



BLENDED LEARNING: AN INTERACTIVE COMBINATION OF PHYSICAL LEARNING AND DIGITAL LEARNING

Anssari Sahajadhussein Gulamhussein
Ph.D. Scholar
I.L.T. College of Education, Rajkot
(Affiliated with Saurashtra University, Rajkot)

Abstract

After the Covid19 epidemic, the use of blended learning is the most popular pedagogical concept of education. The concept of blended learning began in the early 2000s. In 2000, due to insufficient availability of technological resources, traditional face-to-face education was used instead of blended learning in education and blended method was used only for meeting, instruction or other work in a well-equipped institution or organization. As the world progresses, new technologies are being invented and at the same time, technological resources became readily available. The use of technology in education increased and as a result blended education emerged.

Keywords: Traditional Learning, Online Learning, Virtual Learning, Distance Learning, Digital Learning, Blended Learning, Learning through Technology, Flipped Learning.

Introduction

Blend word means mix, mingle, combine, put together, fold in, merge, unify, compound, integrated, commix, intermix, unite, combine, link, connect, associated, coalesce etc...

Blended learning means an interactive combination of physical learning and digital learning. Blended learning also called phygital learning.

BLENDED LEARNING = **PHYSICAL LEARNING** + **DIGITAL LEARNING**

The meaning of "mixed learning" has changed over time. Only definition from 2006 to current to be consider as current, so composite definition is:

“Blended learning is combination of internet and digital media with established classroom form that require physical co-presence of teachers and students.”



In blended learning we are using some words like traditional, online, virtual, distance, and digital. These all words sound the same but in meaning they are different from each other.

- **Traditional Learning**

Traditional learning means students learn with Face-to-Face based communication. For Ex. “Brick-and-Mortal” (Blackboard and Chock) school structure.

- **Online Learning**

Online learning means students learn with any video platform via Internet. Where student must be present while teacher may be present or not. For Ex. via YouTube platform (teacher not present), via Video meeting platform like Live class (student and teacher both must be present).

- **Virtual Learning**

Only one difference between online learning and virtual learning is that student and teacher both must be virtually present here.

- **Distance Learning**

Distance learning is the way of education where student not physically presented in school and student corresponded with school via mail. Nowadays distance learning involves online learning.

Distance learning is may be completely distance learning or combination of distance learning and traditional classroom instruction (called hybrid or blended). For ex. Vocational B.Ed. programme for untrained teachers provided by BAOU and IGNOU.

- **Digital Learning**

Digital learning means learning with electronic media. In other words, Digital learning is any kind of learning with technology that makes effective use of technology in learning. It includes the application of a wide spectrum of practices. Digital learning includes virtual learning and blended learning.

Note: First time advertisement for the weekly mailed lesson in the Boston Gazette in 1728 for "Caleb Phillips, a teacher of the new method of shorthand". Caleb Phillips found students who wanted to learn weekly lessons by correspondence. Caleb Phillips is local teacher and start newly ways of learning. At that time nobody gives important to newly method of teaching and he came to be known as “New Shorthand Method” teacher. Caleb Phillips made history by using Distance learning for the first time in 1728.

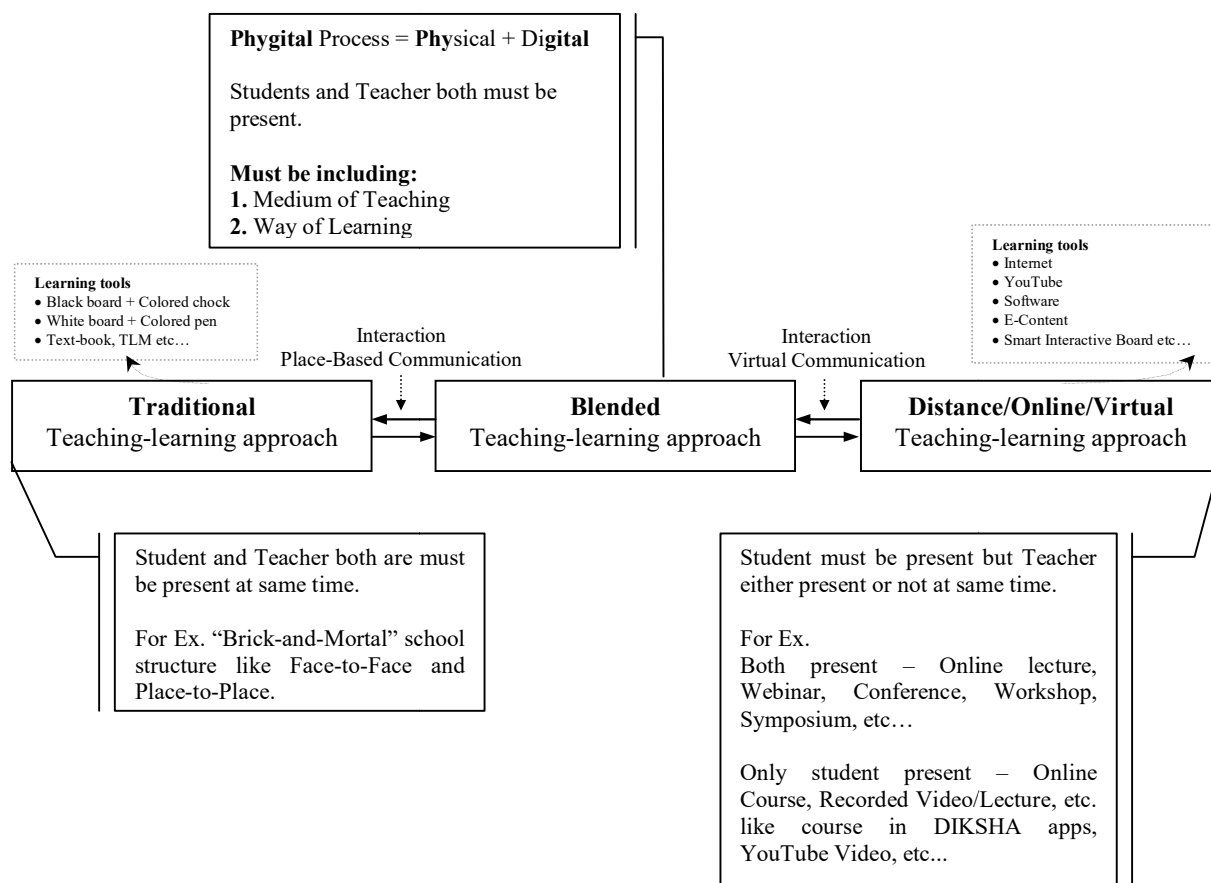


• **Blended Learning**

Students learn via electronic/online media with traditional face-to-face learning is called blended learning.

Conceptual Structure of Blended Learning

Figure 1: shows the conceptual structure of blended learning with its features like learning tools, way of communication, medium of teaching, way of learning etc...



[Figure 1: Conceptual Structure of Blended Learning]

Medium of Teaching:

Teacher or Instructor must be use technological resource like Internet, YouTube or Video, Multimedia, Presentation Slide, Real-Time example, Visual E-Content, Graphical presentation of content, Use appropriate educational software etc...



Way of Learning:

Student learns with own convenience place by educational technology. For ex. Live Class, Online course etc...

Note: In classroom, you put one computer that means it's not blended learning. It is a myth of blended learning. Blended learning must be including medium of teaching and way of learning that describe above with use of appropriate educational technology.

Models of Blended Learning

1. Flipped model

The usual classroom education is reversed under the flipped paradigm. Outside of the classroom, learners often first come into contact with the instructional content through texts, online modules, or video lectures. Following that, class time is devoted to discussions, group projects, exercises, and active learning activities that strengthen and apply the previously taught subject.

The flipped paradigm gives students the freedom to learn at their own pace and enables more individualized and interactive instruction during in-person sessions.

2. Face-to-face driver model

Since the majority of the training is conducted in a classroom environment under the supervision of an instructor, the face-to-face driver blended learning approach is the most similar to conventional classroom instruction. This method provides learners who are having trouble understanding the new material or who are lagging behind the training schedule with individualized, tailored support.

3. Rotational model

The rotational model involves students switching between several forms of instruction, including in-person instruction, online exercises, small-group discussions, and individual study. These rotations can be based on learners' progress or follow a set timetable (daily, weekly, etc.). Employees can work in the modality that best meets their needs at any given time thanks to its flexibility and support for different learning styles.

4. Flex Model

Learners have a great deal of autonomy and choice over their learning path thanks to the flex model. It blends virtual education with on-site assistance as required. When using an adaptive learning platform,



students can access online resources and content at any time and from any location, which makes it ideal for self-paced learning. When needed, instructors are on hand to help students navigate the content and resolve any difficulties.

5. Enriched virtual model

The enriched virtual model is mostly an online course with sporadic in-person instruction. The majority of learning takes place virtually, but for practical exercises, tests, and group projects, students attend in-person classes or workshops at prearranged times.

This methodology ensures that students receive both individualised instruction and opportunities for group engagement by fusing the flexibility of online learning with the advantages of in-person connection.

Benefits of Blended Learning

Blended learning models offer "the best of both worlds" for corporate training and employee development by fusing online and virtual learning methods with in-person, face-to-face instruction. Benefits consist of:

1. Enhanced Efficiency

With blended learning, students can finish some training modules utilising online resources, which frees up classroom time by allowing for post-training knowledge assessments. Furthermore, blended learning allows for the integration of several learning modalities and allows the curriculum to be tailored to the individual learning preferences of staff members, including visual, auditory, reading/writing, or kinesthetic learning.

2. Enhanced Involvement

The monotony of traditional corporate training is broken up by a blended learning model, which provides learners with a range of digital tools and helpful resources to help them learn and remember the material. By giving students a variety of opportunities for independent study and carefully fusing digital and practical training methods, this kind of approach increases student engagement and offers a really interactive learning environment.



3. Adaptability

By enabling employees to use digital resources to study at their own speed, blended learning approaches empower workers while providing managers and staff with flexibility and convenience. To make sure they remember the content, learners can review micro-learning lesson videos and complete online tests at their own leisure.

4. Lower Expenses

Traditional classroom instruction that takes place in person comes with a number of fees, such as those related to travel, housing, food, and transportation. IBM calculates that travel and accommodation account for over 40% of the cost of in-person instruction. When it comes to corporate training, business leaders and executives can use a blended learning model to save expenses and boost Return on Investment.

Difference between Flipped learning and Blended learning

Flipped classrooms and blended learning are two different methods of instruction. Flipped classes are more digital, and blended learning is more conventional. Although a blended learning model incorporates both, a flipped classroom still requires students to engage with one another in person. With a combined approach, teachers can focus more of the class period on higher-order learning tasks by allocating a significant amount of it to high-value instructional time.

Conclusion

It is noted that "blended learning" is seen as helpful, pleasurable, supportive, adaptable, and motivating for learners in all of the studies this paper reviews. These elements, however, are insufficient to foster an environment conducive to learning. Put differently, educators can foster a constructive learning atmosphere by utilizing

Blended learning environments ought to foster greater student participation in the classroom and look for ways to increase social contact through increased teamwork. To get the most out of this strategy, the merging of in-person and virtual learning environments should also be carefully designed.

In addition, research on blended learning has been conducted with a range of students and institutions, including postgraduates, middle schoolers, nurses, English language learners, and military personnel



enrolled in advanced courses. As a result, each of these instances suggests that blended learning will receive more attention from various sectors.

In the near future, more research should be conducted to help administrators and instructors build a successful combination. Furthermore, tablets, smart phones, and other touch-screen gadgets will be the norm in the near future, making them some of the upcoming topics covered in blended learning courses. The topic of "How should we organize such learning environments in order to support learning effectively?" will continue to be crucial as new types of blends and the blending of education with various technologies emerge. The response is that in order to educate more imaginative and inquisitive kids who read, write, and produce for the world, we should research how to include constructivist and collaborative models into blended learning environments.

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