traditional educational resources such as textbooks or online courses (19)</i>		
<b><i>Dependency on Connection / ICT</i></b>	55	25.23
<i>Technical issues such as poor audio quality and buffering or connectivity issues (32)</i>		
<i>Limited or no access to ICT (23)</i>		
<b><i>Learning challenges and limited interaction</i></b>	49	22.48
<i>Noisy or distracting environment can hinder concentration and comprehension (28)</i>		
<i>Does not allow real-time interaction with teachers and classmates (16)</i>		
<i>Feelings of isolation (5)</i>		

<b>Total</b>	213	100
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<sup>a</sup>Multiple responses

The respondents identified non-visual content limitations (52.29%) as the biggest downside of podcast use. The absence of visual components can make it difficult for visual learners to grasp complex concepts and navigate the material. This is followed by dependency on connection/ICT (25.23%). Technical issues, such as poor audio quality and buffering, along with limited access to technology, can disrupt the learning experience. Finally, learning challenges and limited interaction (22.48%) include feelings of isolation, difficulties in noisy environments, and the lack of real-time interaction with teachers and classmates, which can further impact the effectiveness of learning through podcasts.

#### **4.5 Participants' Suggestions to Make Podcasts Engaging and Motivating as a Learning Material**

Participants' insights into enhancing podcast engagement and motivation underscore key elements crucial for creating impactful content. Knowing that audio quality is of utmost importance, they stressed the need for clear audio and professional editing (12.39%) to ensure high-quality content delivery. Likewise, they emphasized the importance of enthusiastic and knowledgeable speakers (11.76%). Structured content with smooth transitions (10.88%) and the use of engaging stories and real-life examples (10.58%) were also highlighted as crucial for maintaining listener interest. Additionally, participants advocated for clear and concise content delivery (10%) and the incorporation of interactive features like quizzes and interviews (5.29%) to actively engage listeners. [Table 9]

**Table 9. Participants’ Suggestions to Make Podcasts Engaging and Motivating<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Ensure clear audio and editing	42	12.39
Consider hosting podcasts with enthusiastic and knowledgeable speakers	40	11.76
Use clear structure and transitions	37	10.88
Use engaging stories and real-life situations	36	10.58
Ensure accessibility on all devices	35	10.29
Deliver clear, concise content.	34	10
Use language that is easy to understand and explain technical terms.	34	10
Add appropriate music and sound effect	23	6.76
Prompt listener engagement	22	6.47
Start with clear objectives	19	5.58
Incorporate interactive features like quizzes, polls, or interviews	18	5.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>a</sup>Multiple responses

#### **4.6 Participants’ Description of Disengaging and Demotivating Podcast**

Participants were also asked to identify factors that usually make a podcast disengaging and demotivating [Table 10]. These include poor audio quality (15.5%), unenthusiastic podcast hosts (14.02%), excessively long episodes (13.30%), overly technical material (12.23%), disorganized content (10.79%), accessibility issues (10.07%), and a lack of engagement prompts (7.19%). These underscore the

importance of addressing audio quality, host enthusiasm, content structure, and engagement strategies to enhance listener engagement and maintain motivation throughout podcast episodes.

**Table 10. Participants’ Descriptions of a Disengaging and Demotivating Podcast<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Poor audio quality	42	15.5
Unenthusiastic podcast hosts	39	14.02
Excessively long episodes	37	13.30
Repetitive content	34	12.23
Overly technical content	34	12.23
Disorganized podcasts	30	10.79
Not easily accessible	28	10.07
Lacks engagement prompts	20	7.19
Lack of listener engagement	13	4.67
Requires active listening	1	0.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>a</sup>Multiple responses

#### **4.7 Participants’ Preferred Learning Material**

Regarding the preferred learning material, a great majority (70.5%) of the participants chose video materials, followed by podcasts (22.7%) [Table 11]. These preferences highlight a strong inclination towards video materials, with podcasts also being favored by a notable portion. Understanding these preferences can aid in tailoring educational content to better meet participant expectations and enhance learning outcomes.

**Table 11. Participants' Preferred Learning Material**

<b>Learning Material</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Video material	31	70.5
Podcast	10	22.7
No Preference	3	6.8

The preference for videos was driven by their visual and auditory engagement. As one participant noted, *"I am a visual learner, and video materials already have an audio incorporated in it."* Videos were also valued for maintaining focus, with comments such as, *"I get distracted easily with just a podcast. I would want visuals and captions to fully be engaged in a lesson."*

However, podcasts were appreciated for their flexibility, allowing multitasking as mentioned by one participant: *"Podcasts enable efficient multitasking. I can easily tackle household chores while absorbing school lessons through audio."*

Those with no specific preference indicated that both formats could be effective depending on the context, with one stating, *"Both materials work depending on the content; some topics are better suited to visuals, while others are fine with just audio."* This reflects a balanced view, where the choice of material often depends on the nature of the content and the eLearner's specific needs.

#### **4.8 Participants' Perceived Usefulness and Ease of Use of Podcast**

Six statements were used to gauge participants' perceptions of the usefulness of podcasts using Likert-scale analysis. Five out of the six statements had mean scores ranging from 3.63 to 4.02, indicating that participants generally agreed that podcasts are useful and easy to use for distance learning purposes. [Table 12]

**Table 12: Research Participants' Perceived Usefulness (PU) of Podcasting**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<i>Using podcast helps me learn topic/s included in my course</i>	3.97	Agree
<i>Using podcast makes it easier to study the course content</i>	3.63	Agree
<i>Using podcast makes it easier to learn via distance learning</i>	3.88	Agree
<i>Using podcast helps me organize my learning</i>	3.25	Neither Agree nor Disagree
<i>Using podcast is easy for my learning</i>	4.02	Agree
<i>Overall, I think that using podcast is useful in my studies</i>	4.02	Agree

Six statements were likewise presented to assess participants' perceptions of the ease of using podcasts. The mean scores for these statements ranged from 3.70 to 4.27, indicating that participants generally found podcasts easy to use for learning. Most participants agreed, or strongly agreed, that podcasts are user-friendly and flexible for educational purposes.

**Table 13: Participants' Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) of Podcasting**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<i>It is easy for me to learn using a podcast</i>	3.70	Agree
<i>Using podcast for learning is easy for me</i>	3.77	Agree
<i>I find podcast easy to use</i>	4.25	Agree
<i>Learning how to use a podcast is easy for me</i>	4.27	Strongly Agree

<i>I find podcast flexible to use for studying</i>	4.02	Agree
<i>Overall, podcast is easy to use</i>	4.27	Strongly Agree

## V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary

The study investigated the effectiveness and acceptance of podcasting as a distance learning tool in the Bachelor of Arts in Multimedia Studies program at the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU). Through an analysis of 44 student participants' responses to an online questionnaire, the research aimed to explore the advantages and disadvantages of podcasting, identify factors that make podcasting engaging or demotivating, assess its level of perceived usefulness and ease of use, and provide recommendations for optimizing its application in educational contexts.

Key findings reveal the following:

1. Podcasts offer significant advantages, such as flexibility, intellectual stimulation, and accessibility. These benefits contribute to accommodating diverse learning styles and schedules, enhancing engagement and learning outcomes. Despite these advantages, challenges were identified, including non-visual content limitations, dependence on internet connectivity, and limited interactions. These factors can detract from the overall effectiveness of podcasts.
2. Factors contributing to engaging podcasts include high-quality audio production, enthusiastic and knowledgeable speakers, and well-structured content. Conversely, poor audio quality, unenthusiastic podcast hosts, and excessively long episodes were noted as deterrents. Addressing these challenges is essential for improving podcast-based learning.

3. Regarding the level of perceived usefulness, participants generally agreed that podcasts are useful in their studies and can make learning via distance education more productive and easier.
4. Students' perception of the ease of use of podcasts was generally positive. They strongly agreed that learning how to use podcasts is easy. Likewise, they agreed that podcasts are user-friendly and flexible to use for studying.
5. Recommendations for improvement emphasize the need for better audio quality, clearer and more engaging content, and enhanced production values. The study also found that podcasts are generally well-accepted by participants, who consider them both useful and easy to use for academic purposes.

### **Conclusion**

Podcasting, as perceived by the respondents of this study, has proven to be an effective educational tool for distance learning, particularly in the context of UPOU's multimedia studies program. The flexibility and accessibility offered by podcasts support varied learning styles and schedules, contributing positively to student engagement and learning outcomes. However, to fully harness the potential of podcasts, it is essential to address the technical and content-related challenges identified by students. Enhancing audio quality, ensuring the relevance and clarity of content, and improving production standards are crucial steps toward optimizing the use of podcasts in education. By focusing on these areas, educators can better leverage podcasting to enrich the distance eLearning experience and support student success.

## Recommendations

The following are best practices that can serve as guidelines to further maximize the effectiveness of using podcast tools for learning:

1. **Define Clear Learning Objectives:** Establishing clear and specific learning objectives for each podcast can ensure that the content is aligned with educational goals, thereby enhancing the learning experiences of students and making the material more targeted.
2. **Promote Intellectual Stimulation:** Since podcasts are appreciated for their intellectual stimulation, it is recommended to create engaging and thought-provoking content. The inclusion of interactive elements such as quizzes, polls, or interviews can further enhance listener involvement and engagement, thereby improving active listening skills, information retention, and the overall enjoyment of the learning experience.
3. **Enhance Audio Quality and Content Structure:** Participants emphasized the importance of clear audio and well-organized content. To address this, invest in high-quality microphones and recording equipment and ensure careful editing to minimize background noise. This will provide a clear and professional listening experience that supports effective learning.
4. **Maintain Conciseness and Focus:** Data revealed that concise, focused episodes are more effective in maintaining listener attention. Keeping podcasts brief and concentrated on essential information helps avoid listener fatigue and ensures that key points are delivered efficiently.
5. **Enhance Flexibility and Accessibility Features:** Given the value participants place on flexibility and accessibility, it is recommended to

incorporate features that allow users to pause, rewind, or replay podcast content. Additionally, integrating accessibility options such as transcripts, captions, and audio descriptions will better support diverse learning needs and improve the overall user experience.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Consent Form**

Welcome to the survey on "Distance eLearners' Acceptance of Podcasting as a Tool for Learning." This study aims to provide insights into the acceptance of podcasting among distance eLearners and offer recommendations for optimizing its use as a tool for teaching and learning in distance education. With the growing popularity of podcasting, especially in distance education settings, it is essential to understand how learners perceive this technology and its effectiveness in enhancing their learning experiences.

Your participation in this survey is crucial, as it will help us identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in the integration of podcasts into distance learning environments. Your feedback will contribute to the development of strategies to enhance the use of podcasts as an effective tool for learning.

Rest assured that all responses will be kept confidential and anonymized. Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw from the survey at any time. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research study. Your input is highly valued and appreciated.

Answering this survey is voluntary. When you answer the survey, it will mean that you have given consent to use your anonymized data for research. Rest assured that you will not be identified in any way and will remain anonymous. If you do not wish to proceed, you can simply exit this online survey site.

Yes, I hereby give my consent to voluntarily participate and answer the survey.

No, I do not give my consent and answer the survey.

## APPENDIX B

### Survey for Distance eLearners' Acceptance of Podcasting as a Tool for Learning

<b>Demographics</b>
Name (Optional)
Age:
BAMS Batch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BAMS: Batch 2020</li><li>• BAMS: Batch 2021</li></ul>
<b>What is a Podcast?</b>
Youtube: Digital Learning at Grant Wood AEA
As a distance eLearner, have you used podcasts as a learning material in any of your courses? Yes No
If yes, what device do you usually use when listening to a podcast? No Laptop/desktop computer Mobile phone Tablet Other, please specify:
What internet connectivity do you use when you access a podcast? Wifi Broadband DSL Cable Mobile data
What technical experiences do you encounter when listening to a podcast?:
Have you produced a podcast as a course requirement? Yes No
If yes, what challenges/issues have you encountered during the production? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No</li><li>• Difficulty in writing a script appropriate for a podcast</li><li>• Lack of equipment to use</li><li>• Lack of place/space appropriate for podcast recording</li><li>• Lack of application/software to use for production</li><li>• Lack of skills needed to produce a podcast</li><li>• Other, please specify:</li></ul>

### **Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Podcasting for Learning**

What are the advantages you see in using podcasts for learning? (Select all that apply)

- Podcasts offer flexible learning opportunities that enable personalized learning experiences. The learners can control the pace and timing of their learning, they can pause, rewind, or replay, they can listen to the learning material anytime, anywhere
- Podcast is a convenient alternative to reading text-based materials
- Engaging podcasts makes learning enjoyable and stimulating
- Podcast allows a learner to do other things while listening to podcasts, such as doing household chores, exercising, or commuting
- Podcasts are cost-effective compared to purchasing physical textbooks
- Enhances students' active listening skills, including comprehension, critical thinking, and analysis
- Inclusive for students with disabilities, as many podcasts offer accessibility features such as transcripts, captions, or audio descriptions
- Aids in information retention and memory consolidation
- Podcasts are portable, making them easy to carry and access on-the-go. Since it can be downloadable, offline listening is possible, learners can continue studying even without internet access
- Other, please specify:

What are the disadvantages you see in using podcasts for studying? (Select all that apply)

- Podcast lacks visual components, which may make it difficult for visual learners to grasp complex concepts
- Learners may encounter technical issues while listening to podcast such as poor audio quality and buffering or connectivity issues
- Podcast does not allow real-time interaction with teachers and classmates
- Listening to podcasts alone may contribute to feelings of isolation, especially for learners who thrive on social interaction
- Can be challenging to navigate and review compared to written materials
- May lack the structured format found in traditional educational resources such as textbooks or online courses
- Listening to podcasts in a noisy or distracting environment can hinder concentration and comprehension
- Accessibility issues may exist since not all students may have access to the technology or internet connection required to listen to podcasts
- Learners with hearing impairments will be at a disadvantage if podcast will be used alone -- no transcript or subtitle are given as alternative
- Other, please specify:

### **Factors that can make Educational Podcast Interesting and Motivating as a Learning Material**

What factors do you think make educational podcasts engaging and motivating for learning? Please choose as many as applicable.

- Has host/s who is/are enthusiastic and knowledgeable
- Has a good technical quality, i.e., - clear audio and professionally edited
- Has an organized structure and well-written content (clear sections and smooth transitions) making the audio instructions easy to understand and follow
- Has music and/or sound effects that add depth to the learning material and enhance the learner's listening experience
- Podcasts that start with a roadmap or explanation of the content of the podcast or learning objectives of the material
- Has engaging content that uses stories, examples, and real-life situations
- Has interactive features such as quizzes, polls, or interviews
- Delivers information in a clear, concise, and easily digestible manner
- Language use is easy to understand. If there are jargons used, appropriate explanations are included in the podcast
- Provides engagement prompts throughout the episode, such as thought-provoking questions, reflection prompts, or calls to action
- Easily accessible on multiple platforms and devices, such as smartphones, tablets, and computers
- Other, please specify

**What factors do you think make educational podcasts disengaging and demotivating for learning?** Please choose as many as applicable.

- Low-quality audio, including issues like background noise, distortion, or inconsistent volume levels
- Podcast hosts who lack enthusiasm or speak in a monotone or dull manner
- Excessively long episodes
- Podcasts with unclear or chaotic structures, such as disorganized storytelling or rambling discussions
- Having content that is overly complex or technical, using jargon or terminology that is difficult to understand
- Lacks interactive elements or opportunities for listener engagement, such as quizzes, polls, or discussions
- Lacks variety in content, format or delivery style, becoming repetitive and predictable
- Fails to include engagement prompts or calls to action throughout the episode, such as reflection questions or challenges
- Not easily accessible on common platforms or devices, such as smartphones or tablets
- Other, please specify:

Which would you prefer to use as learning material?

- Podcast
- Video material
- No Preference

What is/are the reason/s for your answer in the previous question?

**Podcast usefulness and ease of use (Likert Scale)**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the perceived usefulness of podcasting in distance learning:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Using podcast helps me learn topic/s included in my course					
Using podcast makes it easier to study the course content					
Using podcast makes it easier to learn via distance learning					
Using podcast helps me organize my learning					
Using podcast is useful to my learning					
Overall, I think that using podcasts is useful in my studies					

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the perceived ease of use (PEOU) of podcasting in distance learning:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It is easy for me to learn using a podcast					
Using podcast for learning is easy for me					

I find podcast easy to use					
Learning how to use a podcast is easy for me					
I find podcast flexible to use for studying					
Overall, podcast is easy to use					