BLENDED LEARNING WHEN TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM SETTING MEETS TECHNOLOGY

by:

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Due to the fast-changing world and the growing demands of the use of technology, several education community started to adopt the technology-mediated classrooms wherein they combine the use of traditional ways of teaching and the use of technology. This combined practice is called blended learning. It breaks numbers of barriers in learning that will result into more efficient learning. This practice is a trend in education nowadays as it retains the traditional classroom setting wherein there is a face-to-face interaction with the teacher and at the same time, with the use of technology for a modernized way of learning.

According to Panopto (2017), a software company that provides videos, lectures and softwares which are often used in E-learning environments, “education is no longer just about putting pen and paper to memorize facts because today, innovative educators in both higher education and corporate learning and development are improving learning through technology.” Blended learning approach also provides rich learning experiences to students because they can expand their learning beyond classroom settings.

Blended learning can also arouse interest among students because learners of this generation are hooked with the use of technology. They may be tired of a traditional classroom setting wherein the students would just simply sit and listen to the teacher’s lectures but with the mediation of technology, the discussion would be engaging and meaningful. Educational process would be completely different because there will be more involvement during the presentation of lessons. They also have the opportunity to explore more skills and capabilities because technology fulfill the limitations of traditional ways.
Jennifer Patterson (2016) said that blended learning approach provides ultimate flexibility in presenting content as the complex topics can be presented in the classroom, while other subject matter can be available online. Further, blended learning saves classroom teaching time because other information and activities can be utilized and done through online learning activities. Student learning can also be extended at home or any other places beyond classroom settings. Online sources can also give bulk of information for the students which are cannot be found in textbooks and other learning materials provided by the teacher.

To practice blended learning approach, the teacher may let the students watch some video presentation about the lesson to be discussed and afterwards, the teacher may ask some few questions. This is a good starter for the presentation of the topic and can be a best way to engage the students with the discussion. It is important to catch the attention of the students first before the lesson proper because the motivation will set the mood of the whole discussion. This technique can establish a desirable atmosphere inside the classroom wherein the students will participate during the discussion of the lesson.

Further, Jessica Freeman (2017) suggested that blended learning works for the students, since it helps them learn more through practical implementation of the knowledge they gain and also works for the teachers, since it makes their job more enjoyable. It could also be a paperless teaching-learning process because instead of printing tons of handouts and other learning materials to be provided for the students, the teacher can use alternatives such as video presentations, online lectures and soft copies of the learning journals.

Technological advancement already reached the education community and one of the results is the blended learning. Indeed, there are some traditional ways of teaching that must be retained like face-to-face discussion and oral recitation, and these ways could be aided by the advance technology. Blended learning is one of the
educational breakthroughs and teachers must be encouraged to be creative and innovative enough to unleash the skills and capabilities that the students have. Through these kinds of breakthroughs, it would be possible for the 21st century learners to possess the necessary skills needed for their future endeavors.

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