

BLENDED LEARNING

Khushal Limbraj Mundhe, Ph. D.

Principal, Shri Nath College of Education, Paithan, Dist. Aurangabad

Email: dr_khushal@rediffmail.com

Abstract

A mixture of both offline and online training approaches give you the best of both strategies. Blended learning is quite flexible and adaptable as compared to a single-method approach. It takes every type of learner into account, whether they prefer the traditional classroom, online sessions, or a mixture of both, meaning no student is left behind. The right blended learning model helps you break the monotony of corporate training, and achieve higher employee engagement levels through a plethora of training modes including multimedia, presentations, instructor-led training, classroom workshops, real-life projects, etc. The enriched virtual blended learning model is very similar to the flex model with online training as its major component. This model has become increasingly popular in this era of remote work. However, unlike the flex model, learners must go through a scheduled Instructor-led classroom session, either in physical or virtual classrooms. This model enriches the remote learning experience by enabling learner-instructor interaction through online platforms.

Key Words: *Blended learning, Learning and Evaluation, Types of blended learning*



Scholarly Research Journal's is licensed Based on a work at www.srjis.com

Introduction:

Blended learning, also known as hybrid learning, technology-mediated instruction, web-enhanced instruction, or mixed-mode instruction, is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods. It is an instructional methodology, a teaching and learning approach that combines face to-face classroom methods with computer mediated activities to deliver instruction. This pedagogical approach means a mixture of face-to-face and online activities and the integration of synchronous and asynchronous learning tools, thus providing an optimal possibility for the arrangement of effective learning processes. Blended learning is the term given to the educational practice of combining digital learning tools with more traditional classroom face to face teaching. Resources such as video lectures, podcasts, recordings and articles would be provided in order to transfer the main bulk of the necessary knowledge from teacher to student before each class. This then frees up time in class for

teachers to support students in activities, lead discussions and facilitate engagement. A blended learning mode provides ultimate flexibility in many aspects. It can be applied to any program which holds on to the values of traditional learning and incorporates digital media with that. It is a lot more effective and likeable than anything that has been ever before

Role of Teachers in BL Environment

BL shifts the teacher's role from knowledge provider to coach and mentor. This shift does not mean that teachers play a passive or less important role in students' education. Quite the contrary—with BL, teachers can have an even more profound influence and effect on students' learning. Traditionally, classroom instruction has largely been teacher-directed, top-down, and one-size-fits-all, with a bit of differentiation thrown in, but with BL, it now becomes more student-driven, bottom-up, and customized, with differentiation as a main feature. Much of this new learning dynamic is due to the enhanced role technology plays in instruction. BL provides an appropriate balance between online instructions, which offers the interactive, tech-based learning, individualized pacing, and privacy that keep students continuously engaged and motivated, and teacher-led instruction, which personalizes the learning experience and adds the human elements of encouragement, compassion, and caring guidance that only teachers can give.

This new learning dynamic benefits students and teachers alike. Giving students permission and space to become active learners who gain knowledge directly lets them assume some control over their learning and helps them develop self-reliance. As more students are working independently, time opens up for teachers to provide face-to-face support and individualized instruction more frequently for more students, effectively improving differentiation. BL provides teachers with a fuller, more accurate picture of how each student is doing. BL yields more frequent and more personal teacher interaction with individual students, teachers have the opportunity to deepen and strengthen student/teacher relationships. The trust that comes with close relationships can give teachers insights into students' personal struggles and needs -insights which empower teachers to comfort and coach students through challenges that often serve as obstacles to learning. In summary, BL combines the best aspects of online learning with the best aspects of direct instruction, helping teachers easily manage to do much more to meet student needs without adding to an already weighty workload.

Learning and Evaluation:

LMS LMSs are web applications, meaning that they run on a server and are accessed by using a web browser. LMSs give educators tools to create a course web site and provide access control so only enrolled students can view it. LMSs also offer a wide variety of tools that can make your course more effective. They provide an easy way to upload and share materials, hold online discussions and chats, give quizzes and surveys, gather and review assignments, and record grades. LMS can be installed in cloud & all faculty can upload to share all the particular class related documents, video, MP3 etc.

ICT Tools for Collaboration and User-generated content

It is evident that learner-centred learning has always helped the learners achieve curriculum outcomes and more than that adds to their skills to function effectively as the 21st Century learners. Collaboration and not competition at individual level, needs to be encouraged for a teacher's contribution towards a productive society. Studies also emphasize that active participation of learners in the co-creation of knowledge leads to the increased level of learner satisfaction and motivation. At one hand, cooperative learning strategies, group-work, group-projects in the classroom environments help teachers in creation of the conducive learning environments, whereas collaborative ICT tools prove a great aid to the teacher in co-creation of knowledge by learners. BL may not turn into teacher-centred classroom scenarios in face-to-face and online mode. On the contrary, the learners can be engaged in creative and productive activities through several ICT tools. Collaborative contribution of learners may be planned by teachers through free ICT tools. Some of the indicative ICT tools are listed below as some examples, though teachers are expected to explore many other tools achieving learner collaboration:

Five Types of Blended Learning Models

1. Flipped Model

In a flipped classroom blended learning model, the original learning framework gets inverted. Instead of learners attending a face-to-face training session followed by some online self-paced learning, this model puts the focus on online learning. Learners consume the prescribed content on their own time – either at home or before the class – and in-class time is devoted to active learning and applying your newly learned skills. This can be done in the form of discussions, case studies, or group projects.

2. Face-to-Face Driver Model

The face-to-face driver blended learning model is the closest to traditional classroom training, as most of the training takes place in a classroom setting under the guidance of an instructor. This approach offers individual, personalized support to learners who are struggling to grab the new concepts or are falling behind the training curriculum.

3. Rotational Model

In the rotational blended learning model, learners are expected to follow a fixed schedule and rotate through both self-paced online learning and face-to-face interaction. The schedules are fixed but flexible.

Including different training methods allows learners to practice what they have learned, filling any learning gaps. This makes tracking training progress easier, since learners are following a fixed schedule.

4. Flex Model

The flex blended learning model gives learners a flexible and personalized learning experience that is specifically tailored to their needs. This model allows online learning to take the lead as the core transmitter of the material in the overall learning experience while instructors provide needed support in small-group settings. Flex models allow students to customize the paths and the schedules followed throughout the learning process.

5. Enriched Virtual Model

The enriched virtual blended learning model is very similar to the flex model with online training as its major component. This model has become increasingly popular in this era of remote work. However, unlike the flex model, learners must go through a scheduled Instructor-led classroom session, either in physical or virtual classrooms. This model enriches the remote learning experience by enabling learner-instructor interaction through online platforms.

Assessment and Evaluation in BL

Continuous assessment and evaluation play a major role in a learning process. Students can be informed about their performance in online assignments and quizzes through technology. They may be given constant access to their online reports for them to monitor their growth over the time against their individual learning goals. There should be good means to assess the performance of students. Well defined tools to assess the student's growth and accomplishments should be used. Objectivity and standardization should gain significance.

This will also encourage students to participate in self-assessment and peer assessment activities.

Conclusion –

The concept of blended learning has gained great popularity over the last few years, with its advantages being lauded by learning professionals. Blended learning combines the benefits of traditional classroom teaching with emerging technology to make learning more real-time, contextual, and engaging. Blended learning combines the best of two training environments – traditional face-to-face learning and eLearning – to meet the evolving needs of new-age learners. Blended learning takes learning outside the walls of the classroom, making it possible to access resources both online and offline. This helps engage all types of learners – both those who learn better in a traditional classroom environment as well as those who work best with semi-autonomous, computer-based training. While classroom learning offers an opportunity for immediate face-to-face interaction, online learning offers self-paced personalized learning with interactive media such as games, videos, tutorials, quizzes, etc. all accessible from the learner's home page in a learning management system (LMS)

References

- Badheka, Giju Bhai. (1990). Divasvapna an Educator's Reverie translated by Chittaranjan Pathak. NBT, New Delhi.*
- Ball, S. J. (1987). 'The Micro – Politics of the School: Towards a theory of school organization', Methuen: London & New York.*
- Ballantine, J.H. and Spade, J.Z. (2015). Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education. New Delhi: Sage Publications, Inc.*
- Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. New York: Freeman.*
- Bhattacharya, S. (2006). Philosophical Foundation of Education. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.*
- https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/6100340_Concept-Note-Blended-Mode-of-Teaching-and-Learning.pdfhttps://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blended_learning*