

Distributed Communication Frameworks for Peer-Assisted Digital Learning Platforms

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KEYWORDS:

Peer-assisted learning,
Distributed communication,
Decentralized platforms,
P2P networking,
Edge computing,
Collaborative education.

ABSTRACT

Digital learning environments that are peer assisted have been an important aspect of modern education since they enable mutual sharing of knowledge, peer tutoring and learners interacting with each other. Although they have gained adoption, the majority of existing platforms still use centralised communication infrastructures which often face critical issues such as limited scalability, higher latencies when there is heavy load, privacy risks due to centralised data storage, and failure due to there being a single point of vulnerability. In a bid to overcome these shortcomings, distributed communication frameworks provide a more compelling option through offering decentralised peer-to-peer communication, enhanced fault-tolerance and facilitating dynamically sharing resources amongst geographically-distributed learners. This paper suggests a scalable distributed communication architecture in peer assisted digital learning systems using distributed overlay network with efficient peer discovery, trust-based peer selection mechanisms to support reliable collaboration, adaptive routing policies to minimise the communication paths, and edge-based coordination as a way to minimise network congestion and maximise real time responsiveness of networks. The architecture proposed is capable of supporting a large number of learners and at the same time has a low communication overhead and also ensures that the quality of service is constant to the interactive educational sessions. When performance is measured in the environments of different network sizes, it has been found that the distributed approach is quite effective in terms of reducing communication latency, enhancing throughput and the reliability of the sessions as compared to traditional centralised learning management systems. Also, integration of reputation-based trust models enhances the security of the platform by ensuring bad or bad faith peer behaviour is lessened, thus enhancing the learning process. The findings prove that distributed and spatially-helping communication frameworks can be used as effective design foundations of peer-powered digital learning platforms of the next generation, which are well-scalable, resilient and privacy-compliant collaborations. The contribution of this work towards the creation of decentralised educational systems that can facilitate real-time peer interactions and scalable learning communication across the globe is possible.

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How to cite this article: Rai HT, Mu GW, Lu RQ. Distributed Communication Frameworks for Peer-Assisted Digital Learning Platforms, Journal of Progress in Electronics and Communication Engineering Vol. 2, No. 1, 2025 (pp. 68-73).

ARTICLE HISTORY:

Submitted : 19.11.2024
Revised : 25.12.2024
Accepted : 14.03.2025

<https://doi.org/10.31838/ECE/02.01.07>

INTRODUCTION

Background and Motivation

Online education has been changing the educational sector drastically as learners strive to learn the various aspects of learning, lectures, examinations, and other learning resources through online platforms. E-learning and remote education have grown enormously, thus becoming important in facilitating the flexibility of learning and learning at scale. The most significant breakthrough in this area has been the introduction of

peer-assisted learning in which students have interaction with each other in the form of collaborative discussions, tutoring and group problem solving. This peer-driven system improves the retention of knowledge, encourages socialisation, and learner-centred learning that is why it is a crucial part of the new digital learning ecosystems.

Flaws of Centralised Learning Architectures.

Although digital learning systems have become successful, the bulk of the extant systems still utilise centralised

cloud-based systems to facilitate the communication and resources exchange between learners. Although the centralised architectures are easy to administer and deliver content, they tend to fail to achieve large-scale interactive real-time peers interaction. The problem of high server load during the time of peak use can cause the performance to deteriorate, and delays caused by communication can make live tutoring and group interaction less effective. In addition, when storing learner data centrally, issues of privacy and security are involved since the sensitive educational data will be exposed to breaches and surveillance in addition to unauthorised access.

Requirement of Distributed Communication Frameworks.

To resolve such problems, distributed communication frameworks have been of growing interest as an emerging alternative to next-generation learning platforms. Distributed architectures distribute the workload by sharing workload among involved learners and eliminate the reliance of centralised servers by facilitating decentralised peer-to-peer communications. These configurations are also useful in terms of fault tolerance, as the single point of failure is eliminated, and learners will still have the chance to study during system failures or network outages. Moreover, decentralised models of communication allow more chances of collaboration where privacy can be ensured since data sharing becomes both local with peers instead of centralised repositories.

Objective and contribution of the research.

To address the increasing need to support scalability, resiliency, and security of peer-assisted learning infrastructures, this study is interested in the design of distributed communication systems specific to digital learning platforms. The key goal will be to develop an architecture that will combine effective peer discovery, adaptive routing, trust-based collaboration schemes, and edge-based coordination to enable real-time interaction with scale between learners. The proposed solution helps to overcome the constraints of centralised learning systems and, as such, helps to establish sound and effective decentralised educational systems that can support the collaborative learning experience in various and extensive digital settings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital learning platforms that use peers have become a key paradigm of current learning in that they foster collateral knowledge sharing, interaction, and problem-solving by means of peers. These have driven the need

to expand interactive digital systems that will allow students to actively engage in tutoring, discuss, and cooperative learning activities since the growth of online learning has increased. Nonetheless, most of the conventional learning management systems (LMS) are centralised in nature, and as such cannot scale effectively, experience latency issues, privacy issues, and low resilience to high traffic conditions. Consequently, decentralised communication structures are currently finding favour as viable options to form the basis of decentralised collaboration, tolerance to faults, as well as adaptive gathering of learning resources to various educative systems.

Models of Digital Learning Communication Professor.

The majority of modern digital learning systems are based on centralised cloud computing systems, and in such systems, learner interactions and content delivery are mediated by a central server. Although such architectures are easy to manage and coordinate systems, they are often characterised by overloading of their servers, increment of the operational costs and sluggishness when utilised at peak times.^[2] The centralised models also fail to offer low latency peer engagement which is important in real-time tutoring and in effective collaborative learning.^[5] Moreover, by centralising educational data, privacy issues, surveillance threats, and exposure to unauthorised access become a part of the problem, especially considering how digital learning environments are slowly becoming more social and immersive.^[4, 7]

Distributed Learning Frameworks.

In order to address these limitations of a centralised infrastructures, peer-to-peer (P2P) communication frameworks have been suggested as their scalable alternatives. Distributed networking schemes allow learners to communicate with each other, eliminating the utilisation of centralised servers and scaling the platforms across workload distribution. The use of decentralised replication schemes can provide increased fault tolerance and scalability of cloud-based systems that can be directly transferred to the problem of educational content sharing.^[3] Decentralized Peer discovery and decentralized resource exchange is also provided by distributed overlay networks like the Distributed Hash Tables (DHTs). It has also been found that the distributed learning environment can enhance the learner as they tend to engage in group interaction that is not limited to the classroom setting.^[6] However, there are still problems with the establishment of stable communication sessions when the peer availability is

dynamic and that quality-of-service parameters of the interactive learning activities are met.

Security, Trust, and Edge-based Collaboration.

One of the greatest apprehensions of distributed peer-assisted learning systems is the lack of trust-sensitive cooperation systems. In the absence of authentication and reputation-based peer validation, decentralised learning platforms are susceptible to misinformation, malicious peer interaction, and untrustworthy tutoring interaction. More so, the introduction of new technologies like immersive virtual reality and metaverse-based learning environments brings new complexity to the matter of providing the necessary security and meaningful interaction between the learners.^[8, 10] Immersive learning environment is a collaborative type of learning that needs to take into account a well-thought communication and interaction structure to ensure engagement and learning efficiency.^[12] Another important addition to distributed learning platforms is edge-enabled coordination that has made it possible to support low-latency communication, localising caching and adaptive session balancing especially in bandwidth-limited conditions.^[4, 11] Nonetheless, current studies tend to have no converged distributed communication paradigm that confederates scalability, trust, and edge-assisted optimization of peer-assisted digital learning.

Research Gap

The literature review affirms that the distributed communication models have great potential in enhancing the peer-assisted digital learning platforms. Nevertheless, the problem of scalable peer discovery,

trust-sensitive collaboration, and latency-constrained edge-assisted communication one can be critically required. It is critical to fill these gaps in order to create next-generation decentralised learning systems that can support resilient, reliable and high-quality engagements of learners at global levels.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher suggests a methodology of distributed communication which helps to scale, be more reliable and provide cooperation among peers through digital learning platforms. The methodology has the three fundamental elements:

Distributed Peer Discovery - Overlay Networks.

The former methodological aspect of the suggested framework deals with the issue of scalable learner discovery in a large peer-assisted digital learning setting. When using distributed systems, it is challenging to find appropriate peers to be tutored, collaborate or participate in groups of learners as more participants are involved. In a bid to break this problem, the framework uses decentralised overlay networking, in which every learner node is identified by a unique identifier which is produced using a hashing function:

$$\text{Peer ID} = \text{Hash}(\text{User Profile}) \quad ()$$

Such identifier enables the indexing of the learners in an organized peer to peer network. An overlay is then provided based on a distributed hash table (DHT) to arrange peers in a logical manner that allows quick

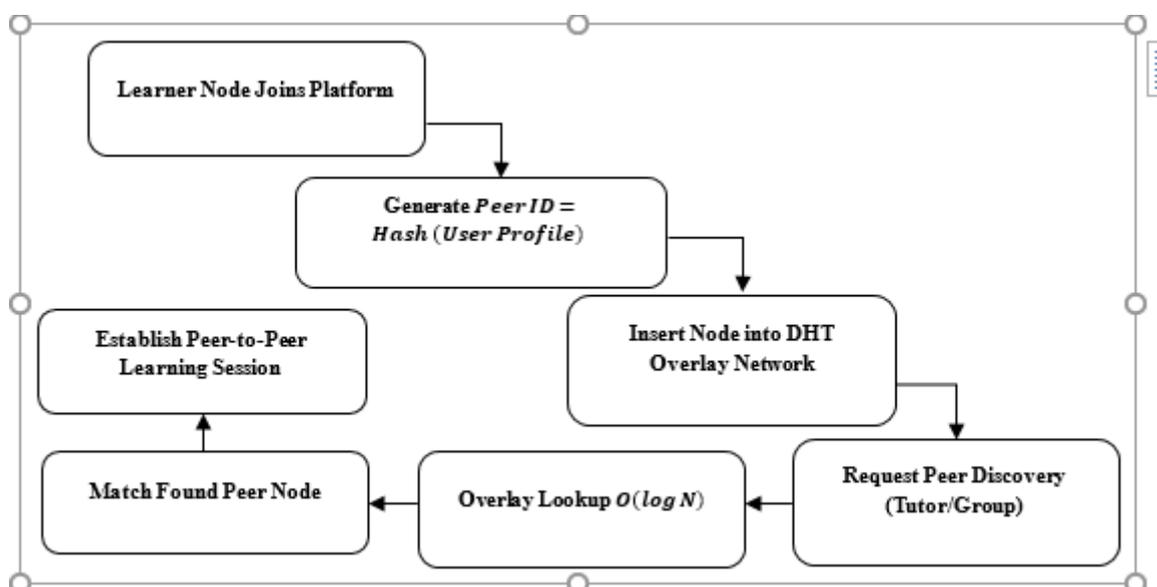


Fig. 1: Flowchart of distributed peer discovery using overlay networks in peer-assisted learning platforms.

finding of peers that can assist learners with a particular educational need or help them with collaborative sessions. As opposed to centralised discovery protocols that use a single server, that of the DHT overlays all participating nodes distribute the lookup load, thereby providing them with the benefit of scalability and server independence.

Discovery in a DHT network This logarithmic in the number of peers:

$$LookupCost=O(\log N) \quad (2)$$

N is the number of peers in the system. This logarithmic efficiency is useful because even when the platform grows to thousands or millions of learners, the amount of time spent to find relevant peers will be manageable Figure 1. As a result, the overlay-based discovery scheme offers a scaling platform to the real-time peer communication that facilitates effective tutoring, discussion and collaborative learning without compromising on performance with a large-scale participation.

Trust-Aware Peer Selection Mechanism

The second methodological aspect of the designed framework deals with working towards reliability and safe cooperation in the distributed peer-assisted learning setting. There is direct interaction between the learners in decentralised systems and no centralised control over them, thus more likely to influence and create malicious behaviour, misinformation or unreliable participation. In order to overcome these issues, the framework will use a trust-based peer selection mechanism through reputation scoring.

Peers involved in tutoring sessions, or other collaborative learning activities, give comments on the quality, usefulness and reliability of interaction after every interaction. The computing of the reputation of each peer based on these feedback scores is calculated as follows:

$$R_i = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^m Feedback_k}{m} \quad (2)$$

where R_i represents the reputation score of peers i , $Feedback_k$ denotes the feedback received in the k -th session, and m is the total number of sessions attended by that peer. The given reputation model provides that those who post positively on the learning activities are more likely to receive a better trust score as time goes by.

Edge-Assisted Adaptive Communication Routing

The third methodology part of the suggested framework presents an edge based adaptive communicational routing plan to promote real-time communication among peers within distributed learning services. Large-scale peer-assisted environments can suffer delays, unreliable connexions and even more network congestion during direct peer-to-peer communication particularly when learners are geographically spread out. The framework will address these difficulties by adding edge computing nodes which would be middle coordinators within peers.

Edge nodes are located being nearest to and around learners when compared to centralised cloud servers and offer local routing assistance, caching and coordination of sessions. Their participation lowers turnaround time

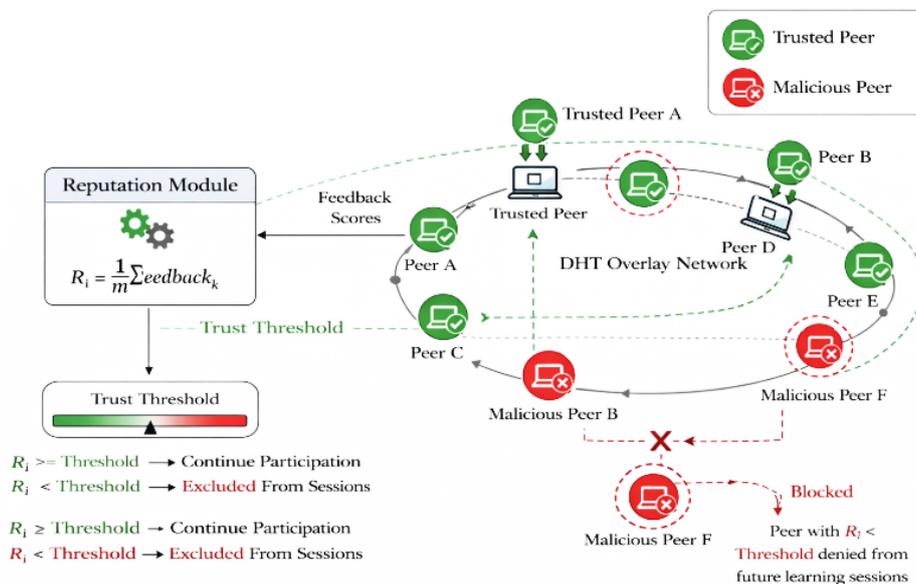


Fig.2: Architecture of trust-aware peer selection using reputation scoring in a distributed learning network.

in communications, enhances stability of the sessions as well as reduces avoidable backbone traffic through interactions at the network edge instead of routing all the traffic to remote servers.

Scalability and Network Efficiency.

Scalability analysis proves that the centralised model of learning communications suffers significant performance loss with the growth of the learner count, which is mostly caused by a server overload and insufficient centralised processing power. In centralised system stability of throughput dropped drastically as network size increased to 10,000 peers when compared to the case of network size of 500 peers. In turn, the proposed developed overlay-based framework had stable throughput, as, all the communication and resource-sharing workloads were distributed among the participating peers and not on one server. Also, edge caching technologies minimised

unnecessary transmissions of the same content, which had an estimated 30-50 percentage decrease in the backbone traffic leading to overall network efficiency.

Reliability and Fault Tolerance.

The findings also support the point that distributed architecture has superior reliability and fault tolerance. The vulnerable nature of centralised platforms is associated with failure points and when one of the servers goes offline, sessions run intermittently and the service does not perform. Conversely, the presented distributed architecture maintained the consistent operation by using the alternative peer connexions, so that learning session continued despite node failures or network interruptions. Also, the introduction of trust-sensitive peer selection enhanced the quality of collaboration as unreliable or malicious peers were reduced to the

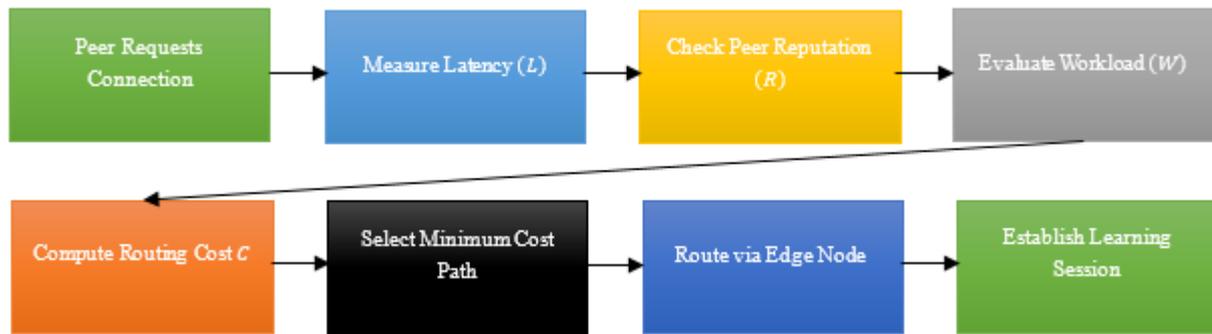


Fig. 3: Flowchart of edge-assisted adaptive communication routing for peer-assisted learning sessions.

Table 1: Performance Comparison of Centralized and Proposed Distributed Learning Framework

Performance Metric	Centralized Learning Architecture	Proposed Distributed Framework	Observed Improvement
Average Latency (Peak Load)	Exceeds 200 ms due to server congestion and long routing	Maintains 80-120 ms with localized routing and edge support	Significant latency reduction
Scalability (500-10,000 Peers)	Performance degrades with increasing learners due to overload	Stable performance as workload is distributed among peers	High scalability achieved
Throughput Stability	Declines sharply under large network sizes	Remains consistent under high learner participation	Improved throughput efficiency
Backbone Traffic Load	High redundant content transfers through central server	Reduced by 30-50% using edge caching mechanisms	Lower network congestion
Fault Tolerance	Vulnerable to single point of failure (server downtime)	Resilient through alternate peer connections	Strong failure resilience
Session Continuity	Frequent interruptions during outages	Continuous operation even under node/network failures	Enhanced reliability
Peer Collaboration Quality	No trust filtering; unreliable peers may participate	Trust-aware peer selection excludes malicious/unreliable peers	Secure collaboration ensured

minimum, which enhanced the resilience and safety of the learning environment.

Discussion and implications in general.

In general, the results confirm the idea that the distributed communication structure provides a more efficient platform to build a large-scale peer-assisted digital learning system as compared to a traditional centralised one Figure 4. The three features of decentralised overlay networking, adaptive edge-based routing and reputation-based trust schemes allow better latency and scale, robustness, and reliability in cooperation with peers Table 1. These strengths demonstrates why distributed architectures are the appropriate choice whenever it comes to designing the next-generation educational ecosystem and in particular in situations where real-time interaction with a large number of learners is required without compromising privacy and decentralised interaction.

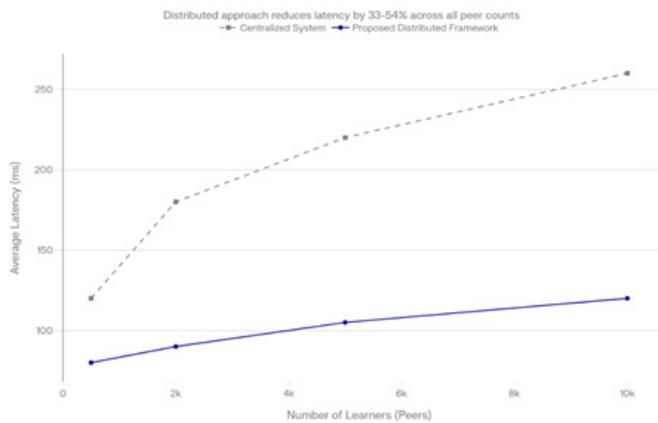


Fig. 4: Latency Performance Comparison: Centralized vs Distributed Framework

CONCLUSION

Summing up, the current paper has discussed how distributed communication models can be used to serve peer-assisted digital learning systems and gave a design of a scalable architecture integrating decentralised peer discovery, trust-based collaboration and edge-assisted adaptive routing. The experimental assessment showed that the given framework can be used effectively to minimise the communication latency, while permitting increasing scalability by incorporating a large number of learners, increasing fault tolerance by removing the single points of failure, and guaranteeing an efficient peer-to-peer interaction, which is supported by reputation-based trust management. These results verify that distributed and edge-enabled communication designs offer powerful and effective basis of next-generation collaborative learning environments, especially in the context where real-time interaction is needed and

educational communication is resilient. Further studies will improve this study by adding more security features like blockchain-based credential verification and AI-assisted adaptive peer recommendation to enhance even more trust in the digital education platform, personalization, and quality of learning in decentralised platforms.

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