

“Blended Learning Is The New Normal For Current Education Scenarios”

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Abstract:

The main purpose of this paper is to enlistment towards the new paradigm shift in current education scenario and also it focused towards multifaceted role of blended learning. It is otherwise called as hybrid or mixed-mode learning. In blended learning educator’s use of classical or conventional approach of classroom teaching meet with the non-conventional or contemporary teaching and learning pedagogy for the same students studying the same content in the same course with the help of numerous ICT tools, in other word it is simply a “thoughtful fusion of face-to-face and online learning experiences”. “Blended Learning” is one of the fruitful ways that give the opportunity to the students interacts with each other without covering any physically distance. It empowered both the teachers and learner to replace or augmented class timing by online learning experiences and also online can include varying degrees of interaction or just time alone in independent study and learning activities.

However, in a quality blended learning experience, the content and activities of both in-person and online learning are integrated with one another and work toward the same learning outcomes with the same content. It is cost-effective way to deliver current education.

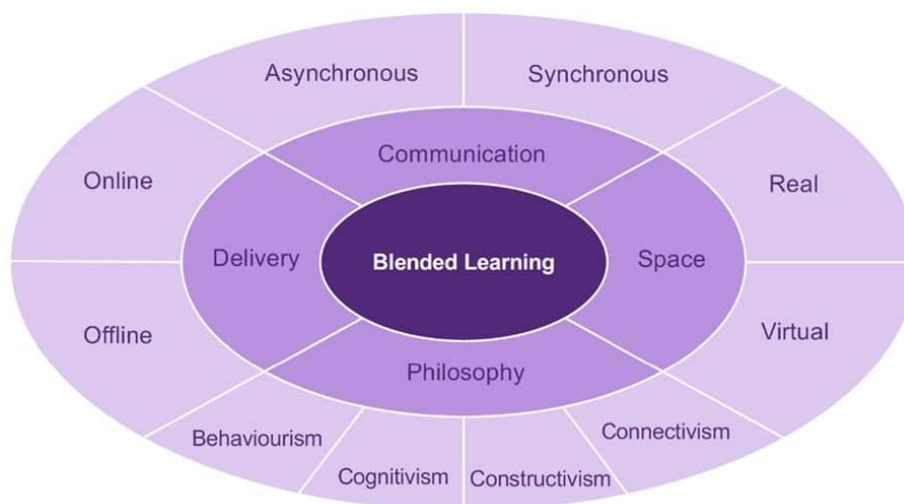


Figure 1 "Blended Learning"

It enhances learner creativity, independence and self-direction. It empowered the students learning skills, greater access to information, improved satisfaction and learning outcomes, and it also create an opportunities for both to learn with others and to each others. It improves the maximum level of engagement that helps to achieves higher levels of learning.

Keyword: Approach, Augmented, Blended, Content, Conventional, Digital Pedagogy, Educator, Empowered, Fusion, Hybrid, ICT, Interaction, Self-direction, Smart Board.

Introduction:

Though current education system is reform rapidly due to the pandemic our classroom transform actual to virtual with the help of ITC henceforth the Digital Pedagogy is integral part of holistic teaching and learning and without it one cannot excel in present academic situation. It turns old “Chalk & Duster” methods to new and advanced “Smart Board” concepts. Digital pedagogy meets the all requirements for 21st century teaching and learning skills and it’s become the new normal for current education system.

Current academic scenario required new knowledge along with various techniques and technologies, both in terms of content and application. This is a cyclical process; go gradually but due to this pandemic mass transmission of harm full Corona viruses Covid-19 triggering new knowledge that have a significant impact on the system and institutions of delivering formal education trough chalk and duster methods, also transform numerous changes that are indirectly or directly connected with various aspects of knowledge creation, development and delivery. All this is inseparably linked with the changing of the paradigm of "traditional" learning and with the changing of the philosophy, the approaches to seeking and delivering new knowledge and introducing new technologies. Due to different phases of lockdown not only in India but in all over world pandemic served as a stimulant to escort in un-expected changes in the academic world.

The blended learning is otherwise called as hybrid or mixed-mode learning. It is widely used to enhance the teaching and learning experience because it combines both classical approaches of “Chalk & Duster” methods with online (non-conventional) teaching through various ICT tools. In current education system, blended learning is not only one of the most multifaceted and diversifying segment with great dormant but also it is most important and essential component for Y2K education pedagogy for holistic learning approach, especially in Covid era. Blended learning enhances the virtue and competence of worthwhile learning experiences. The paradigm shift in higher education, keeping view in mind globalization, rapid change in technology and 3d formula of current education system i.e. Digitization, Digitalization, Digital Transformation and demand for better quality of present education henceforth the institutions’ plan their policies, which inculcate new modes and methods in delivering knowledge.

It empowered with video recorded lectures, live video and other digitally enabled learning opportunities that create generosity among the students, there focus and rate of interest multiply number of time because the blended learning break the monotony of the classes. Individual time management and flexible mode of excess work on online lessons, projects and assignments at

home or elsewhere is the another opportunity of the blended learning. Periodically meeting with the Mentors to review their learning progress, discuss their work, ask questions or receive assistance with difficult concepts. It is not be happened in classical mode of teaching.

Blended Learning:

The merging of conventional class room teaching means the traditional Chack and Duster methods with non conventional, modern use of online digital teaching by the help of different ICT tool's for the same contents and same class is called "blended learning". Blended learning is simply an "introspective blending of face-to-face and online learning experiences". To cope up with hard time of pandemics many educational institutions' offers various blended programs, which can completed with both online and offline mode. In other words, blended learning is a term as hybrid or mixed-mode learning. Which empower the student's to choose their course as well as the mode whether they go for offline or online as per their convenience.

During this paradigm shift in higher education sector due to this pandemic, without attending campus physically students are connected digitally through online, this technology-mediated components not only enhancing their teaching and of learning experiences, but it also save their qualities time.

The scope and justification of blended learning are many; it's a good way to get a sense of the range of possibilities. For example if some up teachers are tech savvy they share their knowledge as collaborative learning about how to teach in a blended delivery system. Students get benefited with recorded video recorded lectures, live video and other digitally enabled teaching and learning e-resource materials also it empowered the student's to live interactions with other groups of students and the teachers from his own institute or other. It also gives freedom to work individually or collaborative on online projects, lessons or assignments from their home or elsewhere. Frequent interval of time students and teacher meet together online or offline and review learning progress discuss and receive assistance on difficult concepts and theorem.

As per its methods and applications is concerns blended learning can be divided into three main models with its own unique characteristics features is concern.

1.1. Blended Presentation and Interaction:

This is the first model, of blended learning as per its name is concerns blended presentation and interaction, it is most relevant and happening model with its primary component is based on classroom engagement. It's a successful model where students can extensively engage, with out-sourcing support from beyond class, especially through various open access resources' and online activities. The most relevant and contemporary term in present education scenarios the flipped classroom or flipped curriculum approach is a common example of this model.

As part of ‘Digital India’ initiative, the government also started many e-Education portals to provide online education in remote and urban areas using smart phones, apps and internet services. Further, this unpleasant and suddenly occur pandemic, government has taken several initiatives (e.g., Swayam, Diksha, Swayam Prabha, E-Pathsala, Nistha, Olabs, Virtual Labs, PM e Vidya programme, etc.) so no doubt this digital transformation or open e learning resource gateway not only support but it strengthen this model.

1.2. Blended block model:

The second model of blended learning is commonly known as “Blended block model” or it also

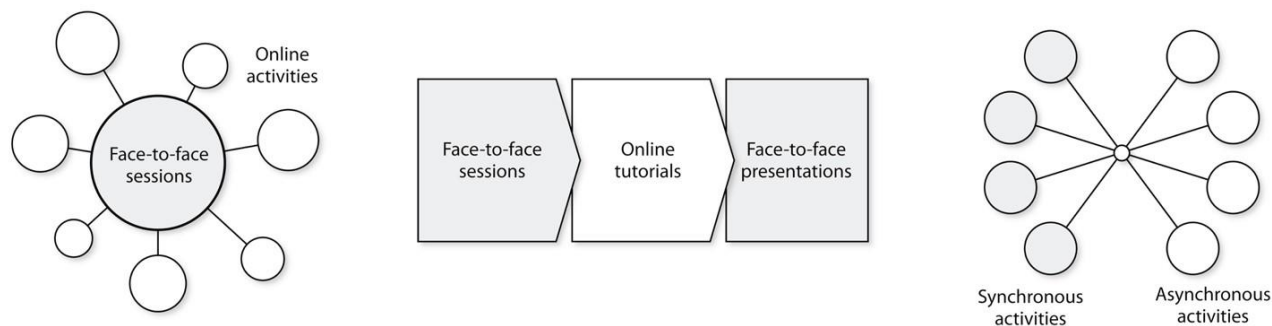


Figure 2 1.Blended Presentation and Interaction

called a “Programme Flow Model”, In this particular model of blended learning a sequence of structured blocks or activities, blended with classical or conventional approach of teaching and learning that means both in face-to-face learning and online study.

These models emphasize, and commitment to acquired both academics goals and hand on practice. For smooth deliberation of this model it is suggested that intensive face-to-face session is taken within one day or half days and also plan to conduct weekly online tutorial/seminars, interactive activities online content and resources.

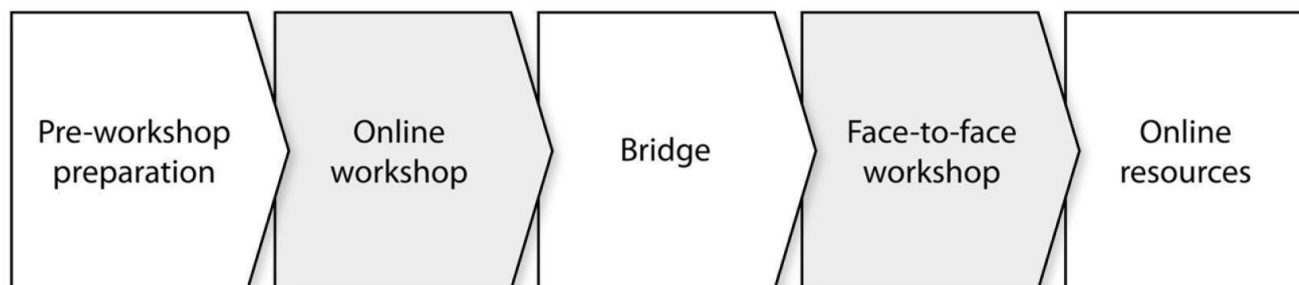


Figure 3 Blended block model

1.3. Fully-Online:

The third model is technology based which is truly reflected “Digitization” and “Digital Transformation” of education through inculcating various ICT tools for teaching and learning. Henceforth the third model is called fully online but may still be considered as a mode of blended learning if the pedagogy incorporates both contemporaneous learning such as online tutorials along

with hand on practices or activities like discussion forums. Thus, third component of blended learning are combination of short lecture podcasts with online resources and learning activities through online tutorials and also interaction via online collaboration, discussion forums and/or group work.

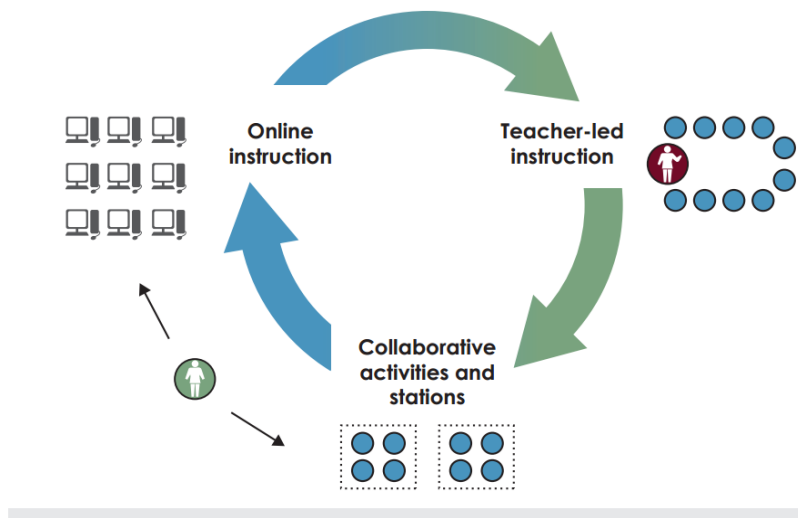


Figure 4 Fully- Online Model

The implementation of blended learning is very much essential and relevant in current education scenarios'. It is a faster growing segment in higher education along with its prime motto to enhance both the vertical i.e. an educators and the student's while at the same time it gives greater flexibility and convenience. Also it empowers learner's creativity and independence.

2. Conceptual frameworks of blended learning Blended Learning Practice

To understanding the soul of blended learning and the components that make it successful in contemporary scenarios of current education pedagogy. The conceptual frameworks of blended learning are major's component. It have numerous models so it is not possible to review all models of blended learning rather here I, try to overview of the major theoretical learning frameworks of blended learning. So the most common and successful model is the Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System (CABLS) framework and the Community of Inquiry.

These two are most relevant and commonly adopted for successfully implementation of structural design and holistic approach of teaching and learning. This two models are not only perform well in higher educational system but it also applicable to blended learning in any level of education and it also gives freedom of adjustments keeping in mind students needs and justification. It work for the both verticals whether for a teacher or instructor work in 21st Century modern schools, colleges or universities by the same time it is also applicable for an industrial workplace or the corporate world.

2.1. The Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System (CABLS) framework

This model is widely acceptable and applicable in all over world from grass root level to higher education sector because of its student's centric approach. In this model students are placed at centre focus while all other components are influence each other. To better understanding the CABLS framework here I mentioned the info graphics of the model which is explain all the elements with their position. CABLS model have six components and each components have their own sub- system, which are as follow:

2.1.1. The Learner:

In this fasted changing scenarios of higher education the new technique and system the role and responsibility of students also changes. To cope of this new transformation the students engage more extensively with maximum use of their time that becomes turn them into passive to active learner. Training and lifelong learning is two major key components of 21st century teaching and learning pedagogy.

2.1.2. The Teacher:

The teachers also more groom, interactive and tech savvy as blended learning is concern. The impression and responsibility will co-evolve with students as both are influencing to each other with respect to other four elements in the system. The significant diversity of teacher and facilitators' are adopted blended learning in such a way that learning not only utilized their maximum time for self study but also they come with productive work as 21st-century teaching and learning demands. Henceforth these "teachers" are justify themselves with new and advanced identified, such as facilitators, mentors, advisors and moderators.

2.1.3. The Technology:

Generally the term technology is refers to the gadget, equipments or any mechanism that help to the human capacity to the things done. The need and justification of technology is directly associated with our life and livelihood. Some of technical mechanism leads to new uses with significant values is called as emerging technologies. In teaching and learning required new technology and its roles became tragically change so both facilitators' and learner intervenes ICT, with objective of quality and contents.

In form of blended learning the use of ICT, many interactive technology are used with due course of digital transformation in teaching and learning is concern. Most of the medium of instructions are made for diverse learner groups with focus to a large range of fruitful outcomes. Though there is still much testing and research needed to developed more number of technology, model and mechanism for teaching and learning. In this framework, the technology is an integral part of the system and it includes all elements which influence to each other.

2.1.4. The Content:

In the delivery of learning the subject matter and contents is an important. E learning content simply refer as the material and elements that used to refers to engage learners to achieved the

mastering in that particular subjects. Many dynamic, interactive, media-rich materials are available online its gives the opportunities for both teachers and learners accesses due on course experience, the medium treated as a dynamic between the both the learner and teacher. The institutions' used the user friendly technology which is not only support learner but it also create an impact the choice and use of content. Henceforth the students get the opportunity for deep learning of content also this technology engage multiple learners through multiple learning modes influenced by many ICT elements.

2.1.5. The Learner Support:

In current education scenario most of the good institutions' provide their students the purify or best e resources contents with objective to make their learner became more competent learners. So requirement of Learner support cell is one of the major components of this framework. Keeping in view producing a competent blended learner a support mechanism is required to explain complex blended structure as well as support can involve technology troubleshooting, material access and learning to communicate effectively online, as well as all the other usual support around understanding content and assignments.

Because once a learners understand the applications and processes is not for a day or years but it is a lifelong asset. For Wang et al. (2015), very beautifully explained the term which is more rational and logical as per him "learner support means "academic support focusing on helping learners to develop effective learning strategies, such as time management and collaborative skills, and technical support aiming to help students improve their knowledge of the technological tools and the fluency with which they use the tools to complete specific learning tasks" (p. 384).

2.1.6. The Institutions:

For the implementation of 21st century teaching and learning centre's infrastructure is the basic requirement for adopting any blended learning framework. So in offline classroom-based learning requires buildings, desks, lighting and other accessories of brick-and-mortar institutions; but as in blended learning institutions 'requires technological infrastructure and digital custodian. Institutions also build learner support management system is a necessary for running a successful blended learning pedagogy.

Though each mentioned components have its own individual characteristics features and sub system, but also one of each components have deep relationship with others. Here the relationships are components are dynamic and integrative as similar as any complex system. The CABLS frame work of blended learning emerges from the role, relationships and the comparative influence of each component with the others components.

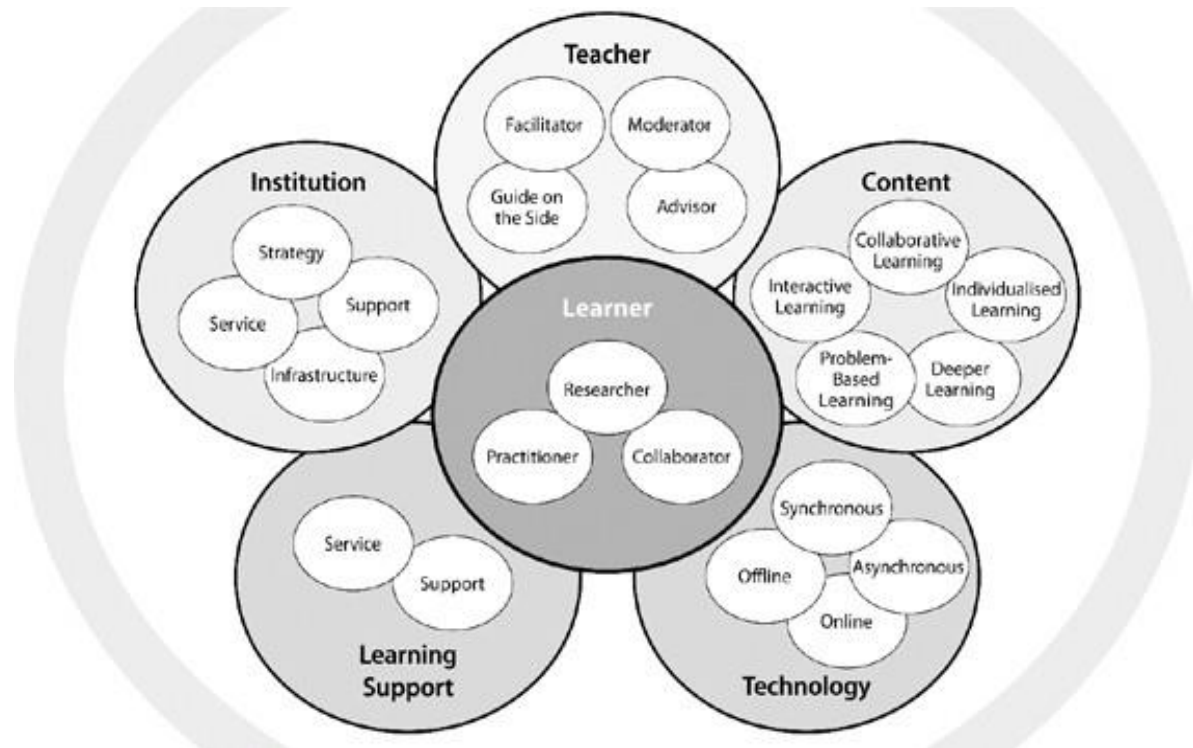


Figure 5 The CABLS framework

3. Creating a Community of Inquiry:

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework is another successful framework of blended learning which supports mentoring inquiry by identifying teaching activity and provides guidance, based on theory and practice, regarding blended learning program pedagogy and contents involve for the same.

CoI framework is one of widely acceptable model for higher education because it incorporated three major components such as (social presence, cognitive presence and teaching presence) henceforth it is most relevant and give the opportunities for self-reflection which is not only one of important parameter of active cognitive approach and interactive learning but also a part of peer-teaching. Through this framework students are get expert guidance from the facilitators' at their convenience time. So the engagement of learner should be encourages by shared group activities which leads to creating communities of inquiry in the classroom whether

face-to-face, online or blended mode.

This COI model of blended learning is one of the most researched pedagogical approaches in higher education sector such as universities and colleges. As per many experts the critical analysis of social presence is a new way to approach teaching beyond strict transmission models of delivery. A significant amount of research has also been done to measure the components of this framework and how they operate in reference to one another. To understand the exact value of cognitive presence a more detailed examination is required. The best part of COI framework is that as none of the presences stand alone, all are overlapping creates an impact on each other components for solving practical inquiry: triggering events, exploration, integration and resolution. In presence of all four components it establishing deep and meaningful learning.

According to the experts Akyol and Garrison (2011) cognitive presence is the one of major components because it creates a balance among social and teaching presence. Direct instruction and facilitation of cognitive activity, beyond just explaining content, is a key role for teachers using this framework. According to corroborates Archibald's (2010) statement the social presence and teaching presence both are form 69% of the variance in cognitive presence. CoI framework based on concept "teaching presence, rather than "teacher presence," trough the facilitators' of e-learning resource materials in both audio visual form by record, plays etc. available 24 x 7 so in this way teaching presence and it allows for and fosters peer-teaching among students.

According to (Cleveland-Innes & Campbell, 2012; Stenbom, Cleveland-Innes & Hrastinski, 2016) in CoI model emotional presence is defined as the apparent expression of emotion, affect and feeling, by an individuals in a community of inquiry, as they relate to and interact with the learning technology, course content, students and instructor. Exploratory factor analysis suggests emotional presence may stand alone as a separate element in this framework though to know more about the relationship between emotional presence and other elements in the CoI framework further research is required.

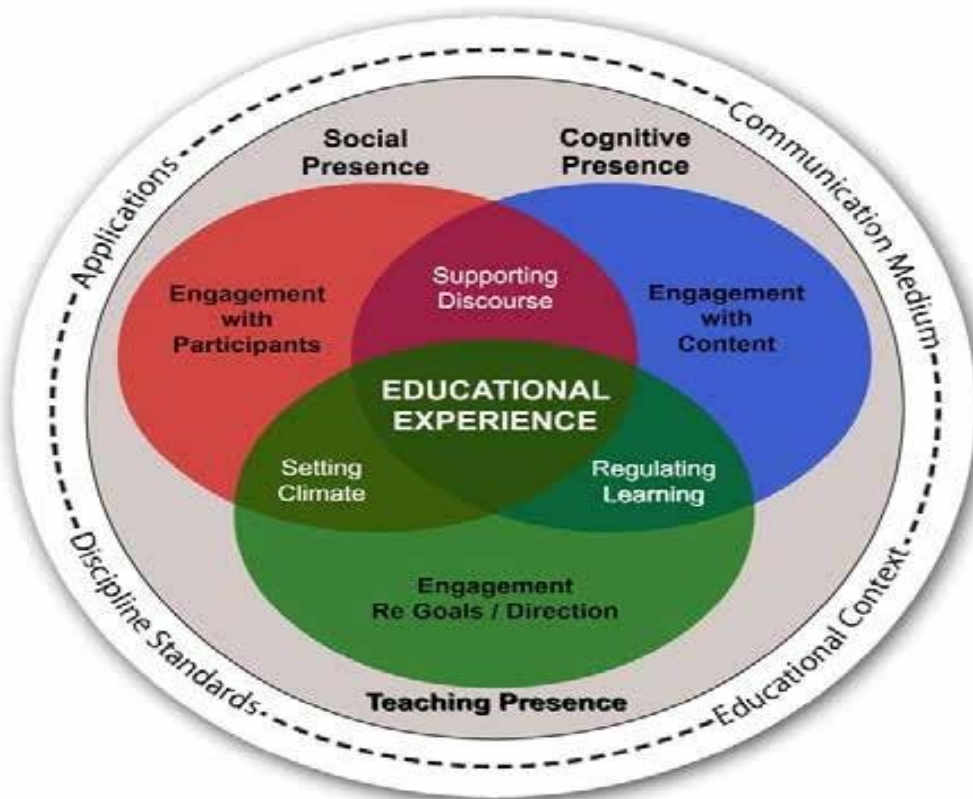


Figure 6 Blended Learning as Technology-Enabled Learning in the Classroom

4. SAMR Model:

The last but not the least here we have discussed another type of blend learning which is based on technology in the classroom otherwise known as technology-enabled learning. Here the engagement and learning outcome foster by adding technology. Henceforth the SAMR model, most applicable and result oriented for K–12, education institutions'. The progressive implementation of new technology in form of digital transformation is an approach for SAMR model. SAMR model is work with logical and rational approach, majorly focuses on four important elements that are discussed below.

4.1.1. Substitution:

Instead of pen and paper in this particular model computer technology is used in the same way to fill a worksheet digitally either on a tablet, Smartphone or in a computer. There is no functional difference, only the mode instructions will be changed from manual to digital by the learner's choice or teacher directed.

4.1.2. Augmentation:

The traditional approach (pen and paper) conducting quizzes will be replaced by technology. It intervenes so the same will be hosted by computer with the help of different kinds of ICT tools. It would give a different dimension to the traditional teaching and learning; henceforth, the auto-correct methods of the system not only archive the track records of each student but it is also capable of giving immediate feedback. Also, digitalizations of traditional classrooms through technology transform them into smart classes where blended with video, audio or dynamic text etc. which is a major component for enhancing the learners' learning experience.

4.1.3. Modification:

Mingling the digital ICT tools in classical mode of teaching and learning, the learners turn from passive to active and it changes the function of the lesson. Simple writing exercises can be more interactive and interesting by adding audio and video filters. That simply turns the whole activity based on a story and performance. It also empowers facilitators' and students to archive whole activity by recording so they can stream when they require.

4.1.4. Redefinition:

Here in this model, technology is used for new activities of teaching and learning. Rather than go and search books or printable resource material in libraries, students are using many search engines in internet e-resource form. Many new ICT tools and applications are programmed to complete the tasks assigned; for example, for good vocabulary and spell-check Grammarly is the commonly used application. Here is the pictorial graphic illustration of the SAMR Model of blended learning.

SAMR Model



Figure 7 SAMR Model (Brubaker, 2013)

Through all this above mentioned research we have the fair amount of knowledge regarding different kind of blended learning models and its successful implementation of blended learning, with a special focus towards the three major model of blended learning which are widely accepting by numerous institution's and organization's across the world **“Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System”**; **“The Community of Inquiry”**; and **“SMAR Model”**.

In the “Complex Adaptive Blended Learning System” (CABLS) framework analyses teaching and learning into a compact and dynamic model inculcated with six interacting elements such as learner, teacher, technology, content, learner support and institution but the CoI focuses inquiry-based teaching which is describing as meaningful learning which encompasses with cognitive convergence and teaching and social presences fourth elements of CoI emotional presence. Both frameworks can provide guidance in developing blended learning content and processes to support active, lifelong learners.

All the frame works empowered new learner to understand the values and necessity of blended learning in current education scenarios. Also its gives a platform to facilitators' to assessment' their creative interacting components or e-resources materials which design and offer a blended learning program. The most important is to understand the relationship between content, learners and technology.

Conclusion:

This pandemic open a new path, take away the classes actual to virtual mode within little span of time henceforth the classical approach of learning transform into the modern age of learning. The faculties adapt and transform to the new reality of online lectures, evaluations and examinations all are carried out in virtually. To cope off with this pandemic, where many of institutions faces

number of phases of lockdown so the current education system inculcated with various ICT tools and introduced of blended learning is practice as an on-going process, which has significantly contributed to a more extensive change of the educational process from grass root level to higher education sector.

Some restrictions, namely inexperience, limited resources and only a small (still) learning team of enthusiasts, caused frustration in the implementation of the blended learning project.

The significance of a holistic initiation of blended learning is noticeable in numerous fields. In teaching and learning, it induces discussion about the method of applying knowledge and the changed perception of how students accept the execution of the teaching affairs. The findings encourage more training courses on academics and its unique approaches from actual to virtual or in an e-environment. Henceforth, blended learning has its own place in this rapidly changing present current academic scenarios' with its broader effect. After saw the various perspectives It can be confirmed that blended learning enables is a powerful weapon for both teachers as well as for learner and it is also more coherent use of deliberation.

The outcome of blended learning, is more interactive, enthusiastic, rational and student centric beside this another major benefit are open access and spontaneous that's means it provide knowledge 24 X 7. Some of the flows and challenges are also found many eminent and competent mentor who are unable to cope up with new normal they simply lost their jobs and syllabi of several classes were add and subtract to make up for days lost.

However, the most of the rural belt and poor were left behind in the new online learning paradigm due to chose of right resources gadget such as laptops or Smartphone, limited bandwidth is another major challenges, unreliable Internet connectivity, designing courses with the pedagogic principles of both and integrating technology in a way that supports meaningful learning, safety and security cyber crime, unethical learning practices, academic dishonesty, both students and instructors must have technological literacy and competence with technology applications. Though few have the wealthy private and some of the premier public institutions quickly adapted to the new normal but most of the unhealthy and average public institutions suffered due to limited IT infrastructure, funds and resources.

With this flaws it is very much true that in this hard time (pandemic) where almost door are closed this is (blended learning) is empowered the institutions' to serve academic world, mingling with various tools of ITC, "Blended Learning "is treated as the new normal for current education scenarios." Further study is needed for the blended learning not only from the grass root level but also it comprises middle and higher educational sector. Starting from Schools, Colleges and Universities especially in the delivery of courses regarding different kind of pedagogical aspects such as e-contents, curriculum, questionnaires', evaluation assessment, assessment rubrics, session plan, teaching plan, assignment brief, improvements in course tasks format along with application's and implementation's.

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