Blended learning, an educational tool for students in the academic places: A descriptive study

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Abstract - The use of blended learning, a style of education that combines conventional classroom teaching with online learning, is one way in which it is feasible to deliver a course and build a favorable learning environment effectively. A descriptive method by reviewing and critical evaluation of the previously published articles has been used to conduct this research on Blended learning, which combines the conventional in-class education students are used to with the resources they may access online in order to accelerate the learning process and increase students' chances of academic achievement. This article aims to study the potential benefits of blended learning for students in helping them achieve their academic goals. Many other elements may be considered when creating a practical blended course. When technology is used in the classroom, students have the opportunity to benefit from having quick access to a wide variety of resources, flexibility, effective pedagogy, learner autonomy, an enjoyable atmosphere for learning, involvement with the course materials, immediate feedback, self-evaluation, and additional time to interact with teachers and other students. Overall, adaptable and accessible blended learning is a successful teaching method. The students' motivation and success in the course may also be increased.

Keywords: integrated education, independence, participation, adaptability, blended learning

I. INTRODUCTION

To begin with, what exactly is "Blended learning"? Numerous definitions are provided in various sources. Blended learning is the strategically combined delivery of both online and in-person teaching, as defined by Graham et al (2019). Russell et al (2003) claimed that, "Blended learning relates to face-to-face to distance transference structure, but it is more than merely displaying a webpage on the screen. Those who use blended learning environments are trying to boost the benefits of both face-to-face and online learning." Online and conventional learning are combined in blended learning. While doing some of their learning in a traditional classroom setting, students also conduct some of it online. In addition to giving students the chance to take courses in a classroom environment with a teacher present, it also enables them to engage in online learning activities. Blended learning combines instructional technology with conventional teaching methods in order to provide a more effective learning environment than merely introducing computers to classrooms. The usage of educational media helps learners progress, therefore incorporating technology into learning makes it easier to accomplish educational objectives (Welker & Berardino, 2006; Wajdi, 2018; Fuzianti et al, 2022; Susanto et al, 2022; Bustam et al, 2022; Amrullah et al, 2023). When instructors present their courses using a variety of instructional approaches, learners have a higher chance of progressing.

This strategy is also referred to as mixed-mode learning and hybrid learning. The most efficient online technologies are used in blended learning to boost the effectiveness of teacher-led classrooms. On the other hand, with hybrid learning, the best manner to offer a course is prioritized above technology. Blended learning, which combines online resources and conventional classroom techniques, has a significant position in education even if the transition from classroom to online learning may be intimidating. According to Garrison and Kanuka (2004), "Blended learning is a careful combination of educational directly instruction with online learning experiences." According to Watson (2008), "Blended learning combines virtual classroom elements with those found in traditional face-to-face instructional environments. "Blended learning, which combines the finest aspects of both distance and classroom higher education, is expected to become the dominant teaching paradigm in the future, according to John Watson. It is clear that blended learning combines conventional in-person instruction with online and technological learning.

According to Thorne (2003), mixed learning is an approach that improves classroom engagement by combining traditional learning with all of the technological breakthroughs that have occurred since then. Niemiec and Otte (2005) defined blended learning as "the integration of online with face-to-face instruction; and not just a combination of online with face-to-face but an exchange (replacement) of face-to-face time with online activity (or vice versa)" Blended learning was defined by Niemiec and Otte (2005) using planned, pedagogically beneficial methods. Blended learning is "the integration of online with face-to-face instruction" The following is a comprehensive explanation of blended learning that McGee and Reis (2012) have provided for the following statements:

To achieve educational goals that are didactically backed through tasks, exercises, and assessments as appropriate for a given mode and that bridge course environments in a way that is meaningful to the learner, blended course designs involve the instructor and students working together in mixed delivery services modes, usually personally and technology mediated (p. 9).

The vast bulk of the research focuses on educators, digital technologies, and the methods through which instruction is delivered. It is possible to deduce from the definitions that blended learning is a combination of traditional classroom teaching and

online study. In addition, a significant portion of the learning that takes place nowadays is accomplished via participation in online activities. According to Bersin et al. (2003), a successful learning environment may be created via the use of a variety of different learning media. They assert that in order for blended learning to be more effective, it must take into account all of the educational media that is available within the classroom, as well as training on the network, previously made decisions, available videos, and simulations, in addition to other means such as telephone communications (p. 254).

Online learning enhances self-paced learning whereas conventional learning increases active learning, interpersonal interactions, and face-to-face engagement (Mart, 2013a, 2013b). When the advantages of these two techniques are combined into a pedagogically sound strategy, learners are much more engaged in their studies. There is plenty of possibility to promote learning outcomes since instructors and students are collaborating by employing mixed delivery instructions. Furthermore, learners are provided with favorable learning environments if this delivery is backed by interaction, activities, and assignments.

To put it another way, blended learning, which combines online and in-person delivery methods, with suitable learning activities as reinforcement, aids in learners' learning development. Learners in blended learning get unique assignments depending on their skill levels. As a result, while doing these activities, students build their own talents. These actions that students do outside of the classroom help them learn how to learn independently. Since it should be kept in mind that "the most effective learning occurs outside the classroom" (Jones, 1995, p. 228), online assignments offered by their professors specifically assist those students who are unable to learn in a traditional classroom. The benefit of blended learning is that it gives students the opportunity to tailor their education using technological tools. Providing hints and activities to slow learners encourages them to gain more information about a certain subject.

Accessibility, pedagogical efficiency, and course engagement are three of the many advantages that blended learning offers students, according to Johnson (2002, p. 5). Accessibility to a broad range of materials is one of blended learning's most important benefits. The effective utilization of resources contributes to a general improvement in learning. The instructional tools are accessible to students not just throughout their educational institutions but also from their homes. According to Wingard (2004), having access to learning assets has an incentive that motivates students to learn more. He also notes that: Students like having the flexibility and convenience of being able to utilize instructional content whenever they want courses with blended learning help in professional development.

The flexibility the technique provides for both instructors and students is another benefit (Gedik et al, 2012). It promotes students to easily absorb the material while enabling professors to employ a range of teaching techniques. Blended learning uses a variety of instructional modalities, which results in superior learning outcomes for students. Since each student prefers a certain technique of learning, instructors who employ a variety of ways throughout teaching help students comprehend concepts better. Teachers now have more time to connect with students in the classroom and monitor their progress thanks to the integration of technology into the educational process. Teachers can enjoy more time with their pupils since they don't have to spend as much time giving lectures.

The cooperation between instructors and pupils may improve as a result of blended learning. Additionally, using collaborative technologies enables students to interact with one another and start conversations. Activities conducted both in the classroom and online provide students a higher opportunity of enhancing their communication skills.

Today's learners are surrounded by technology resources. Every element of our

life uses technology, and the younger generation in particular has grown up with it. Due to their familiarity with technology tools, students participate more readily when professors lead activities. It should go without saying that learners have excellent opportunities to increase their level of comprehension when they have access to materials from anyplace (Graziano & Feher, 2016). Chen and Jones (2007) emphasize the benefits of blended learning for developing a thorough comprehension of the subjects being studied. The completion of tasks and assignments is necessary for learners to advance. All of these resources provide students the chance to interact with the course material. The ability to access information whenever they want helps students use their time more effectively and motivate them to study at their own speed (Shand & Glassett Farrelly, 2017). Individuals learn in various ways. Learning at their own speed is made possible by using online activities to supplement classroom instruction. Some students learn quickly while others take their time. It's critical that language learners take ownership of their education (Yildiz & Hur, 2020).

Secondly, blended learning promotes the growth of learner autonomy. In order to move more quickly, students must have control over their education. Teachers should work to foster students' autonomy in this regard. Blended learning has the potential to reduce the amount of stress that students are under since it provides them with more alternatives. In addition, students find eLearning platforms engaging because they include a variety of media types, such as games, animations, photos, and videos. These technologies make learning more fun and stimulate the attention of those who are studying. Another benefit is the environment that blended learning creates, which allows students to interact without disrupting one another or making complaints. The use of an online learning environment could help alleviate some of these significant problems, which otherwise might make education less efficient.

The evaluation of learners is very important to their development. However, because of the time commitment they need, evaluations are not often used in traditional forms of schooling. The teachers are also unable to make remarks in a timely manner. Blended learning generally includes frequent online testing; during which students get immediate feedback that contributes to their capacity for self-evaluation. During the process of developing new goals for personal improvement, students consider both their strengths and their weaknesses. Teachers may obtain a sense of how their students are developing in a manner that is analogous to how children may gauge their own growth.

II. METHOD

A facility devoted to the study of literature served as the location for this examination. Library research is a kind of information extraction study that utilizes various methodologies to collect information from pre-existing datasets. During the course of the study, the researcher will make use of various papers (documentation). Secondary data are used to support books or articles written by journal academics. This is done so that the content and interpretation of the book, as well as the books based on primary data sources, may be completed.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Why should education use a paradigm that combines different types of learning? Since technology has become a part of human life and altered the way people live, it has an effect on the way that parents teach their children. People were only able to get education in-person at one point in time, which was either before the introduction of technological tools or when they were rare. Because we now live in a world that is littered with technological devices, it is essential that we learn to make productive use of them. As instructors, we permit the use of "Any technology equipment in the lessons, including mobile phones and laptops," in contrast to the regulation that states "No smartphones in

the lesson." A significant number of younger pupils choose to continually use their iPhones. Students' minds are preoccupied with how to utilize their devices when we encourage them not to use their cell phones and to keep them in their luggage. If students do not utilize their computers and smartphones for learning, they will occupy their free time with video games or by just scrolling through their favorite accounts on Instagram and Facebook. Of course, both in-person and online learning have their drawbacks. For instance, students may get bored simply by listening to tedious lectures in class or by lengthy texts and pointless graphics in online courses.

It is sufficient for them to just read the contents provided. Because they don't verbally communicate their discoveries with their spouses, it frustrates and demoralizes them. In this case, blended learning is an appropriate answer to this sort of issue. Studies on the efficiency of blended learning have been conducted. In integrated learning, teachers may use cutting-edge methodologies incorporating information and computer technology (Chen et al, 2005). Dr. Ranjana Bhatia listed the following benefits of blended learning in her paper titled "Blending Traditional Education with Digital Learning in Educator Educational institutions: (a) Increased productivity due to smaller group sizes; (b) Encourage the development of professional or work-based abilities; (c) Study that is adaptable, with learning that can be done whenever, wherever, and on demand, to fulfill the requirements of learners whenever, whenever, and however they desire.

A. Comprehensive access to many informational platforms, shared tools, and digital resources

Graham (2006) identifies the following as the three main explanations why blended learning should be suggested: (1) Increasing the quality with which education is provided, (2) Enhanced availability and user friendliness, (3) Increased efficiency relative to expenditures.

El-Deghaidy and Nouby's (2008) investigation showed that students in the mixed group achieved much more than those who attended class in person. Additionally, they discovered that the mixed group had much better attitudes from students about online learning. Blended learning was deemed beneficial in terms of attitudes and achievement. In the line with Miyazoe and Anderson (2010), blended learning is an environment that fosters learning.

Smyth, et al (2012). There are benefits and drawbacks to both conventional and online schooling. Consequently, in the case of blended learning, the strong points and good elements of in-person instruction and online learning may be combined to complement one another. Various systems, like Google Classroom and Quizizz, discussion groups, and other tools may support blended learning. For the following reasons, blended learning is often preferred: (a) Resources that are not difficult to reach, (b) Criticism and conversation in real time throughout the lesson, (c) Adaptable teachings, (d) There is no need for massive structures.

With blended learning, students may ask questions about anything they are unclear about while taking flexible online lessons from anywhere at any time. Additionally, it is simple for students to obtain course materials; they may read articles that will be discussed in forthcoming lessons beforehand to prepare for the in-person class, and then they can do online exercises based on the information to get a better understanding. Contrarily, in conventional education, students enter the classroom with no prior knowledge of a new subject, so they study it, return home, and solidify their learning by doing homework. Additionally, educational institutions may not need to have enormous student facilities if they use blended learning rather than the conventional method. Other groups of students may attend online classes while one group of students is receiving teaching in-person.

IV. CONCLUSION

Blended learning promotes students' knowledge breadth and depth, as shown by these

results. For tech-savvy pupils, in-person training is pointless. Solo online learning includes drawbacks such as late feedback, student disengagement, social isolation, and low motivation. Finally, one may grasp the topic by building a hybrid course and merging the best of online and face-to-face education. Technology and blended learning are helpful in academia so that they may be investigated and developed. Education aims to build skills. In today's tech-driven world, blended learning is the best educational answer. Customized blended learning improves student performance. Today, technology is more feasible. Technology may enhance schooling. Today's students are constantly surrounded by technology; therefore, teaching without technology will not work. Teachers should choose online assignments and activities that emphasize interaction. It is possible that lecturing alone, without interactive exercises, will not provide superior results. Despite the drawbacks, blended learning can enhance understanding, inspire confidence, encourage independent learning, enhance collaborative learning, boost motivation, and increase engagement. Learning may change in a mixed learning environment that is well-designed.

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