

Blended Learning for Smooth Transition

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Abstract

The paper discusses the different models of Blended method and also, the procedures for conducting a lesson using one of the models of blended method. Blended learning is also referred to as "hybrid" learning which is to enjoy the best of both online and offline world of learning. When students are taught in a hybrid or blended mode, they are benefitted with the collaborative learning experiences which enriches and enhances their content knowledge as many studies have shown. Blended learning facilitates many students to learn independently, at their own pace and can benefit from performing their learning through a blend of digital and face to face environment. So, it is important that blended learning be used for enriching the student's learning thoughtfully and justifiably.

Keywords: Blended, station rotation, flex, ala carte, virtual.

Introduction

In the field of education, there is a monumental shift from offline to online and from online to Blended mode. Most of the countries cautiously reopened classrooms, as education remains a pivotal barometer of progress. There has been wide use of blended learning gradually, mainly because of the lockdown which was prevalent due to pandemic and the ongoing trend of using digital learning technology or virtual platform. Hybrid mode of instruction is student centred that engages them effectively. There are many blended models that can be adopted by teachers in their classroom teaching.

Avazmatova M (2020) in her article significance of blended learning in education system mentioned that blended learning is the integration of traditional face-to-face learning with technology, the internet, and distance learning. The research paper examines the importance of blended learning in teaching and the objective of the article focuses on the reasons and essential factors for successful blended course in education. By combining the advantages of both online and in person learning the quality of the blended course can be



intensified. The article also provides other factors that can help to design a productive blended course which is an effective way of teaching that is flexible and easy to access, and it can increase students' motivation and their achievement of the course.

Lalima; Dangwal.K. L (2017) in their article blended learning: an innovative approach discusses blended learning as an innovative concept that embraces the advantages of both traditional teaching in the classroom and ICT supported learning including both offline learning and online learning. They mention that blended learning has scope for collaborative learning; constructive learning and computer assisted learning (CAI).

There are four different types of Blended Learning which are discussed in detail:

Rotation Model: This model is commonly used by educators where students rotate within a single class through different learning activities. It is often considered as a traditional method where students used to rotate around the different corners which is deemed as a station, only difference in the blended mode is the use of online platform.

- a) **Station Rotation:** In single classroom students rotate through all learning activities on the same schedule, when prompted by either their teacher or the timer i.e., the bell within specified time.
- b) **Lab Station:** This model is very similar to the previous model that is station rotation, only difference is the students rotate to a computer lab for online learning activities instead within the same classroom.
- c) **Flipped classroom:** In this model, the student spends their time away from school learning content independently through online video lectures delivered and the classroom is used for completing the home assignment. Here, the teacher doesn't spend time instructing students or delivering direct sessions, instead just guide or supervise the practise and provide individual assistance where needed.
- d) **Individual Rotation:** In the model, based on the student's individual unique needs, the teacher rotates them on daily schedule to different activities.

Flex Model: In this model the student's learning is online but still it takes place within the school campus. Here the student can learn at their own pace and also seek guidance from teacher in classroom. In this model online learning is the core, though sometimes it guides the students to do activities which is conducted in an offline mode. Some of the flex model



have face to face teacher's interaction daily while others may provide very less interaction which all depends upon the combinations used by the instructors.

A La Carte Model: It was formerly known as Self-Blend model. This model doesn't give whole school experience as it very different from full-time online learning. In this model the student has to choose a course online so as to decrease the workload at the school campus. It is usually found in high school level, where students can choose an advanced placement or language course which is not offered by their school. Some courses can be taken fully online outside the school, and some are provided with in the school so students can be benefitted from the interaction with teachers and their peers.

Enriched Virtual Model: This model allows the students to spend most of their time completing coursework online remotely, supplemented by the in-person learning sessions with their teacher. It differs from full-time virtual schools as face-to-face learning is a required component of the coursework. So, the students get the important experiences of a school campus. Mostly in Enriched virtual programs it emphasizes full time online schools and then develops it in a blended mode to enrich the students with actual school (brick and mortar) experiences.

Procedure Used for Conduction

A blend of Lab rotation and station rotation model was demonstrated to student teachers, where the google classroom is divided into 3 breakup rooms. This model must be introduced to the students with proper instructions.

1. First step here is to create different groups before explanation of instructions, considering what each learner can learn from others in the group. While working together, these students contribute their varied talents and skills which advances learning and character development in each member of the group.
2. So, three groups were created, and three links of different classrooms was provided with proper instructions like group rules. Here the teacher creates a list of rules but doesn't share it with students instead encourages the students to come up with their rules, ensuring that both the rules are matching.

For example: Every team member should contribute to discussions, sharing plans, ideas, actions to be taken and also volunteering for the projects, talking with respect, if



- you disagree, disagree with the idea and not the person, offer tentative suggestions when proposing a change in someone else's writing or idea, be responsible, complete the assigned work on time and with your best effort, follow all the group's rules, praise other group members for ideas or jobs well done, politely wait for your turn to talk, etc.
3. After that the teacher explains the structure and the process to the students. Soon after the instructions, the teacher set the stations up so that they are separate from each other and enters the link assigned to each group.
 4. Teacher explains the possible scenario by giving instructions: There are three stations set up in different locations in the google classroom. Each person in the group will do the task mentioned in the link provided. You can help each other in your group. You'll have one to five mins to do the assignment at each station and in each classroom, there would be two questions to be answered which should be open ended questions or some thought provoking activities. Each groups had to rotate clockwise to the next links and note down the answer to the questions or do the activity assigned in the classrooms, when they hear the bell ring that is the signal that they must move to the next link and enter another classroom with a pair of questions or activity. Once they rotate in all the three stations, they will assemble in the main classroom where the teacher will ask few students to share their answer and discuss with the class thereby building the content knowledge and making the concept clear to the students.
 5. The teacher can also give a computer lab day, assigning each group some targets to be completed for their dominant learning needs. All the group members can sit together in the lab and help each other. The teacher can always differentiate group assignment based on the student's need in the group. The teacher can effectively engage the students in the teaching learning process ensuring maximum participation by the students for attaining the learning outcomes or for achieving the goals set by the educator.

The best part of utilising blended mode of instruction is any content or any subject can be taught effectively with the student's engagement and active participation. This method can be introduced in any aspect of teaching learning process like set-induction, explanation, recapitulation or even during evaluation.



Application of the Blended Method

A topic Poverty in India for Standard eleventh was demonstrated by the student teacher using the blended method-station rotation model and also providing computer lab day. Teacher created three breakup classrooms with three different links. In each link two open ended questions were asked. Once the set induction was done, teacher instructed about the station rotation method and divided the class into 3 groups of 5 students each. Teacher already had a set of rules prepared and she encourages the students to come up with similar types of rules. Teacher gave each group an assignment that targets their dominant learning needs on a computer lab day. And then the students rotate in clockwise to all three links provided in breakup classroom and note down the answer in the notebook for the questions mentioned in each station. Once they rotated around all three stations, they assembled in the classroom where the teacher asked each group about their answer to the question asked in the link. All the students discussed their attempted answers and develop the concept of Poverty in India with the help of different scenarios mentioned in the link. Teacher recapitulates the lesson taught along with core element of following small family norms and correlating it with statistical data and graphical representation of Mathematics. Teacher evaluates the students using kahoot assessment tool with objective and critical awareness questions and then concludes the class with an innovative assignment.

Managing Transition through Blended Learning

Due to pandemic, there has been a shift from offline to online and back from online to new normal that is Blended mode or more commonly known as ‘hybrid’ where all the educators must choose the right blend for their content delivery. Blended learning model always focuses on developing learning outcomes and also lays emphasis on the impact it has on students due to the improved engaging learning process provided by personalization or customisation provided to each student as per their needs and maintaining a balance between online and offline seeking continuous noticeable improvement among students. The benefit of blended learning is the flexibility which is accelerated by the different modes that can be thought by the teachers administering the models. Each and every student is unique and special, and they have a varying need, so the teacher can provide a customised experience to each student through this innovative strategy. As there are different models of blended instruction, the teacher can choose the best model by



connecting the goals with the desired learning outcomes. So, any model of Blended learning can be implemented in the classroom through the guidelines and thereby make the teaching learning process effective.

Conclusion

In the contemporary trend, many strategies of learning like computer-based learning, web-based learning, etc. is emerging but use of hybrid or blended model is an advanced tool which will effectively and successfully be used for the smooth transition of Curriculum. The hybrid or blended mode of teaching and learning environment motivates students to actively participate during lectures and discuss virtually with their teachers and peers and strengthen their bond along with in-depth understanding of the concepts.

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