

BLENDING LEARNING METHOD

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Abstract: *This article provides information of blended learning, Benefits of Blended Learning, and its types, Making Blended Learning Work*

Keywords: *education system, distance education system, Blended learning, online libraries*

ANNOTATION

Now, blended learning method has already established itself as one of the most important trends for 21st century education. a blend of classroom and web-based teaching and learning offers access to the widest range of learning modes and methods for developing student skills and expertise as learners. Many findings on blended learning show an increase in learners' ability to learn collaboratively, think creatively, study independently and tailor their own learning experiences to meet their individual needs.

INTRODUCTION

The simplest definition of the term blended learning is the use of traditional classroom teaching methods together with the use of online learning for the same students studying the same content in the same course. It is a "thoughtful fusion of face-to-face and online learning experiences". There are also blended programmes, in which students study some courses in face-to-face classrooms and other courses are delivered fully online. In other words, blended learning is a term applied to the practice of providing instruction and learning experiences through some combination of both face-to-face and technology-mediated learning.

METHODS

During the technology-mediated components of these learning experiences, students are not required to be physically together in one place but may be

connected digitally through online communities. For example, one blended learning course could involve students attending a class taught by a teacher in a traditional classroom setting while also completing online components of the course independently, outside of the classroom, on an online learning platform. However, in a quality blended learning experience, the content and activities of both in-person and online learning are integrated with one another and work toward the same learning outcomes with the same content.

Blended learning is sometimes called hybrid or mixed-mode learning. These systems of instructional design use many types of teaching and learning experiences and vary in design and implementation across teachers, programmes and schools. The potential variations of mixed-mode learning are virtually endless; a good way to get a sense of the range of possibilities is to consider some examples:

- In one school, a few teachers create mixed-mode delivery in their individual classrooms. In another, a whole programme chooses to make blended learning its choice of delivery for all students; all teachers work together to learn how to teach in a blended delivery system.

- Videorecorded lectures, live video and other digitally enabled learning opportunities can be a student's primary instructional interactions with other students and the teacher. In some cases, students may work independently on online lessons, projects and assignments at home or elsewhere, only periodically meeting with teachers to review their learning progress, discuss their work, ask questions or receive assistance with difficult concepts. In other cases, students may spend their entire day in a traditional school building, but they will spend more time working online and independently than they do receiving instruction from a teacher. Blended learning can be divided into three main models.



Figure 1. Models of blended learning

The first model, blended presentation and interaction, has classroom engagement as its primary component, with support from out-of-class, online exercises. The flipped classroom or flipped curriculum approach is a common example of this model, with students viewing podcasts or other online resources independently, followed by classroom-based tutorials or seminars for group learning based upon these resources. The second is the blended block model (sometimes called a programme flow model), in which a sequence of activities, or “blocks,” is structured to incorporate both face-to-face learning and online study, usually with consideration for both pedagogical goals and practical constraints. For example, a course for geographically distributed learners or working professionals may have limited opportunities for classroom-based learning and therefore begin with a block of intensive face-to-face sessions, followed by blocks of online study and collaboration through online tutorials, possibly followed by a further block of face-to-face learning or group presentations. The third model is fully online but may still be considered blended if it incorporates both synchronous learning (for example, online tutorials) and asynchronous activities (for example, discussion forums). Thus, blended learning covers one or more of the following three situations:

- Combining instructional modalities (or delivery media).
- Combining instructional methods.
- Combining online and face-to-face instruction.

Table 1. Three models of blended learning

MODEL 1	MODEL 2	MODEL 3
Blended presentation and interaction Activity-focused face-to-face sessions blended with online resources. For example, the flipped curriculum model combines: • short lecture podcasts,	Combination of: • intensive face-to-face sessions as one day or half days • weekly online tutorial/seminars for activities and interaction • online content and resources	Combination of: • short lecture podcasts with online resources and learning activities • online tutorials (synchronous) • interaction via online collaboration, discussion forums and/or group

online resources with • face-to-face tutorial/seminars for interaction and presentation of group work.		work
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Benefits of Blended Learning

The advantages of blended learning for students include increased learning skills, greater access to information, improved satisfaction and learning outcomes, and opportunities both to learn with others and to teach others. Recent research identifies the following key benefits of blended learning:

1. Opportunity for collaboration at a distance: Individual students work together virtually in an intellectual endeavour as a learning practice.
2. Increased flexibility: Technology-enabled learning allows for learning anytime and anywhere, letting students learn without the barriers of time and location but with the possible support of in-person engagement.
3. Increased interaction: Blended learning offers a platform to facilitate greater interactivity between students, as well as between students and teachers.
4. Enhanced learning: Additional types of learning activities improve engagement and can help students achieve higher and more meaningful levels of learning.
5. Learning to be virtual citizens: Learners practice the ability to project themselves socially and academically in an online community of inquiry.

Making Blended Learning Work

Technology integration in itself is not necessarily blended learning. If online learning is only a minor component of a classroom-based course, without offering students the independence, convenience and interaction opportunities of being online, it may not really be a blended learning system but simply a case of technology integration. Creating an effective blended learning environment means making appropriate choices and overcoming the challenges that come with the use of technology. The following challenges and recommendations were identified in recent research on teacher perspectives, conducted by Athabasca University and the Commonwealth of Learning:

1. Technology access: A critical first step is to know which resources are available to your students. Is there limited bandwidth, unreliable Internet connectivity, or lack of devices such as laptops or smartphones? Once you are clear about access, you can choose learning activities with the technology in ways that allow all to participate.
2. Design: Creating the appropriate in-person and online activities means designing courses with the pedagogic principles of both and integrating technology in a way that supports meaningful learning.
3. Safety and security: Create awareness of cyber-malice and ensure security interventions against unethical learning practices, academic dishonesty, identity theft and bullying are in place.
4. Skill development, support and training: Both students and instructors must have technological literacy and competence with technology applications.
5. Motivation: Students need adequate motivation when engaging in a wide range of often shifting learning modalities, some of which may require significant skill development.

CONCLUSION

So blended learning teaches students how to organize their activities. Thus, these steps are repeated in each lesson. In this way, students spend more time in class on practical work, communication, and project work, without wasting time on unnecessary discussions, re-listening to unnecessary and pre-existing material. They develop skills such as distinguishing information, working independently, and applying theoretical knowledge in practice.

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