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Emerging Need of Blended Learning

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Abstract

Education aims to provide a nourishing environment that would facilitate or bring out and develop the potentialities in an individual. Quality education produces people who have the attributes of functional and social relevance, mental ability and physical dexterity, efficacy and reliability, confidence, capability to communicate effectively, exercise initiative innovative and experiment with new situations. Quality teaching is the chief instrument of quality education. It is concerned with how best to bring about pupil learning by various activities. Innovative instructional strategies play a remarkable role in the education sector.

Blended Learning / Teaching is one innovative solution to modern classroom in which modern technologies integrated in the teaching and learning process. Generally Institute of Higher Learning (IHL) adopted three ways of Blended Learning: first access online material through Learning Management System (LMS) and Traditional instruction; second digital technologies and conventional teaching; third learners use digital technologies by themselves. Components of Blended Learning include face-to-face instruction, web-based learning, simulation, internet-based videos, CD-ROM based learning, e-learning courses.

Blended Learning approach ensures that the learner is engaged and driving his or her individual learning experiences. It also offers flexible time frames that can be personalized to each person offering them the ability to learn at their own pace.

Keywords: blended learning, learning management system (LMS), traditional instruction, digital technologies

Introduction

Etymologically speaking, the word education is derived from the Latin word ‘educare’ meaning ‘to raise’ and ‘to bring up’. According to few others, the word ‘education’ has originated from another Latin term ‘Educere’ which means ‘to lead forth’ or ‘to come out’. The meanings of these root words lead us to believe that education aims to provide a nourishing environment that would facilitate or bring out and develop the potentialities in an individual.

Quality Education and Quality Teaching

Challenges of Education – A Policy Perspective (1985), a publication of the Ministry of Education, and a forerunner of The National Policy on Education – NPE 1986, has something worth quoting, on quality of education. It states, “It is difficult to define quality, particularly with reference to educational processes. However, it could be stated that a quality conscious system would produce people who have the attributes of functional and social relevance, mental ability and physical dexterity, efficacy and reliability and above all, the confidence and the capability to communicate effectively and exercise initiative innovative and experiment with new situations.

To these personal attributes one could add the dimensions of a value system conducive to harmony, integration and the welfare of the weak and disadvantaged.

Quality teaching also known as effective teaching is the chief instrument of quality education. It is essentially concerned with translating the objectives of education into action and practice. It is concerned with how best to bring about pupil learning by various activities. Quality teaching may be defined as the teacher's ability to stimulate students intellectually and move them emotionally to instill in them love for learning and develop suitable skills and attitudes. Quality teaching is based on the premise "All teachers should teach well and all students should learn well.

Innovative Instructional Strategy

In recent years, there has been a groundswell of interest on how computer and the Internet are best harnessed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education at all levels. Now, innovative instructional strategies play a remarkable role in the education sector. The development of the economy of any country depends on the quality of education imparted in the educational institutions. The teacher education institutions are playing an important role in shaping the destiny of the teacher education is the need of the hour. For enhancing the equality in education, the strategies of teaching of the teachers followed in the classrooms is very important. A strategy is a kind of approach or way by which one can disseminate content in the classroom.

Integrating Technology Based Teaching Learning Strategies

The 21st century demands high standards of knowledge and competence from graduates of universities given the higher quality resources access they are assumed to have. Countries that excel at preparing their young people for the opportunities of the 21st century thrive. Citizens of countries that succeed in harnessing ICT opportunities to nurture, promote and utilize talent will blossom.

Institutions are challenge to [re]-invent and innovatively integrating technology into teaching and learning in any educational education programmes to be front runners in this globalized world. The increase of student population, refer to as the digital native forces teacher education faculties to refocus training programmes to accommodate students. The integration of technology should serve to guide, expand and enhance learning objectives in specific programmes. It is understood that teachers and students do need to spend time learning the basics of using computer. This is necessary in order to move to effectively integrating technology.

In any training programmes, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be a “diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, and to create, spread, store, and manage information (*Honey, Culp and Carrigg, 2000*). Teacher should strive for two goals when integrating technology. The first goal is to become a computer using teacher. It may be the producing materials to use in the classroom such as handouts, banners or newsletters. The second goal is to make the computer a teaching partner rather than an object of study.

Information and Communication Technology

The development of Information Technology such as web based learning, Mobile learning, Virtual learning inevitable at tertiary education level. The Institute of Higher Learning (IHL) always looks out innovative solution to improve the learning delivery of subject contents (*Prinsloo & van Rooyen, 2007*). ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) improving the efficiency in the teaching and learning processes (*Jones and Knezek, 1993*). ICT in Education can help deeper understanding the subject, increase the learning retention, and arouse interest among students (*Forcheri and Molfino, 2000*). ICT change geographical barriers and providing better opportunities for learning and lead to promote the quality of learning (*Garrison and Anderson, 2003*). Educational Institution prepare the students to live in Knowledge Society and ICT also included in the curriculum (*Ghavifekr, Afshari & Amla Salleh, 2012*). ICT helps the teachers to prepare the digital lesson plan to active approach among students and plethora of studies proved that, enhance the students learning and increase the students achievement, to develop digital skills and promote the active learning. ICT improves student achievement in Teaching and Learning Process (*Nakayima, 2011*). Teachers one who lack of attitude, skills and Knowledge towards ICT and poor knowledge of Application of ICT they were reluctant to use technology (*E. Ramganesh & Z. Zayapragassarazan, 2010*). E-learning is a one of the method which is used to distance learning (*Clark, 2000*). E-learning means learning happen through any electronic gadget. It refers to web based learning, cyber learning, internet based learning, etc M – Learning stands for Mobile learning. Mobile as a communication tool which is used to making calls, sending SMS, MMS, Playing games, stop

watch, clock, calendar, use internet, download video, audio, image, send voice calls etc (Hartnell-Young, E. and Heym, N, 2008). Mobile is a portable device learner carries always with him. Instructor can achieve the idea of learning anytime and anywhere. U - Learning stands for Ubiquities learning. It is combination of U-learning = e-learning + m-learning (Muthuchamy, 2009). It is a new paradigm shift in Education, moves from didactic pedagogy to electronic/mobile learning. Ubiquities learning environment provides opportunities to person learn from anytime and anywhere. 21st Century is often interpreted in many ways information society, knowledge society, Digital Age and more importantly knowledge age. Today's students are digital natives and they are living in the digital world. The digital natives and digital immigrants coined by Marc Prensky. Digital natives mean one who proficient with technology and spent maximum time computer, playing video games, watching video games, Music, Cell phone, e-mail, internet, and instant messaging are the integral parts of their lives. Digital immigrants means one who learn new technologies and adopted it later (Prensky, M. 2001). Blended Learning is more appropriate instruction method to satisfy, engage, efficiently and effectively involve in the Digital age learners. Blended Learning is a hot topic nowadays and it came from industry. Later it could be adopted in Higher Education (HE). Blended Learning encompasses synchronous and asynchronous learning. Email, EduBlog, CD-ROM based learning, Wikis etc are synchronous learning and live video or text chat are asynchronous learning. In the Blended Learning classroom traditional face to face learning and supplemented the cyber learning, sharing and managing the learning resources (Jeyalatha. T and Anandan. K, 2015). Teacher use online learning platform for Blended learning such as Edmodo, Blendspace, MOODLE, Blackboard, Schoology, and Google Classroom (David J. Rosen, and Carmine

Stewart, 2013). The facebook, Edmodo and MOODLE (Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) are good Learning Management systems for blended learning.

Blended Learning

Blended Learning / Teaching is one innovative solution to modern classroom in which modern technologies integrated in the teaching and learning process and try to overcome some limitation in the conventional classroom and it is effective pedagogy and potential to support teaching and enrich the students learning experience. Generally Institute of Higher Learning (IHL) adopted three ways of Blended Learning, first access online material through Learning Management System (LMS) and Traditional instruction, Second digital technologies and conventional teaching, third learners use digital technologies by themselves (*Sharpe.et.al, 2006*). Online learning has some learning flexibility which is not found in traditional classroom. Blooms taxonomy revised according to suite the Blended learning and added creativity after the evaluation, it developing the Lower Order Thinking (LOT) to Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Skills (Churches, 2008).

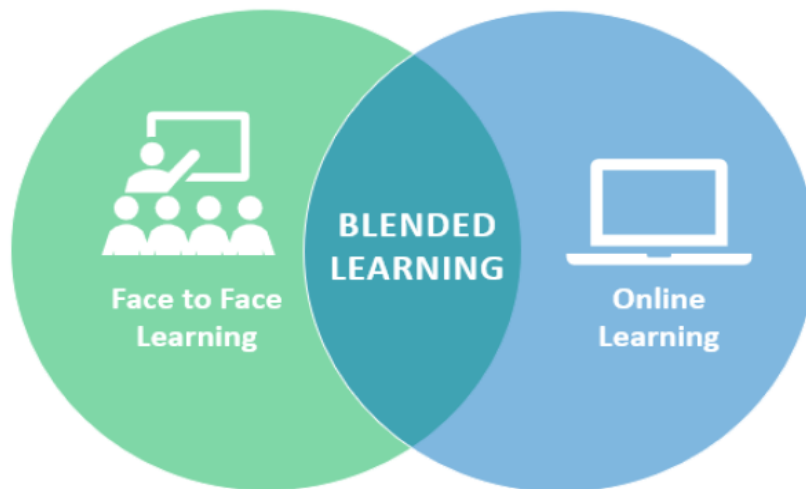


Fig. 1.1 Blended Learning

Source: <https://www.graniteschools.org/edtech/tip/blended-learning/>

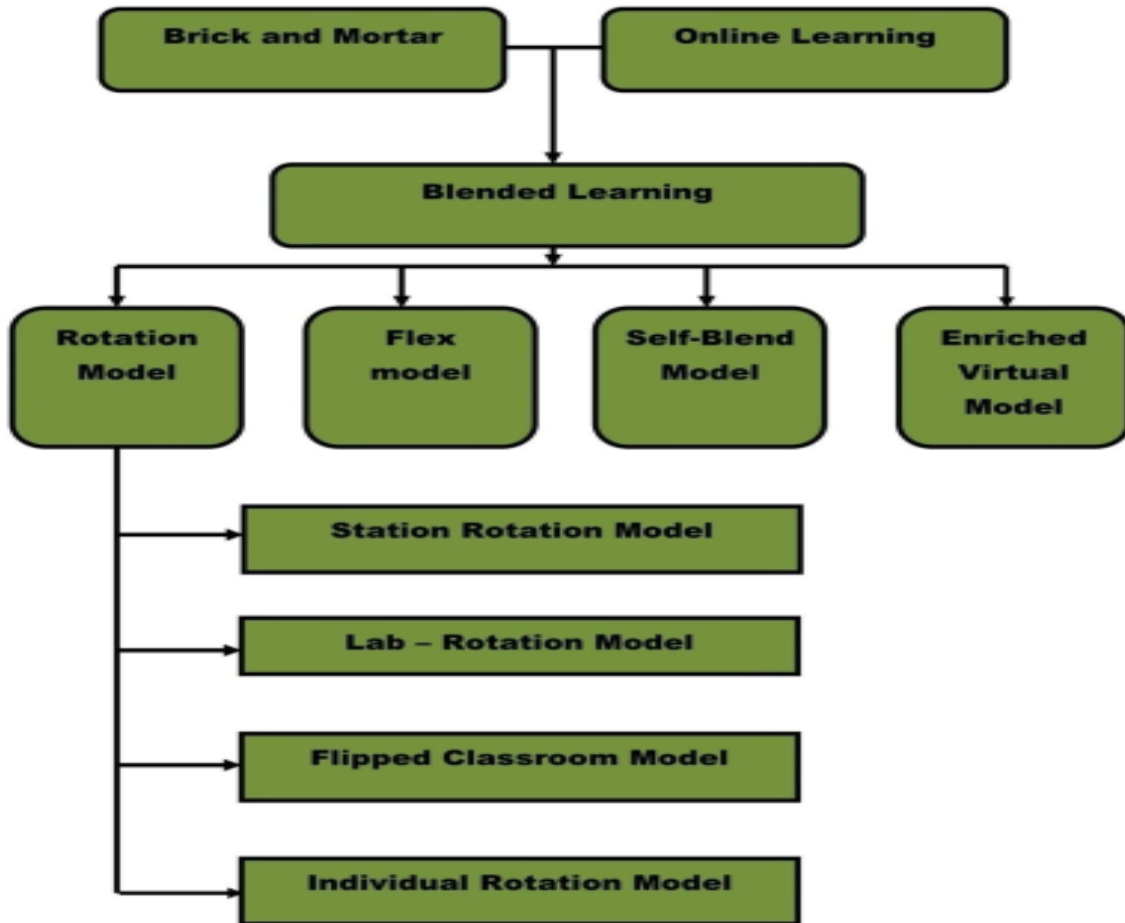
Components of Blended Learning

Components of Blended Learning includes such as face to face instruction, Web based learning, Simulation, Internet based videos, CD-ROM based learning, e-learning courses, Electronic Performance Support System (EPSS), Audio, Video conferencing, Audio book, Printed books, Offline videos etc.

Five components of Blended Learning proposed by carman (2005) are

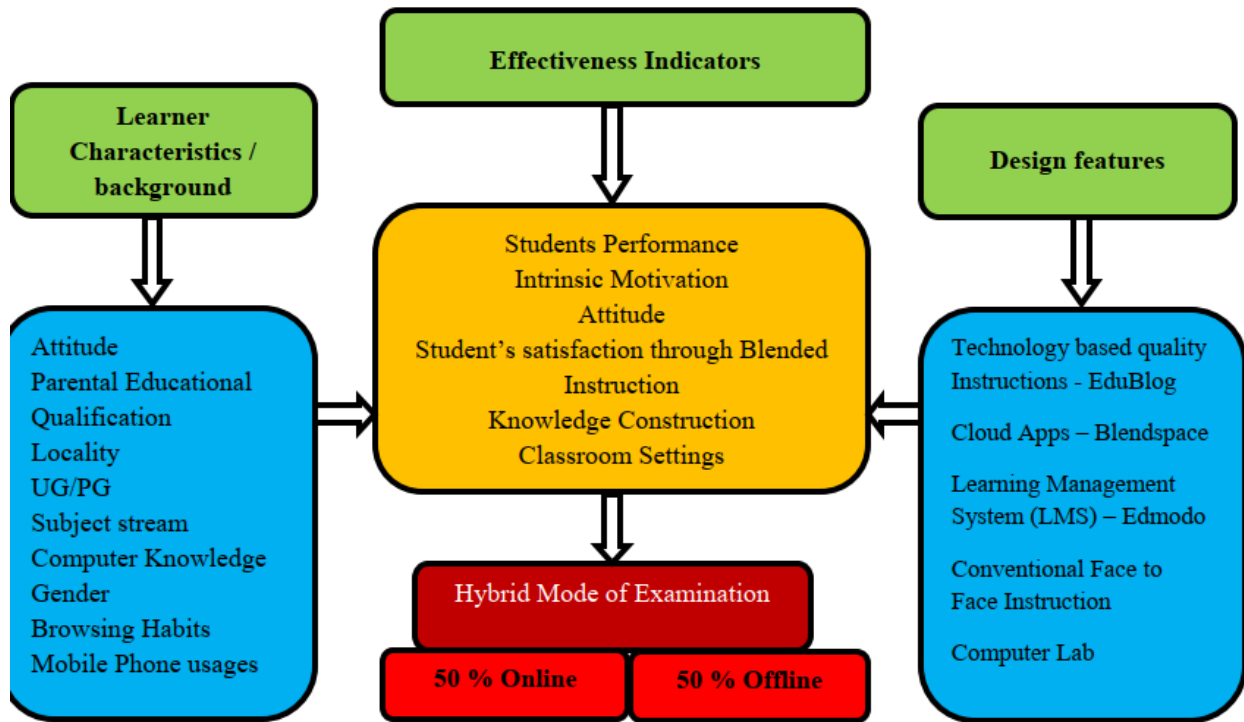
- Live events
- Self paced learning
- Collaboration
- Assessment
- Performance support

Taxonomy of Blended Learning



Taxonomy provides a way to classify according to the distinctive characteristics while establishing a basis for discussion and improvement. Taxonomy is the assay of the procedures and principles, signifying arrangement. Its focus relies on the intelligibility and schematic arrangement of the phenomena through of the taxonomy approach.

Effectiveness of the Blended Learning



Conclusion

The teaching landscape is rapidly changing; the technological rise of the 21st Century widespread integration of those technologies in to our society, combined with access to the internet has integrally changed teaching in just a few years. Teaching methods need to evolve to keep up with times and incorporate integrated technologies in to the learning model. Blended Learning is a natural development to the growing accessibility of e-learning, online resources and the continued need for a human component in the learning experience. Blended Learning approach ensures that the learner is engaged and driving his or her individual learning experiences. Blended Learning also helps cater to the individual needs to the learner, most

students have unique learning styles and Blended Learning is more likely to cater to those needs than a traditional classroom teaching experience. It also offers flexible time frames that can be personalized to each person, offering them the ability to learn at their own pace.

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