Students Perception of the Effect of Blended Learning on their Academic Achievements at University Level in Narowal

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Abstract

An engaging learning experience is produced by the unique educational strategy known as blended learning, which mixes traditional face-to-face instruction with online technology-mediated activities. Keeping the importance of blended learning, this research was designed to access the student's perception on effect of blended learning on students' educational achievements, problems and issues concerning with blended learning and what recommendations can be used to future researchers for the improvements in the modern era of blended learning. Quantitative research has been designed with a survey scale to meet the research objectives of the study. Researcher used stratified sampling in this research. The data were taken from 200 students. The data collected through a valid and reliable permitted questionnaire. Findings of the study showed a significant relation with components of questionnaire and demographics. As students consider blended learning less stressful but more challenging. They think blended learning is advantageous but less effective. As blended learning engage the students most but didn't force them to study. It could be noticed that more of females consider blended learning effective than that of males. In mixed learning contexts, students often display higher levels of engagement, contentment, and motivation. Comprehensive training program and support program may introduce to facilitate students with basic digital literacy skills

Keywords: Students Perception, Blended Learning (BL), Academic achievements, University level.

Introduction:

The current study focuses on students' perceptions of BL delivery and its impact on their academic performance at the university-level in Narowal. It specifically seeks to identify how hybrid learning affects students' achievements and learning. Hybrid or BL has been applied as one of the best delivery methods gaining attention in academic literature publication (Dziuban et al., 2024). The world of education has undergone significant digital transformation in line with technology growth, leading to universities' revision of their mode of learning. While the blended mode of learning has been praised and recommended for various learning institutions, especially during seminars and workshops, research

should be conducted to determine its significance. Precisely, research in a local context such as Narowal is key to determining how learning institutions have found blended or hybrid learning (Rovai, 2022).

While BL has become increasingly popular in the educational settings, the evidence concerning the student's perceptions regarding their academic outcomes are scarce, especially in the context of University of Narowal. The prevailing amount of literature related to BL emphasizes the institutional or instructor perspective and ignores the experience and opinion of the students, which undermines the internal perspective of its efficacy. The findings of the present study are expected to be offer a comprehensive insight into the peculiarities related to the integration of BL in the settings of Narowal (Graham, 2023).

Educators and policymakers need to know how students perceive BL in order to design suitable and effective instructional modalities. Through an examination of student experiences in BL, including their struggles and accomplishments, this research will shed light on educational trends and advise rationales that strive to foster systems that seamlessly facilitate learning. Additionally, the outcomes of this study may direct future BL implementation programs by framing appropriate contexts for the implementation of systems that enhance learning among students from Narowal and its environment (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2023).

The reason for choosing this topic is the need to understand the transformational capacity of BL in higher education and the necessity to assess the effectiveness of its implementation from the student perspective. It is expected that identifying the relationships between the various factors and students' academic performance in the context of BL will help the research to generate recommendations for practice that will be grounded in evidence and directed at the improvement of education quality and the building of a conducive environment for student learning and development. Thus, the overall goal of the research is to contribute to the improved quality and equity of education by enabling better student opportunities in the increasingly digital and globalized world (Means et al., 2022).

Objectives of the Research:
1) To determine the perception of students on effectiveness of BL by comparing who acknowledged BL with those who received traditional face-to-face instructions.
2) To suggest some recommendations and guidelines for policy makers for the successful implementation of BL at university level in Narowal.

Research Questions:
1) How does a learner perceive BL as compare to traditional classroom instructions?
2) What are the positive recommendations can be made to enhance the effective implementation of BL at university level in Narowal?

Literature review:

Blended learning, which combines face-to-face classroom instruction with online learning components, is on the rise in higher education. In the current study, a literary review of how university going students perceive blended learning and its impact on their academic

achievement has been investigated. This research was designed to examine what they think about the hybrid nature of this approach (combining face-to-face teaching with online learning activities); how do they feel it impact their overall performance. In discussing Narowal, Pakistan, researcher hope to illuminate the local context and expose some of these unique problems/plusses that students are encountering when engaging in their learning through Blended Learning (Ali,2024).

1. Definition and Models of Blended Learning

Blended learning is an education program that combines traditional classroom methods with non-classroom activities (such as self-paced studies or watching online instructional videos outside of the classroom). This duo offers the perfect combination of flexibility and interactivity that can suit every student's individual style as well as preference. The rotation model, flipped classroom, and flex model (among others) each provide a framework for structuring blended learning that allows implementation to be structured in most effective ways. All of these blended learning models seek to use the best parts of traditional face-to-face teaching, while also ensuring that the tech component reinforces opportunities for teachers and learners to create interactive and collaborative experiences that result in better learning(Adil,2024).

2. Academic Achievement and Blended Learning

Research yields several findings on how blended learning is linked to levels of scholastic achievement. There is research to suggest that compared with face-to-face learning, blended learning results in better learning outcomes as well as more engagement from students. Our findings indicate that this approach may have several advantages over conventional methods of instruction. However, some scientists claim that blended learning shows no significant differences in its effect on academic results when compared to traditional forms of studying. This finding seems to indicate that the efficacy of blended learning may be something than can and does vary across a multitude of factors. In blended learning environments; there are a number of factors that can affect academic achievement. Some of them are related to the design of the course, others with how technology is used on their learning process, and still more about students' features and skills. All of these factors, in one way or another, collectively help in determining the final effectiveness score of blended learning with respect to enhancing academic results (Alizer,2024).

3. Students' Perceptions of Blended Learning

The key to the efficacy of an EBP based using graded blended-learning depends largely on how students' perceive it. "For students that have a positive perception of this way of learning, they will feel more motivated and every time we reiterate the flexibility and comfort it can provide them with". It's because students feel more involved and active in their learning. Nevertheless, the adoption of blended learning has several challenges that might impact this perception. It can be really irritating with things like technological issues

(e.g., difficulties with online platforms or tools). Other students, however, feel isolated and miss the professional networking opportunity that traditional classroom learning provides. Another challenge is for students to effectively divide their time between online components and the offline ones of this course. Although this can have its own negative effect of the overall experience of blended learning for this reason, although the perception of positive aspects can help to increase motivation and comfort, it is necessary to overcome many obstacles in order to achieve the use of blended learning properly(Abdullah ,2024).

4. Blended Learning in Pakistani Context

Blended learning, which involves a mix of traditional face-to-face instruction and online learning components, is evolving in Pakistan including Narowal too though it has been started well recently. Many factors play a crucial role in the successful implementation of the above approach under this context, such as infrastructure to support online aspects, teachers' readiness to implement technology in their teaching strategies and students' openness to adopting hybrid learning forms. In studies that are limited to universities in Pakistan, the potential of blended learning is demonstrated for enhancing quality of education all together and providing opportunities for learners Ibid. Offering a combination of in-person and online instructional opportunities, blended learning models hold the promise to meet the needs of all types of students as well as produce better academic results. This approach not only complements conventional modes of teaching, it also imparts knowledge in an interesting and creative manner to educate students out-of-classroom as well(Ali,2024).

5. Methodological Approaches and Challenges

This problem includes determining how to measure academic success without prejudice or subjectivity, how to eliminate any prejudice from the targeted samples, and how to acquire data verification and accuracy. One way to increase the academic performance of students in a South Asian nations university, such as Narowal, Pakistan, is to follow class with blended learning. This approach's usefulness is largely contingent on the level of instructor training and knowledge, the degree of technological advancement, and the element of students' apprehensive concerns that are dealt with. In the future, it will be essential to pursue research strategies and prioritization of resources that directly and fully target and effectively enhance the learning environment most acceptable for students in Narowal, Pakistan, as well as studying blended learning does, to better use this approach to improve academic performance and student's outcome generally(Alizer,2024).

Research Methodology:

 This study focused on a particular research design that looked to understand how the combined effect of traditional learning and E-learning (blended learning) on academic achievement in the universities students in Narowal. This is part of their empirical research

used to collect data through observation and experiments, which are usually employed in the social sciences such as education. Here is how they conducted this study:

Research Design: Research design is the organized and structured master plan that guides all steps within the research process, guaranteeing the findings to be truthful or valid. It is an exceptional plan that clearly defines the framework and approach followed by researchers. This proposition outlines the design of how data was gathered, quantified and analyzed similar to a structured course of action. Learning outcomes also comprise of learning the appropriate ways to collect relevant data, choosing proper frameworks/methods and using effective ways of analyzing them for deriving solutions. A well-built path of research design is imperative in upholding the rigor and cohesion of this study which further strengthens its credibility and reliability (Alizer, 2024). In This study, we applied correlational design in order to assess statistical relationships among variables.

Population:

The term "research population" refers to a well-defined collection of individuals or things known to share comparable features. In most cases, every person or thing that belongs to a particular community shares one essential quality or attribute. (Hill & Epps, 2020).the students studying in the different universities of Narowal were population of the study.

Sampling: The particular group from which you were gathers data is known as a sample. The sample size is always smaller than the population as a whole sample is a pre-selected, discrete subset of a larger population from which information is gathered in order to make generalizations and conclusions about the overall group. It is a manageable portion of the population that is carefully examined in order to learn more and make generalizations. It's important to note that the sample's size is naturally smaller than the size of the population it reflects as a whole. Researchers can effectively analyze and understand data while using fewer resources and spending less time on data gathering and analysis thanks to this careful selection of a subset. A carefully chosen sample offers a trustworthy foundation for generalizing conclusions and making wise choices in a variety of research projects by faithfully representing the traits and patterns present in the larger population (Abdullah, 2024). The target population for this study was undergraduate and post graduate students enrolled in different universities of Narowal. A stratified "random sampling" technique has been recycled to choose the 200 participants. A control analysis will be lead to control the proper "sample size" for the learning.

Data Collection: Data has been collected using Likert scale. This scale includes student's perception about Blended learning having five scales values (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree) asking about their understanding about "Use of Blended Learning, their Ease of using Blended learning and their understanding of contents while using Blended learning". Questionnaire includes five demographic variables (Gender, Age Group, Residence, GPA and Department) to collect and generalize data more definitely.

Students were asked to fill a informed consent first to get their permission first before carry the questionnaire.

Ethical Considerations: "Ethical considerations" has been taken into description through the research processes. Participant has been informed about the "purpose of the study", and their "informed consent" has been got. Confidentiality and anonymity has been ensured throughout the study, and participant has the "right to withdraw" from the education at any time without any negative consequences (Smith, J., 2023).

Data Analysis and Discussion:
Fig.1: Incorporated of BL encourages me to learn and increase my interest in mycourse
According to BL 1 explains the findings of the statements as it collect the reviews of students about the statement "Incorporated of BL encourages me to learn and increase my interest in my course". Only 1.5% students were strongly disagree, 10.5% students were normally disagree with the statement as the don't think that incorporation of BL encourages then and increase their knowledge, 33.5% were neither agree nor disagree with the statement but 42.5% students agree with the statement and 12% students were strongly agree with the statement as they feel incorporation of BL encourages them to learn and increase their knowledge.
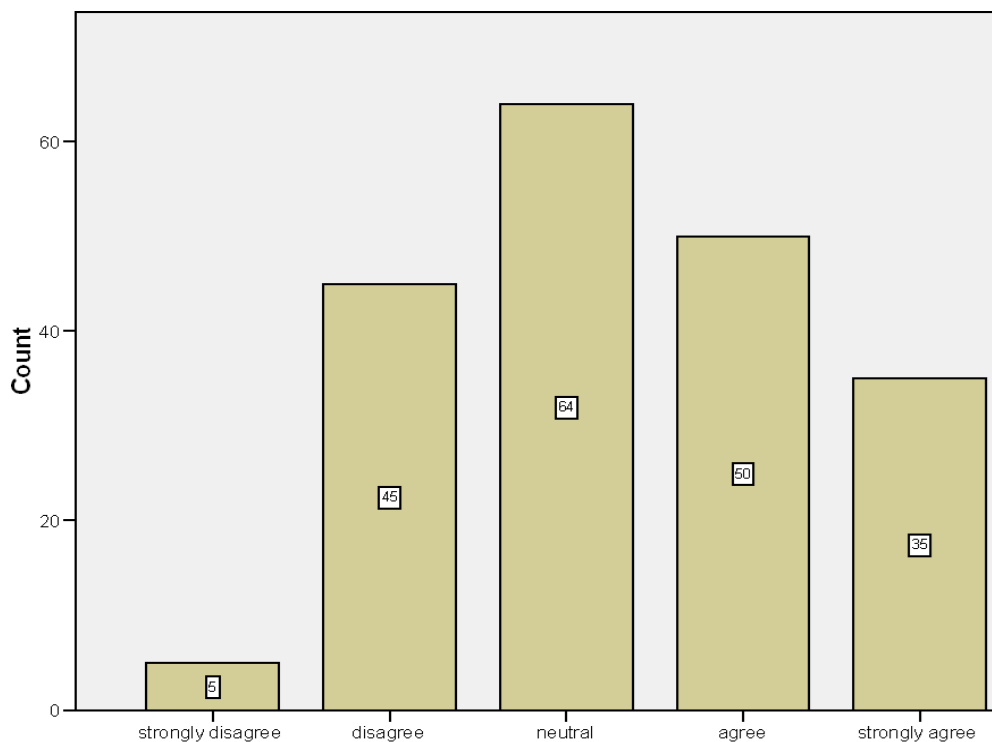**Fig.1:** *Incorporated of BL encourages me to learn and increase my interest in mycourse*

Fig.2 : BL is more effective than traditional classroom teaching

According to BL 2 the findings of the statements as it collect the reviews of students about the statement "BL is more effective than traditional classroom teaching". Only 4.5%students were strongly disagree, 19.5% students were normally disagree with the statement as they consider BL less effective than traditional classroom, 24.5% were neither agree nor disagree with the statement but 33% students agree with the statement and 18.5% students were strongly agree with the statement as they feel BL effective then traditional classroom.

Fig.2 : *BL is more effective than traditional classroom teaching*
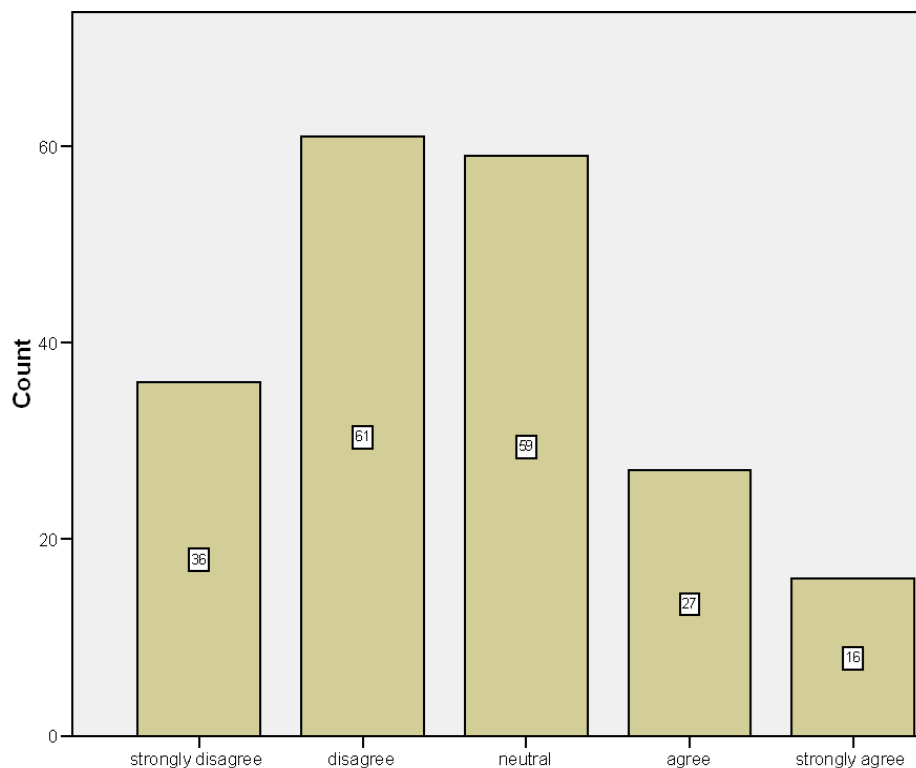

Fig.3: BL positively impacts your academic achievements

According to BL 3 the findings of the statements as it collect the reviews of students about the statement "BL positively impacts your academic achievements". Only 17% students were strongly disagree, 34.5% students were normally disagree with the statement as they consider BL did not impacts positively at their academic achievements, 27.5% were neither agree nor disagree with the statement but 17% students agree with the statement and 4% students were strongly agree with the statement as they feel BL positively impacts their academic achievements.

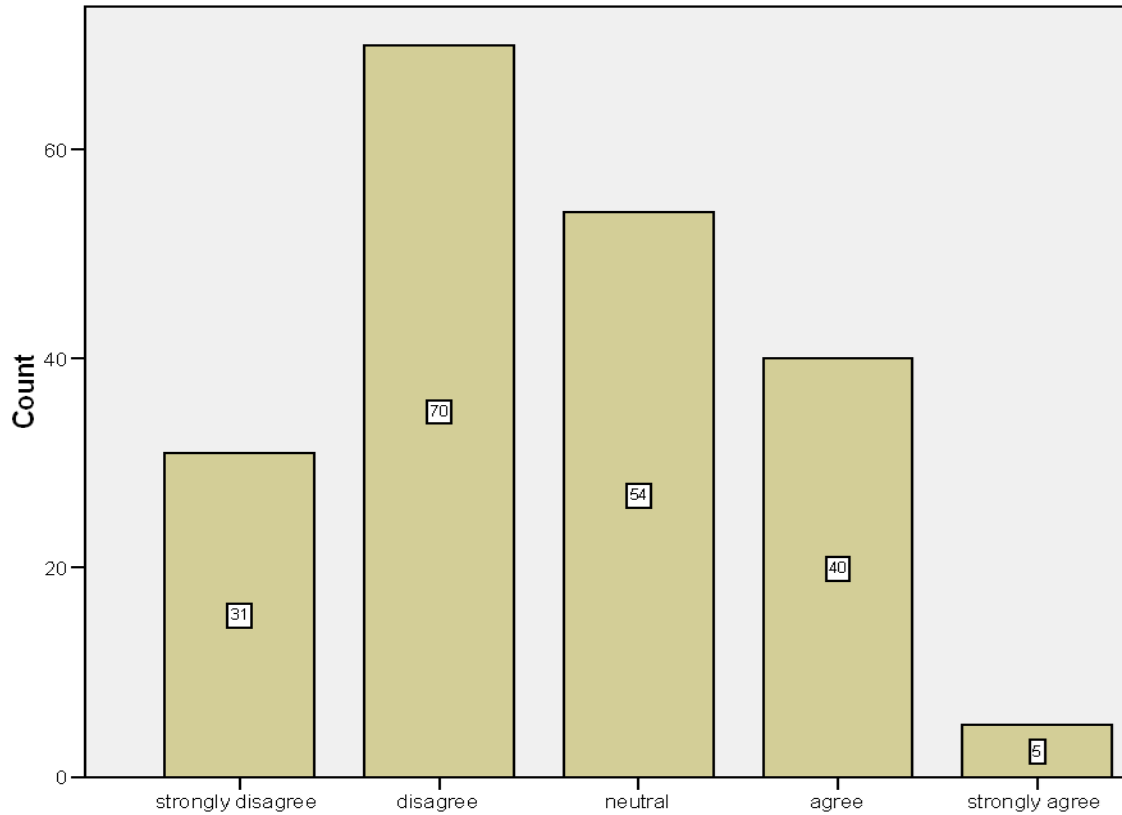**Fig.3:** *BL positively impacts your academic achievements*

Fig.4: *Your academic performance has been increased after experiencing BL*
According to BL 4 the findings of the statements as it collect the reviews of students about the statement "Your academic performance has been increased after experiencing BL". Only 0.1% students were strongly disagree, 15.5% students were normally disagree with the statement as their academic performance has not been increased after experiencing BL., 34.5% were neither agree nor disagree with the statement but 32.5% students agree with the statement and 18% students were strongly agree with the statement as their academic performance has been increased after experiencing BL.

Figure 4:*Students 'view on BL Contents*
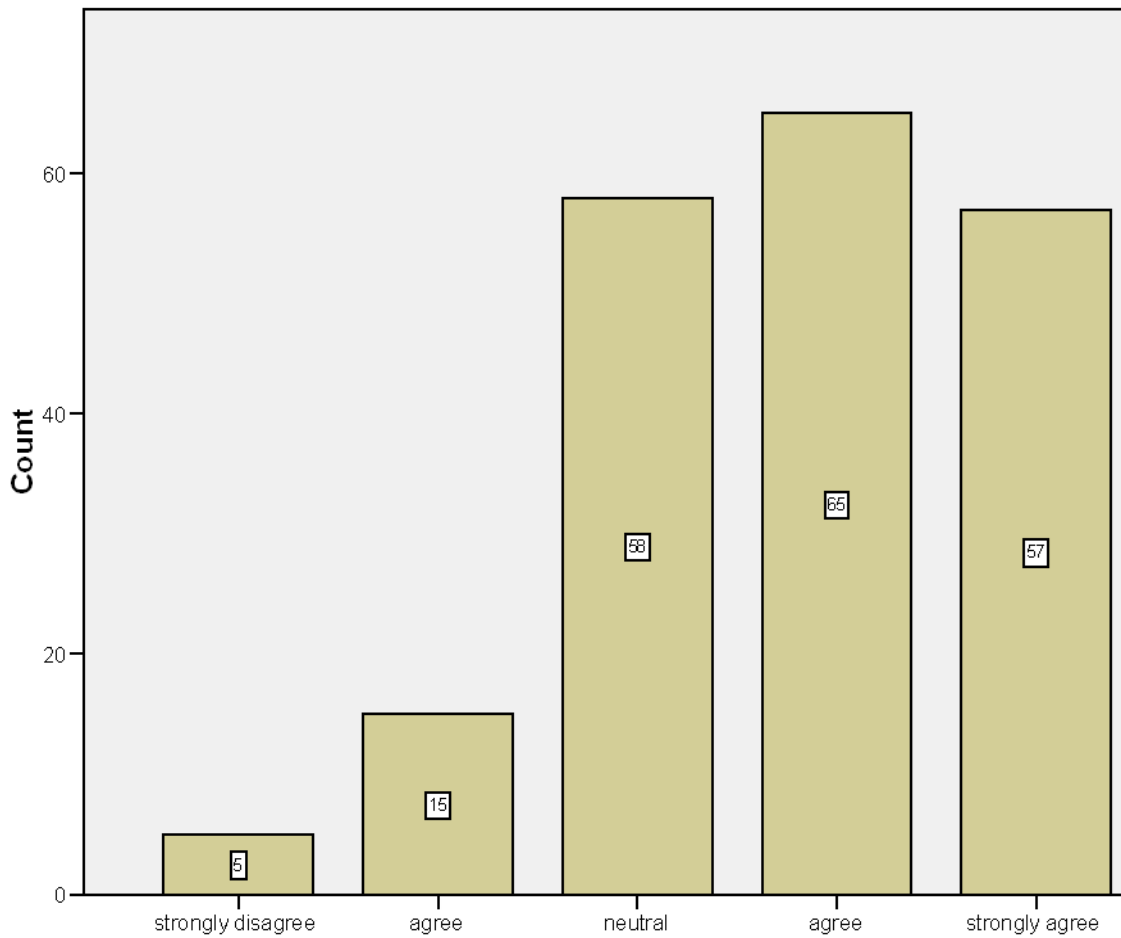
CORRELATION

		USE OF BL	EASE OF BL	CONTENT OF BL
Use of BL Correlation	Pearson	1	-.127 .077	-.100 .161
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	198	196	197
Ease of BL Correlation	Pearson	-.127 .077	1	.087 .222
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	196	198	197
Content of BL Correlation	Pearson	-.100 .161	.087 .222	1
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	197	197	199

According to Findings correlation analysis is used to evaluate association among variables by using SPSS. By using Pearson correlation (as p<0.01 two tailed normal distribution), we can say that (Content of BL) shows positive correlation with (Ease of BL) with value of 0.087. Therefore, understanding of contents while using BL depends how much a person easily can use BL. At the meantime (Ease of BL) is also negatively correlated with (using BL) with the value of -0.127 as it not significant that every person who use BL find it easy and effective for the studies. In other way (use of BL) is negatively connected by (content of BL) with the value -0.100. Which means Just using BL is not significant for users to be familiar with the contents of BL as it includes variety of contents. There is a strongly negative correlation between variables

Conclusion:
BL is a cutting-edge instructional strategy that incorporates technology to fulfill the needs of 21st-century learning and is pertinent in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there are not many BL programs in Pakistan, particularly at university level, and some teachers are not familiar with this paradigm. In order to inspire university teachers to create and implement the BL model in their classrooms. This study intends to describe the implementation of BL and its impacts on pupils. And what they perceive about it. A thorough review of the available literature it is to cover different areas of BL to meet objectives of the study.
The objectives of the study was just to know student's perceptions about effectiveness of BL as how did they takes face to face traditional learning and how they feel effectiveness of learning with online learning education.This study also aims to identify the problems and difficulties students face during the BL and what guidelines can be made to make BL more effective in University of Narowal.
This study has conducted a survey which received student's views about BL and encountered their problems while dealing with it. This study focused on three units of correlational analysis which was "Use OF BL", "Ease Of BL" and "Contents of BL" .This study observed all the three selected units of analysis that were categorized as positive (agree, strongly agree), negative (disagree, strongly disagree) and neutral.

The study got following answers of research questions from the findings.
Q.1: *How do learners perceive BL as compare to traditional classroom instructions in Narowal's university setting?*
As findings declare that mostly students find it easy and interesting from learning perspectives. They find it user friendly as compare to traditional classroom as they find traditional classroom learning more difficult to deal with it but in learning perspectives, they traditional classroom learning more advantageous than BL. It was clear that they all were familiar with concept of BL but they encountered many challenges while using BL. Students think their academic performance has been increased but level of their learning is not up to the mark. Students think BL is less stressful as traditional classroom learning make them engage in learning activities all the time but in BL it happens less. With BL, students can plan their own learning to some extent. Those with busy schedules or those who prefer to work at their own pace can access online materials and complete tasks.

Q.2: *What are the problem and issues that influence the value of "BL" in Narowal's university setting?*

Students face many of the problems when it comes to application of BL in universities of Narowal. Some students could find it difficult to learn independently online, wanting more structure and direction. For some students, having access to dependable internet and the requisite technology might be a barrier, resulting in differences in their learning experiences. The transition to online study may cause you to feel alone and cut off from your classmates and instructors. In a virtual environment, fostering a feeling of community can be difficult and have an impact on the learning process as a whole. Students' ability to use internet resources and tools is improved. BL is a useful method for gaining technological competency because these abilities are becoming more and more important in the current workforce. The online component of BL might be hampered by technical issues and unstable internet connectivity. It may be difficult for students to fully engage in the online components if they do not have regular access to technology or the internet.

Although online conversations and virtual meetings make an effort to mimic classroom interactions, some students still yearn for the direct feedback, social interactions, and interpersonal relationships that come with traditional classroom settings. BL's flexibility has several drawbacks. Some students have trouble managing their time and staying motivated.

Q.3: *What recommendations can be made to enhance the effectiveness of BL in Narowal's university setting, and what guidelines can be developed to ensure successful implementation?*

BL provides a combination of flexibility, personalized learning, and engagement options from the viewpoint of the learner. It also necessitates strong self-management abilities and the capacity to overcome technical obstacles, therefore it is crucial for students to take charge of their education. However, BL has problems that need to be carefully considered. A well-designed curriculum and the right technological infrastructure are necessary for the successful blending of technology and in-person training. To provide fair learning opportunities for all students, maintaining a sense of community and addressing any inequities in access to technology and resources are essential. In addition, teachers might need to change the way they teach and come up with new tactics to handle both traditional and online classes.

Recommendations

1. Flexible blended learning models may be implanted according to the learning needs of individuals.
2. Comprehensive training program and support program may introduce to facilitate students with basic digital literacy skills
3. Blended learning material may infuse with traditional teaching methods to enhance academic coherence
4. Autonomous and self-directed learning may be encouraged to empower students to take ownership of their academic goals.
5. Periodic and regular surveys may help to assess student perceptions to improve

academic outcomes.

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