

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING BLENDED LEARNING: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the key benefits of blended learning in educational institutions and the challenges educators/teachers and students face in the implementation of blended learning. With the use of a systematic literature review, 25 research papers were synthesized. To ensure a rigorous selection of relevant research studies on the topic while remaining flexible to include diverse views, this study followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework across multiple databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, and Mendeley. The research revealed that blended learning benefits students in a few different ways, e.g., increased autonomy, greater flexibility, inclusivity, support for diverse learning styles, and development of transferrable skills. There are also some challenges that both students and teachers still have to face. Internally, students are faced with distractions, especially from social media, and feelings of isolation, while teachers deal with resistance to change, low self-confidence, and increased workload. Externally, there is still a technological divide between rural and urban areas, a lack of teachers' involvement in the decision-making process, and a lack of clear policies and strategic direction within educational institutions.

Keywords: Benefits, challenges, blended learning, secondary schools, higher education

INTRODUCTION

The rise of digital technology in the past ten years has single-handedly transformed many areas of our lives, including how we learn and consume information. The availability of digital tools in schools has fundamentally changed the education landscape, facilitating students to access, create, and share knowledge beyond the boundaries of traditional classrooms. This shift requires us to redefine pedagogical strategies to leverage the full potential of technology in schools (Bates, 2019). Some digital tools have been developed in the education sector to help teachers deliver lessons, increase student autonomy, enhance academic process management, promote collaboration, and improve communication between teachers and students. During the COVID-19 pandemic, video conferencing tools such as Zoom and Google Meet became popular and widely used as teaching platforms to replicate face-to-face classes (Bailey, Almusharraf, & Almusharraf, 2022).

Two years into the pandemic, these tools were used to support blended learning as schools reinstated in-person classes. Blended learning is one of the teaching and