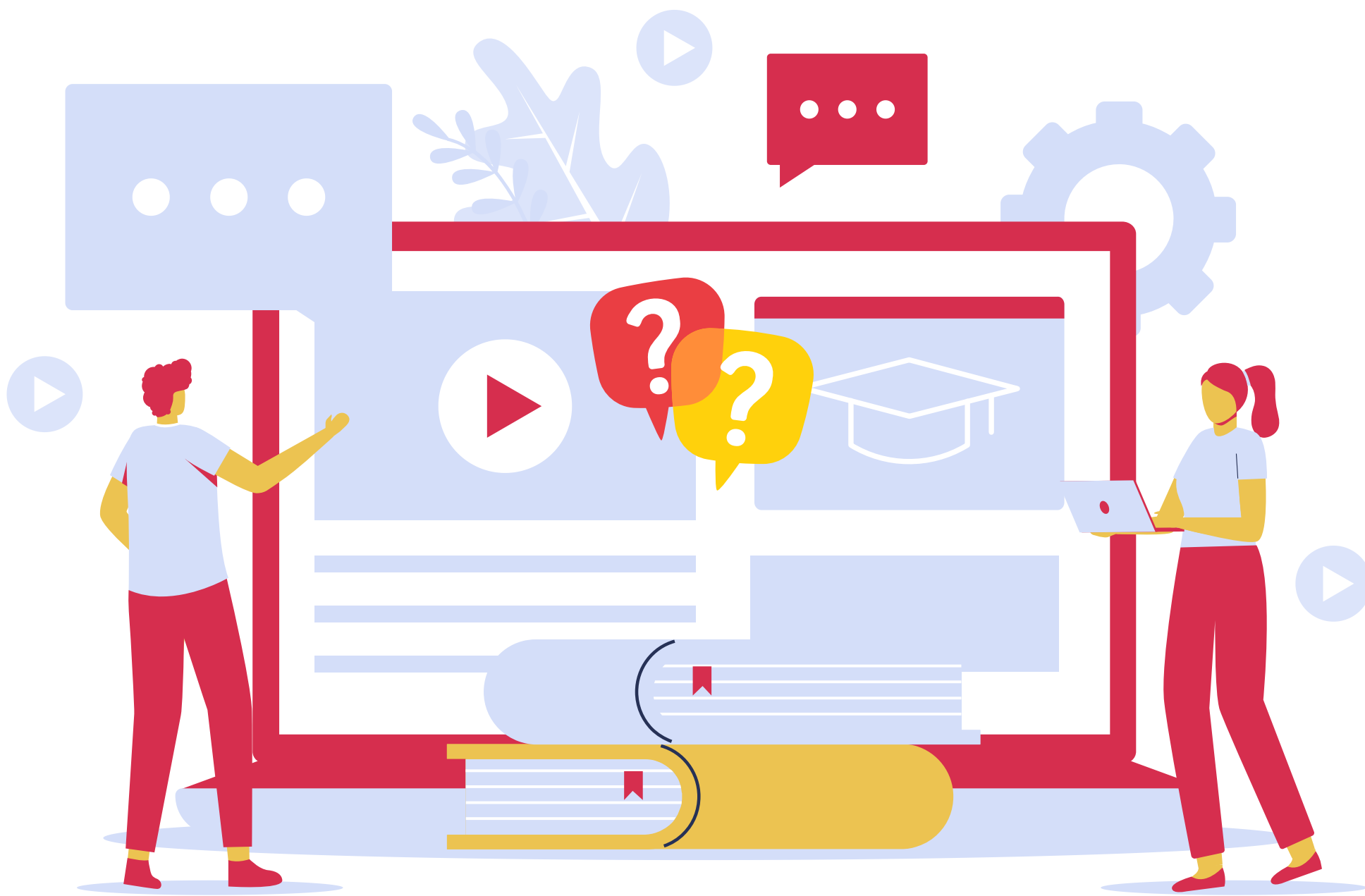


Breaking the Cycle: Rethinking LMS Adoption in African Universities

Introduction

- **Global Importance:** Learning Management Systems (LMS) are essential for scalable and flexible learning in higher education worldwide [1].
- **Local Barriers:** Its use in African universities is often hindered by a narrow focus on technical implementation[2].
- **Neglected Dimensions:** Pedagogical and institutional factors are frequently overlooked.
- **Design Mismatch:** Most LMS platforms are built for well-resourced, stable environments.
- **Contextual Challenges:** Infrastructure limitations and local contexts reduce LMS effectiveness.
- **Cycle of Abandonment:** Repeated patterns of adoption, underuse, and abandonment are common.
- **Need for Contextual Solutions:** Understanding the factors that contribute to limited use is key to developing relevant strategies.



Problem Statement



- Problem: LMS platforms in African universities are repeatedly adopted and abandoned due to structural neglect and poor contextual fit.
- Existing Solutions: Focus on technical deployment, using platforms built for high-resource settings, ignoring local realities.

Aim

- Develop a context-adaptive LMS framework for sustainable digital learning in African university clusters.

Research Questions

- What contextual variables influence LMS adoption and use in African universities?
- Are these variables unique to African contexts or shared with other under-resourced global settings?
- What institutional change processes are necessary to support sustainable and resilient online learning environments?

We address this using a mixed-method: 1. Systematic Literature Review 2. Quantitative and 3. Qualitative methods

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Findings from Literature

Contextual variables that influence LMS adoption in African universities.

- **Technical Factors:** Infrastructure, maintenance challenges, ease of use/usability of the system
- **Pedagogical Factors:** Training gaps, misalignment with teaching, course quality, curriculum design, learner motivation
- **Institutional Factors:** Policy, funding, staff participation, management approaches, evaluation
- **Socio-economic Factors:** Student access to technology, digital literacy, language barriers, and socio-economic disparities
- **Human Factors (Users):** Low computer literacy [3], technology anxiety, resistance to change, high lecturer workload, attitudes & perceptions
- **System/Platform Quality:** Customization, usability issues

Methods

	Mixed Methods
	Quantitative Survey:
	• Target: 50–300 accredited universities across 5 African countries • Sampling: Stratified random sampling for diversity
	Qualitative Case Studies:
	• Five purposively selected universities (1 per country) • Varying LMS maturity and resource levels
	Participants:
	• IT managers, LMS administrators, academic staff, institutional designers
	Data Collection:
	• Online surveys • Semi-structured interviews
	Data Analysis:
	• Thematic coding guided by constructivist grounded theory • Cross-case synthesis of patterns and divergences

Expected Contribution

The study will identify key factors influencing LMS adoption in African universities and explore future perspectives. The insights will guide the development of a sustainable LMS framework to promote inclusive digital learning across diverse higher education institutions and practices on the continent.

Conclusion

LMS adoption in African universities continues to face persistent challenges, often due to a mismatch between imported systems and local realities. This study aims to move beyond technical fixes and offer practical, future-oriented strategies that are grounded in the lived experiences of African educators and learners.

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