

Implementation of Blended Learning in Classroom: A review paper

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Abstract- We live in a digitalized era where all the information's are just a touch away. Even our educational system is not untouched. So the need of hour is of modified learning environment which incorporates the benefits of traditional as well as modern learning. Thus the new concept of learning (Blended) arises. Blended environment is the best possible solution for meaningful learning.

In present paper authors glances the various studies and had summarised the findings and views of many of researcher under following headings: 1.Concept of Blended Learning 2.Characteristics of Blended Learning 3.Role of Teachers and Students in Blended Learning Classroom 4.Importance of Blended Learning and 5.Obstacles that are faced by the institutions for implementing it in regular classroom learning settings.

Index Terms- Blended Learning, Traditional Learning, Online Learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Blended learning as a learning program where more than one delivery mode is being used with the objective of optimizing the learning outcome and cost of program delivery (Singh & Reed 2001). The concept of blended learning is rooted in the idea that learning is not just a one-time event—learning is a continuous process. Blending provides various benefits over using any single learning delivery medium alone (Singh, 2003). In 2003, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) described blended learning in as *the integrated combination of traditional learning with web-based online approaches*. Blended Learning as optimizing achievement of learning objectives by applying the “right” personal learning technologies to watch the

“right” personal learning style to transfer the “right” skills to the “right” person at the “right” time (Singh 2003). Blended learning is a way of meeting the challenges of tailoring learning and development to the needs of individuals by integrating the innovative and technological advances offered by online learning with the interaction and participation offered in the best of traditional learning (Thorne, 2003). Dziuban, Hartman and Moskal (2004) describes Blended learning (BL) or hybrid learning a learning environment that either combines teaching methods, delivery methods, media formats or a mixture of all these. Blended learning brings traditional physical classes with elements of virtual education together (Finn & Bucci, 2004).

Blended learning is essentially traditional in class learning and supplemented by online activities and resources (Downes, 2008; Williams, 2002; Power, 2008; Stacey and Mackey, 2009). Blended Learning combines online delivery of educational content with the best features of classroom interaction and live instruction to personalise learning, allow thoughtful reflection, and differentiate instruction from student to student across a diverse group of learners. Blended learning should be viewed as a pedagogical approach that combines the effectiveness and socialisation opportunities of the classroom with the technologically enhanced active learning possibilities of the online environment, rather than a ratio of delivery modalities (The International Association for K-12 Online Learning, 2008) Blended learning can be defined as the combination of traditional method of learning and online learning. Traditional method includes face to face interaction with teachers. Here teacher is the active speaker where as in online learning students are centre of teaching and learning process to achieve curriculum diversity. Blended learning do not use any single learning delivery medium rather incorporates a wide range of learning opportunities like-online, face to face.

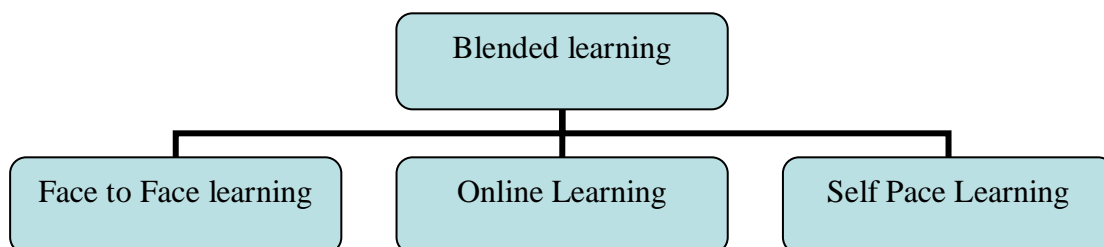


Figure: 1 Components of Blended Learning

It is the best way of facing the challenges in learning with its innovative technology and regular motivation by teachers in classroom. It's a two way process where teacher acts as facilitator for the students.

Characteristics of Blended Learning

Most common characteristics cited by Egbert & Hanson-Smith (1999)

- Learners have opportunities to interact socially and negotiate meaning.
- Learners have enough time and feedback.
- Learners are guided to attend mindfully to the learning process.
- Learners work in an atmosphere with an ideal stress/anxiety level.

Blended learning supports all the benefits of e-learning including cost reductions, time efficiency and location convenience for the learner as well as the essential one-on-one personal understanding and motivation that face to face instructions presents. (Brown, 2003; Rice, 2012; Yonge, 2014). Blended learning can help foster critical and reflective thinking (Garrison and Kanuka 2004). Northern Illinois University (2015) stated that blended learning is flexible, social atmosphere and reusable learning object.

Characteristics of blended learning can be summarized as cost effective, time saving and flexible. It also helps students to learn according to their pace and time. It is the combination of digital content and face to face content. In blended learning the learners have enough freedom for learning and time to time feedback is given by the teachers. It is the best way of interface between teacher and students.

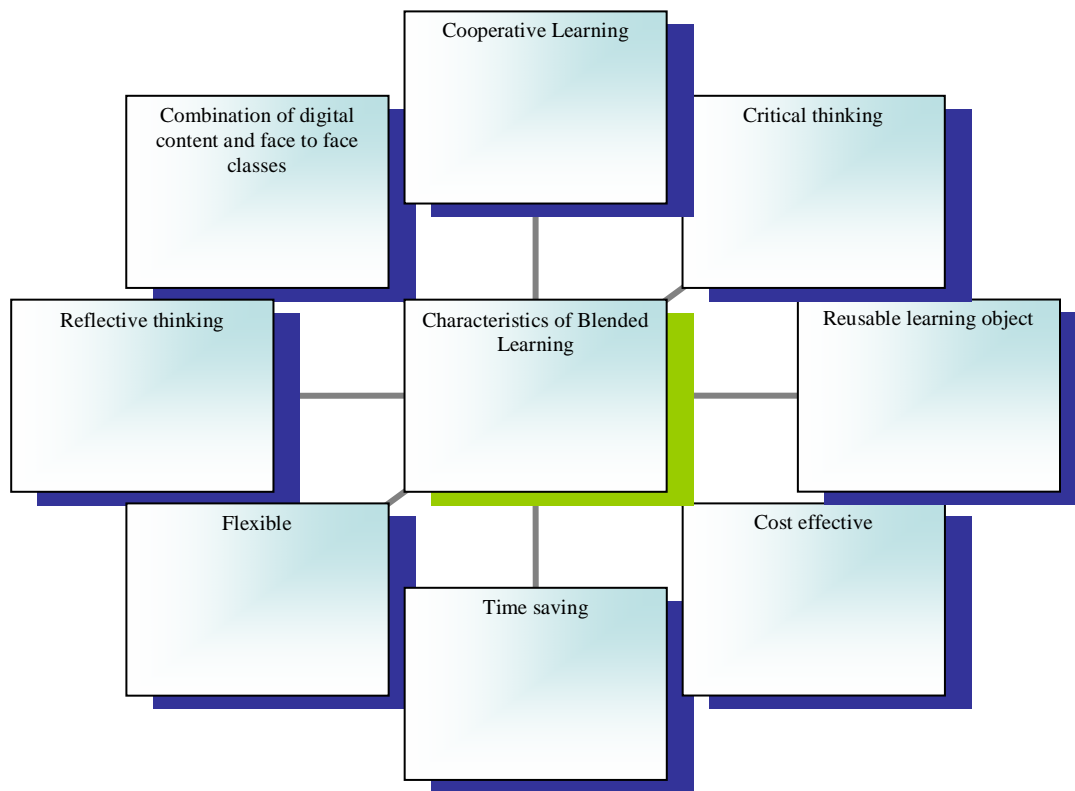


Figure: 2 Characteristics of Blended Learning

Blended learning develops cooperative feeling among students. The NPE (1986) had laid special emphasis on the special use of computer for improving quality of education.

Role of teachers and students in Blended Learning Classroom

Teacher should have depth knowledge about content so that they can teach various subjects. They should also be able to differentiate between various instructions based upon students need (Armes, 2012). Teachers must not only understand the content that is to be taught within the classroom but they must now have a depth of understanding that allows the content to be morphed into the delivery system allowing the student to take ownership in their learning process (Justis, 2012). Armes (2012)

emphasized on the student ability to integrate online information with their classroom content. Students should also be able to demonstrate through various aids as and when require. The teacher continues to encourage and motivate, guide and monitor progress, give feedback, boost confidence, and maintain motivation (Marsh, 2012). University of Western Sydney (2013) stated the role of student as need to understand what is expected of them and also the mandatory requirements for successful completion of the unit. Students need to be made aware that participation is important and necessary. Students must make use of good time management skills as blended courses require them to balance both online and face-to-face course activities. The teacher's role is to encourage each student group to come up with their own answers to the essential question or problem, teacher's

responsibility is also to help students set up the end of the lesson where they will do a quality presentation to real-world experts, defend their ideas, and then re-analyze what they have learned about the subject (Stanely, 2013). The role of the teacher has to be the motivating; organizing force to the integration of students' online and classroom learning (Northern Illinois University, 2015).

Teacher and student role are much interconnected. With the use of technology in teaching and learning process the student's participation has increased. Students in blended learning work as partner of teachers. Now the new role of teacher is of facilitator and guide. The basic requirement of students is to understand the unit of the subject so their participation is necessary. Thus teacher motivates students to increase their confidence so that they can develop critical thinking. Most important role played by the teacher is in keeping the students digitally safe.

Use of blended learning technology in classroom teaching and learning process is an innovative method. It combines the quality of both online learning and classroom method. It not only creates interest in learning through audio-visual aid but also develops better understanding and group feeling among student.

Importance of blended learning can be pointed as:

- Helps students to develop project and time management skills (Spika,2002)
- Integrate appropriate technology and managing it effectively throughout courses. (Wesson, McKenzie and Bangay, 2015)
- Cost benefits increased access to educational opportunities, flexibility of workforce deployment and so on. (A synthesis of research finding in Victorian education, 2006-2011)
- Opportunities to create course experience that are personal, relevant and engaging. (Wesson, McKenzie and Bangay, 2015)
- Support the provision of information and resources to students (Griffith institute for higher education, 2010)
- Engage and motivate students through interactivity and collaboration (Griffith institute for higher education, 2010)
- Synchronous technologies such as Skype and Elluminate Live! Allow students to communicate and collaborate outside of the classroom. (Joutsenvirta and Myyryan, 2010)
- Improved pedagogical practices (University News, Vol.52)
- Speedier performance was detected on real world task (Thomson, 2003)
- Ability to use web for the classroom has the potential to serve any student at any time, in any place (Jrffrey,2003)
- Develops stronger sense of community among students than either traditional or fully online courses (Rovai and Jordan, 2004)

In a study by Abel (2005) showed that institutions successful in online learning had compelling reasons to support such learning. Many of these institutional missions were to serve

working adult, who have a strong need for more flexibility in receiving effective instructions.

Blending technique is good to incorporate in teaching method still it is not free of disadvantages being faced by the educators and learners. In this technological era many people are unaware of the new techniques being used in world. Few sections of educators are not ready to change their conventional mode of teaching. Thus before the implementation of blended learning in regular classroom settings **few obstacles** need to be removed such as:

- Recruitment of teachers includes looking to effective teachers, who possess the potential to grow into new roles (Jackson, 2014)
- The fear of loss of control, lower student feedback grades and general uneasiness about the impact of online learning on classroom relationship should be considered (Vaughan,2007)
- Public school systems, in particular, are facing with obstacles related to technological availability, funding, and policy (D2L, 2014)
- Library and IT Help is primary contact point for assistance with computing and library services both on and off campus (Bath and Bourke, 2010).
- Using multiple computer systems on a course can also cause new problems. Students will be frustrated if they have to spend considerable amount of time just for learning the systems ((Joutsenvirta and Myyryan, 2010)
- Blended learning requires both the time and a willingness to learn new things (Yonge. 2014)
- Blended environment also adds additional scheduling and communication challenges as course meet both online and face to face (Kauts& Kauts, 2014)

Kant, K. (2014) have mentioned following limitation of blended learning:

1. Before a blended learning scenario can be considered ready for use, the lecture has to do long, detailed and extensive work.
2. Students sometimes feel that they are given more work to do when distance modalities are used.
3. The materials developed by the lecturers cannot simply be the same set that they had developed for handouts.

There is no doubt that the new technology used in teaching and learning process enhances the performance of students. It increases the collaboration among participants. More information can be gathered by using technology and sharing of information can be done not only within the campus but across the world. The flexibility and accessibility of the method make it more interesting and challenging. It provokes students to complete their task in given time.

Current generation of students are digital natives, they are born with the Internet network, and now they are experiencing the transition from the old to the new web-based technology, which is more participatory, more collaborative. The development of blended learning in the university system is still

at its initial stage. In the era of ICT the use of technology will not only creates a better learning but also connects students with outside world. Now there is a high time for countries to use technology in the field of education and let the students discover the knowledge of their choice.

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