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Teaching through Hybrid Learning – An Overview

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ABSTRACT

The newest continuous trend in education is hybrid learning, which combines elements of traditional offline instruction with those found online. It is used to coordinate teaching that takes place both physically and virtually, both in-person and online. It fosters an environment that allows for greater flexibility in the teaching and learning process so that students may fully comprehend the instructional tactics. It is tough for both teachers and students because it is different from standard education. The disruption of digital technology and the departure from the traditional classroom may be a challenge for learners. Technical difficulties impede not only the individual student's learning but also the learning of other crew members. The variety of technological problems experienced by remote students ranges from voice clarity and connection issues to more complicated computer/laptop problems or the inability to use software that is appropriate for the course. The likelihood of having a positive learning experience is extremely slim, depending on how serious the technological problems are. It is also crucial for teachers to transition from traditional classroom instruction to the development of digital skills, pedagogical effectiveness, or the capacity to recognise when various hybrid learning models are appropriate given the circumstances. The hardest part of providing an equal learning experience is keeping both the students who are physically in the classroom and the students who are learning remotely engaged. The detailed review of hybrid learning is the paper's main topic.

Keywords: *Classroom Learning, Hybrid Learning, Online Teaching, Student Community, Teaching-Learning Process*

In contrast to traditional classroom instruction, hybrid learning completely alters how education is provided in the contemporary period. The term "hybrid learning" refers to synchronous learning that incorporates both in-person and online learning at the same time. Understanding how hybrid learning bridges the virtual and classroom modalities of education is crucial. By carefully examining the challenges experienced by both students who are physically present in the classroom and those who are learning remotely in the virtual mode, educators can overcome their teaching commitments. The utilisation of numerous online resources, including video conferencing, testing, and teaching software, is a component of hybrid learning. Asynchronous learning methods like online exercises and video tutorials are a part of hybrid education. When hybrid learning successfully blends in-person instruction with

online learning that can also be adjusted based on the requirements of the learners, it is at its finest. The learners can select their preferred learning style during the online or offline lessons. They are given access to internet learning tools, and they have freedom in how they choose to learn.

Hybrid Learning Vs Blended Learning

Due to their greater similarities, the phrases hybrid learning and blended learning are sometimes used interchangeably. Both are separate instructional paradigms, though. Blended learning blends synchronous and asynchronous learning methods, allowing students to work at their own leisure on online projects and watch instructional videos. On the other hand, hybrid learning is a teaching strategy in which instructors instruct both in-person and online students at the same time. In contrast to blended learning, hybrid learning combines face-to-face training with asynchronous learning techniques.

Importance of Hybrid Learning

Hybrid learning combines traditional and online instruction at the same time, and this approach gained popularity, particularly after the COVID - 19 pandemic when students were compelled to stay at home. However, hybrid learning came to the aid of the teachers, allowing the students to complete their study. Due to the distance, limited availability of transportation options, and accessibility issues for those with disabilities when students were required to attend classes on a regular basis after lockdown, hybrid learning became more appealing to students. The students were able to resume their education because the teachers delivered lessons in both offline and online formats to isolated areas. This allowed the students to maintain contact while away from school for an extended period of time.

Hybrid Learning Model

A hybrid learning model combines in-person training with online learning resources. To better meet the needs of the students, it also incorporates adaptive and remote learning

techniques. It gives students a tailored learning experience. Students gain from both online and traditional classroom instruction. Additionally, it offers a flexible learning environment and conducts ongoing formative and summative assessments for the students. The use of a digital library and online internships by students also helps them learn more effectively.

Role of the teacher

In hybrid learning, teachers play the role of a supervised professional. The teacher is required to offer both offline and online teaching strategies to the students. The professors must be present in the students' digital domain, too, according to the students. Teachers should start conversations with the students so that they can ask questions, get answers, and have meaningful interactions. The instructor serves as a digital motivator and teaches the students appropriate online conduct. In an electronic classroom, a teacher's duties include adaptability, punctuality, digital engagement, practice-spaced virtual learning, and efficient communication with the students.

Student Engagement and its difficulties

The main potential issue with hybrid learning is how to keep students interested. It is difficult for the teacher to maintain student engagement while ensuring an equal teaching-learning experience for those physically present in the classroom and those who are learning remotely. Because remote learners would be excluded from the face-to-face activities, the approaches utilised in the classroom may not be feasible or appropriate for students in the hybrid learning environment. The students in the classroom learning environment may become distracted and have their train of thought interrupted by the continual and focused efforts to engage the remote learners. The lack of direct eye contact and the educator's expression may cause remote learners to show signs of disengagement, which can result in boredom and a lack of interest in the course material. The educator must concentrate on activities that are appropriate regardless of the teaching-learning techniques used if they are to overcome student engagement issues. Active learning can be accomplished by engaging in group or classroom discussions, administering tests, and exchanging study materials online. These activities can be made possible by screen sharing and live streaming technologies with the aid of the Google Classroom, Google Meet, and Zoom platforms.

The Technical Obligations

Technology must be used both in the classroom and for online instruction in hybrid learning. Another potential issue that can arise while using the hybrid learning approach is the appearance of technological problems. Technical challenges affect students who are learning remotely as well as those present in the classroom. It is impossible for distant learners to have

a positive learning experience because of challenges with the sound, connecting to the live stream, and significant hardware and software problems with their computers. Technical problems have varying effects on pupils at different times because there is no "one size fits all" solution, although some learning challenges can be avoided by training and other activities. Remote students must sign in to the online platforms in advance; doing so will make it simple to spot technological problems and attempt to fix them. The study materials' recording and uploading could help with the follow-up of lessons that are missed later on because of technical difficulties.

Problems faced in facilitating Collaborative Learning

In a hybrid learning environment, it is challenging to promote collaborative learning. In a traditional classroom setup, learners can be physically organised into groups, but live social interaction opportunities may not be practical for distant learners. The simultaneous use of two learning styles is therefore a barrier to collaboration. The online platform's shared whiteboarding, screen sharing, and live annotations with "Huddle groups" allow the hybrid learning course to be engaging for distant learners. Online platforms that offer synchronous communication chats can aid in simulating the advantages of face-to-face conversations.

Sharing of Files and Learning Materials

Since students are taking part in the hybrid learning course from various physical and geographic places, the requirement to transfer files, learning materials, and other content between devices becomes more important. To guarantee that there is no disruption in understanding and applying the shared study materials, the educators must establish a clear sharing plan. Since collaborative projects may lose its critical substance if two students find it impossible to share and access the shared files of the project they are working on, compatibility of sharing the learning materials is crucial. The inability to access the shared files could cause the project submission to be delayed. The students should use standardised technologies as they work together on a single assignment. In a hybrid learning environment, cloud computing technology can be utilised to standardise the hardware that distant learners use. A wonderful technique to allow file sharing in a secure setting where security features like passwords may be employed and access can be easily controlled to those who do not truly require it is through cloud file-sharing alternatives.

Advantages of Hybrid Learning

The main aim of hybrid learning is to adapt and adopt the benefits of both online and face to face instruction. The advantages of hybrid learning are:

- It provides flexible learning experience to the learners.
- It enhances communication between the teacher and learners and among the peers
- It is comfortable for the learners those who are not able to attend the classes in person
- It engages the learners with classroom interaction, presentations and group work
- It motivates the learners to engage in meaningful interaction
- It provides opportunities for the learners with learner autonomy
- It enables the learners to expand their knowledge horizon by independent academic exploration
- It enables effective and efficient use of learning resources
- It provides flexible teaching and learning experience
- It accommodates differently abled learners as well
- It reaches all the learners even from remote areas
- It reduces absenteeism among the learners
- It acquaints leaners to use modern technology

Disadvantages of Hybrid Learning

Although hybrid learning has many advantages, it also has certain setbacks, namely,

- Not all the learners have accessibility to technology
- Learners may lack accountability
- It requires specially designed courses
- It increases teachers workload
- It increases learners cognitive load
- It is not cost effective as it employs more online tools
- It limits the teacher – learner interaction
- Learners may get distracted
- It lacks human touch

Besides these disadvantages, hybrid learning is a blessing in disguise for the learners to pursue their education without any hindrance especially during the pandemic.

Recommendations

The following recommendations can be followed by the teachers for effective employability of hybrid learning in their classrooms. They are

- Teachers should frame relevant subject/course to teach using hybrid model
- Instructional objectives and specific outcome of learning should be defined clearly for each course

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- Proper interaction should be initiated among the learners so as to ensure smooth conduct of the course
- After the completion of discussion in the forum, the learners can come to their respective home groups which are well equipped with the texts
- Teacher training programmes should be organized by the educational institutions so as to enable them to use technology without any complexity.

Conclusion

Hybrid learning offers learners to resume their education irrespective of time and space. It enhances the technological skills among the teachers and learners. It provides teachers and learners to adapt and adopt emerging technologies so as to keep them updated which will in turn enable the learners to develop their technological competence. This research paper has offered opportunities to explore hybrid learning to be implemented for the betterment of the learners. Hybrid learning has turned the future of learning.

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