Learning Management System (LMS) schoology: Why it’s important and what it looks like

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Abstract. E-learning becomes one of the concepts deriving learning management system (LMS) which is designed to identify the gaps in teaching learning process, analyzing and reporting the data received automatically. One of the upgrading platforms of this learning management system recently is Schoology. It serves collaborative blended learning units which is form used in revolution 4.0 era. In investigating the reason of why Schoology is important and try to dig more information of its look, interview and documentation are applied in this research to be described clearly. Two teachers from one of the private universities in Cirebon are willing to participate in this research. By its interactive features that Schoology has, it changes teacher’s perspective to be a must using Schoology since it allows teachers to collaborate not only with their students, but also with other teachers, coaches, and parents. Four aspects of features involve content delivery, test and quizzes, discussion, and video viewing/ link sources which allowed teachers sharing material discussed with students, searching new article with other teachers, and grading students test result, quizzes and attendance offered by Schoology as the reason of both teachers that Schoology should be one of learning management system conducted.

1. Introduction
What is Learning Management System (LMS)? Learning management system (LMS) is a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting and delivery of educational courses, training programs, or learning and development programs [1]. Learning management system derives from e-learning based. Since the internet grows up rapidly in 1992, it changes people’s mindset in controlling their life as easy as holding the world in their hand. It involves changing education system in the world. One of them is the upgrading online system in educational program or e-learning as the based concept of LMS in 1990 [2].

So, why it is LMS? It is designed to identify teaching learning gaps, analyzing and reporting the data automatically. As it is e-learning, it focuses on delivering material or sources both asynchronous based and synchronous based. The appearance of LMS is so vary, one of them is Computer-assisted Learning (CAL). Learning management system allows teacher brings everyone together in one platform, which means that it is not only teacher and students who join the platform, instead, parents, coaches, and administrators could join in it. Schoology, google site, and Wix are examples of those platforms that can be implemented in supporting e-learning, which is in termed of blended learning. While Wijayanti utilizing LMS includes schoology, Learnboos, Edmodo, Moodle and Etc [3]. So, it is not a must
attending a class for studying anymore because teaching learning process can be implemented by using an online system. Both teacher and students could interact each other without attending in a same room or class, yet, they could keep discussing the material as it is. In supporting online teaching learning process, teacher could choose many advanced digital media, applications or learning management system whether it is free or paid accessing. Its tool has each advantage and disadvantage. Then, it is a must for teacher to select the appropriate learning management system in advancing learning outcome, such as, creating an interactive learning which can be easy and accessible for students to learn anywhere and anytime.

One of platform that the writers focus on this writing is Schoology. Schoology is a revolutionary learning management system (LMS) and social networking tool which make the user is easy to create and disseminate their academic project. As stated, before that it serves collaborative blended learning experience to make an efficient conventional teaching learning process.

Then, why it is important to dig its platform used is one of the aims of this writing. The writers need to analyses its factors why it is important to implement Schoology as the focus of the writing and try to describe what it looks like since its usage has every tool needed in a classroom and it is integrated with more than 200 tools, student information systems (SIS) and other education platforms, such as google drive, skyward, OneDrive, Aeries, Brain Pop, etc. Besides, it has twenty million users and counting plus sixty thousand schools using this LMS.

Based on the user reviews taken from Finance online showed that Schoology provides a more engaging and instructive learning environment. They add that it could change their education better with its great and highly effective learning platform which is flexible, fully-featured and fun features. It involves advanced analytics, align content to common core and state standards, automate grading system and performance-based analytics, automatically updating online grading system, calendars, messaging, and personal/shared content, centralize online educational activity, collaboration-based interface, create custom applications, curriculum management, global community for sharing resources, instructor tools for course creation and management, open-access integration platform, resource sharing center and instructors, Schoology mobile apps, seamlessly integrate third-party programs, student information systems integration, transform classroom courses into a 1:1 and webpage creation tools.

Through its varied features, Schoology offers some benefits such as empowers instructors with dynamic course creation and management tools, a global community for sharing best practices and resources, and comprehensive analytics for free. Moreover, since it is flexible, it connected interface facilitates unique curriculum management. Utilizing standards-compatible content creation, sharing, and tracking, the platform provides in-depth oversight that allows for greater attention toward meeting student needs and improving student outcomes. Still, Schoology’s Global Learning Community provides access to resources, best practices, professional development, and personal experiences from local as well as international instructors. Also, Schoology offers an automatically updating online grading system and performance-based analytics that instructors can use to get the important data needed to tailor lessons for a more effective education. In addition, Schoology’s Resource Center and Groups allow users to collaborate with other instructors in a local-to-global community. They can share instructional methods, personal experiences, resources and more to help each other improve instruction. Eskridge said that Schoology does not just benefit students. It allows us to provide online and blended PD for teachers while giving them a private community to build their professional skills [4]. It also allows for many creative applications of learning like building personal learning communities for students. The last benefit offered is Schoology’s mobile apps not only provide important classroom management abilities with mobile freedom, they can easily transform any course into a 1:1, fully engaged experience with little cost by investing in mobile technologies or holding BYOD days.

Based on the description delivered above, it comes to the writers’ goals doing this writing which focused on digging information from the teacher as the participant about their reason why Schoology is important for them in teaching learning process. Besides, this writing would explore what Schoology looks like.
2. Methodology
Interview and documentation are the appropriate one in digging the important data relate to the aim of this research to be described deeply [5]. Two teachers of one private universities in Cirebon who are in charge using Schoology as the learning management system in supporting their teaching process are offered some questions. Meanwhile, in getting the data of the look like of Schoology, documentation is the suitable tool applied in this research.

3. Result and discussion
Before using any application or other platforms in teaching learning process, teacher should know well how its usage, advantages and disadvantages, and why it is important for teacher as the user. In gaining the information of it, interview was conducted to the two teachers as the participant in this research. Some questions delivered in a form of open interview to get deep data in answering the question. The first thing that the teachers impressed during accessing Schoology is the easiness features offered by this platform. It is in line to what Suana et al. said that Schoology is the based tools which everyone can use easily and freely as social media like a Facebook [6]. Moreover, they stated that Schoology becomes an important LMS for teachers because it could improve their participation by giving opinion, comment which show feedback for the students, and it automatically improve their writing during discussion session as in Figure.1. It showed how teacher and students collaborate in discussion of the material discussed. In this feature, both teacher and students could share their idea by giving comment, opinion by clicking Reply or Like if they agree to what students or teacher comment.

![Figure 1. Sample of teacher’s feedback in comment.](image)

In other feature, Schoology is an effective tool which can be used to show video without any comment or related video offered by YouTube or any ads. Of course, it avoided any searching un relevant source by students. Besides, teachers argued that Schoology has an efficient feature which they can share their link account to students safely as Figure.2. This feature used to share link whether it is video or article which support blended learning given by the teacher. By attaching link to this feature, students only focus on what the teacher shared and of course it avoided any un relevant sources.
Figure 2. Sample of share link.

It is in line to what Red Clay Google account mentioned. Something that make Schoology is important for teacher is, they could deliver enrichment, remediation or self-paced lessons as it is form of blended learning units which is a part of education system in Revolution 4.0. Furthermore, they stated that Schoology is helpful in organizing the test and quizzes result. It is supported by Karlin et al. said that Schoology, although not specifically designed for the creation of e-portfolios, did have a collaborative component [7]. This allowed students to share and comment on each other’s work and turned out to be one of the highlights of the tool. It is as mentioned by Karlin et al. that Schoology is a free learning management system that can be used to create an interactive online environment for students [7]. Within the Schoology ecosystem, students can work on and submit assignments, receive feedback, and collaborate with peers. It is the fastest tool in getting feedback and automatic grading, so it makes the teachers’ time more efficient to give assignment, comments or reflection. Of course, it is more efficient one than traditional assignment that should be written in a paper. Besides it belongs to go green activity, paper less, it also helps teacher in collecting, saving data and grading. In addition, differentiated assessments given anonymously as in Figure 3. It figures out how well management of Schoology is. That is why the teachers claimed that Schoology helps them in grading the students whether it is about students’ attendance, score of quizzes, test result and their participation during blended learning. All are in one great program.
Those are the description given by the teacher why Schoology is important. As what described before that teacher could collaborate not only with their students but also with other teacher, coach, and specially parents. They could share idea, resources or create teams or clubs etc. which could be integrated with other web tools into instruction as in Figure.4. Of course, it really helps teacher doing their activity in teaching learning process in a blended learning system that is not a must for now doing discussion in classroom, because it provides best practices for use, monitoring, and cyber-safety for K-12. Besides, it provides teacher in finding related sources for preparing the material, discussing with related group, upgrading their knowledge from the updating issue shared by other teachers in group, and the most valuable is the teacher could discuss and share of their students with parents.
It is also important to note that the use of Schoology is still limited. It includes its feature. Teachers still focus on some features only as stated by Karlin et al. that the affordances that are gained from the implementation of Schoology has only begun to be recognized in recent years [7]. In addition, this LMS, particularly at the K-12 level, is still somewhat limited [8-10], however, given their growing popularity and potential benefits, there is a need to explore and reflect upon the practical implementation of these tools within the field.

4. Conclusion
Finally, the writer found the importance of Schoology based on what the teachers explained refers to four features involve content delivery, test and quizzes, discussion, and video viewing/ link sources which allowed teachers to collaborate with students, other teachers, coach, and parents. It is also supported by its look that shows an interactive blended learning by giving and sharing idea, comment and feedback of the material or sources given by the teacher. Moreover, the teacher could manage the result of teaching learning process automatically by its system. At last, the teacher could interact with other teachers, or parents collaboratively.

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