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Blended learning: Effective way for students progress

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Abstract
We Indians are facing challenges to achieve extreme heights of excellence by joining our shoulders with other developed countries in the map of the world. It is right time to build the capacity of our nation by multi-skilled human resources. Today we need to adopt right kind of approaches in education to stimulate the brain cells for new thoughts and energy to become advanced creative personalities. Blended learning is the perfect approach for manufacturing new inventions and new ideologies. It improves education such as teacher can collaborate to share their ideas and resources online, and students can develop valuable research skills at a young age. It is the best technique to spread quality culture education to wide ranges through formal and non-formal settings.

Keywords: Blended Learning, multi-skilled human resources

Introduction

Teaching methodology is a set of methods and principles used to perform teaching activities. Techniques used in teaching should develop habits of self-learning and reduce dependence on teachers. Active learning is the active involvement of students in the process of learning. NCF 2005 recommends, "Including initiatives and creativity is possible if we perceive and treat children as participants in learning, not as receivers of fixed body of knowledge." The researcher Mary Bart in teaching and learning observes students who sense disconnect between but they are learning at college (or in your course) and their future life as they perceive it will never engage to the same degree as students who understand the relevant connections between their current learning and their future. The teacher must initiate the dialogue from classroom, fit enough to mention lifelong aspect. "It is difficult to teach if students are unprepared to learn". And this is said in terms of the quality of education. If the quality of education must be enhanced, the process must be more than quality assured.

An array of media resources are employed to facilitate learning and provide channels of communication between learners and tutors in e-learning. Traditional written materials such as books and manuals are supplemented with television and radio broadcasts, online information, online groups, audio tapes and CDROMs, video conferencing and e-mail support in e-learning. Blended learning is on the rise in higher education. Blended learning is a pedagogical approach facilitated by teacher where students have some control over their learning; and the teacher seamlessly incorporated the use of online learning tools (e.g. discussion boards, online collaboration, blogs etc.), technology tools (computers, digital white boards, cameras etc.) and face to face communication so that instruction and learning can be assessed at any time by the students through multiple electronic devices. Interest in student's engagement levels grows, as it is an acknowledged way for students to experience increased learning and improved outcomes from an educational institution. Engagement practices that stem from faculty, staff and students actions are found to help students develop intellectually and personally.

Blended learning: The term 'blended', 'hybrid', 'technology mediated instruction', 'web enhanced instruction' and 'mixed mode instruction' are often used interchangeably. It combines e-learning tools with traditional classroom learning to ensure quality outcomes. It offers personalized system of instruction which improves retention and reinforcement through follow up mechanism on the web.

It is highly flexible mode of learning which is based on learning styles and level of audience. Building partnership with quality training provides and combining this with a dedicated

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experienced technical team and support staff, virtual college provides the perfect blended environment, offering anyone the chance to take their online training to the next level. Blended learning is an approach to education that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place-based classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some elements of student control over time, place, path, or pace.

Blended learning may also allow teachers to spend less time giving whole-class lessons, and more time meeting with students individually or in small groups to help them with specific concepts, skills, questions, or learning problems—the basic educational rationale behind "flipped classrooms" or "flipped instruction," a form of blended learning. Blended learning may also allow schools to teach more students more efficiently at a lower cost to the school and—in the case of higher education—the student. And because students are required to use digital and online technologies in blended-learning situations, they naturally acquire more technological literacy and greater confidence using new technologies. Some supporters may also argue that the blended-learning approach more closely resembles modern workplaces, in which employees may work largely on their own to meet specific objectives, only periodically checking in with their supervisors to give them updates or seek assistance. In this case, students would also be learning skills such as self-discipline, self-motivation, and organizational habits they will need in adult life.

Student Engagement

Student engagement is willingness to participate in routine school activities, such as attending classes, submitting required work and following teacher's direction in class. Engagement is more than involvement or participation it requires feelings and sense making as well as activity. Acting without feeling engaged is just involvement or even compliance; feeling engaged without acting is dissociation. Although focusing on engagement at a school level, Fredrick, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004, 62-63), drawing on Bloom (1956), usefully identify three dimensions to student engagement, as discussed below:

1. Behavioral Engagement: students who are behaviorally engaged would typically comply with behavioral norms, such as attendance and involvement, and would demonstrate in the absence of disruptive or negative behavior.
2. Emotional engagement: students who engage emotionally would experience affective reactions such as interest, enjoyment, or a sense of belonging.
3. Cognitive engagement: cognitively engaged students would be invested in their learning, would seek to go beyond the requirements and would relish challenge.

Accountability

Teachers can also foster accountability through blended learning, even in our complicated world where many factors can interfere with students' ability to account for their learning. Many of students worked while taking a full course load. Implementing blended learning gave them more time in class to learn, practice with, and apply course content. Students will be less stressed and more engaged with their learning while in class, and if they chose, they could extend the learning beyond class time with additional practice.

Blended learning also motivated them to stay connected and continue learning even when they did not attend school due to illness, family vacation, or disciplinary action. Blended learning created an environment where they had no excuses to avoid completing work even when absent from class. In the learning environment, the students chose what they read, researched, wrote, and discussed. They also chose how they presented their work, giving them more control of the pace, place, and path of their learning. It will be amazing for a teacher to see them take charge and enjoy being accountable for their learning.

Increased Adaptability

Implementing blended learning creates an environment where adaptability is inevitably necessary to succeed—for both teacher and student. Students would record themselves discussing what they were reading and share their talks with the class online. They engaged in meaningful conversations with each other that enabled them to practice with speaking skills.

Teacher will prepare their students for outages involving either the internet or tools, adapting by discussing and practicing face to face in pairs and small groups. Technology is not perfect, but despite ups and downs, students and teacher adapted to blended learning. Though a teacher use different technologies and teach different subjects and grade levels, he/she face a common challenge when implementing blended learning: imagining new experiences for students that make meaningful use of new technologies. Despite these teachers' best intentions, designing technology-rich lessons and activities often means digitizing existing lessons without redesigning the learning experience to take advantage of the unique opportunities that a blended environment creates.

Benefits of blended learning

1. Increased learner engagement.
2. Improved learning effectiveness; better outcomes for learners.
3. Increased efficiency of in-class time and optimize resources.
4. Cost effective way to relieve overcrowded classroom
5. Convenient alternative to the traditional classroom experience; accommodate various learning styles and support learners at different phases in the learning process.
6. Increased variety of delivery and learning strategies formally and informally.
7. Decreased delivery limitations by having a mix of delivery modes.
8. Increased flexibility in managing schedules, task loads, and out of class factors.
9. Increased learner participation and accountability in the learning process.
10. Provides personalized training experiences.

Conclusion

Within the recent 10 years the introduction of the new technological innovations filled the gap between traditional face-to-face learning and distributed learning environments. Blended learning would have a great role in the future and it

would be dominated by the distributed learning environments. With the joint efforts of eminent educationists, teachers and other technical experts who are directly involved in this process, we can provide suitable platform of leaning to our students for the multiple-skill development.

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