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## Need of Modern Era: Blended Learning

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**Abstract:** The goal of education is the holistic development of a learner which leads to development of nation. Throughout their life students acquire certain knowledge and skills which bring a permanent modification in their behaviors. This permanent modification in behavior is known as learning. The concept of teacher teaches and learner listen is prevalent since ancient times. But now, in 21st century the world is changing rapidly. Nowadays we daily encounter some advancement in technology. It is need of the hour that teachers bring innovations in their pedagogy and make the teaching learning process more student centered by adopting methods like inquiry based learning, discovery learning, blended learning, project based learning etc. It should be clear in mind that the purpose of education is not to make human encyclopedias but to develop character of a learner. In this paper, the highlights of the benefits of blended learning to make teaching and learning more progressive.

**Keyword:** Blended Learning

### Introduction

Blended learning strategy is the combination of traditional classroom learning with online or computer assisted learning. Blended learning strategy involves incorporation of multiple resources like online videos, video conferencing and educational software in traditional face to face teaching learning. It modifies the role of teacher and student both. Now teacher is not just a lecturer but also a guide, facilitator and mentor to students and students are active participants in learning process. Blended learning strategy provides a conducive environment to students which are free from restrictions like time, place and situations up to some extent. Blended learning strategy is learner friendly and learner centered approach. Blended learning provide personalized instructions to an individual and let the learner to learn at his own pace and comfort so that he can master the content before moving forward. In this digital era children love to spend their time on computers and mobile phones because they are handy and interesting to them. That's why schools are showing keen interest in using technology in their education programs and moving towards blended learning approach



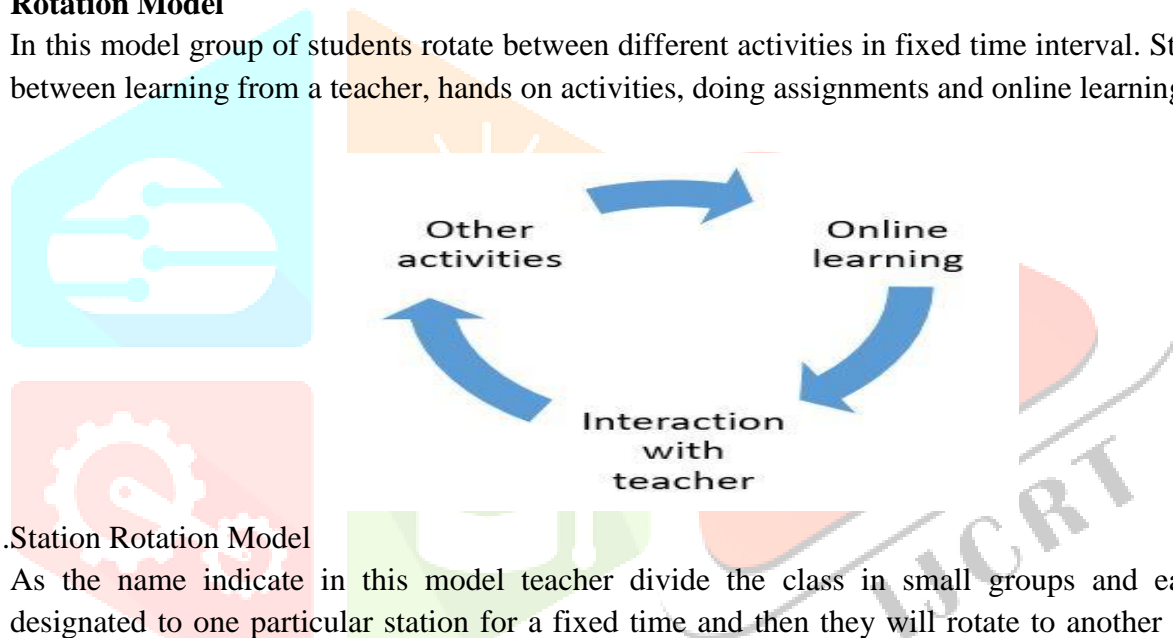
Figure 1. Structure of Blended Learning

## Models of Blended Learning

There are various ways to blend classroom learning with online learning. Teacher choose one of the model on the basis on topic because some topics require learner to be more independent and some topics demand more interaction with teacher. Model of blended learning are:

### 1. Rotation Model

In this model group of students rotate between different activities in fixed time interval. Students rotate between learning from a teacher, hands on activities, doing assignments and online learning.



#### 1.1. Station Rotation Model

As the name indicate in this model teacher divide the class in small groups and each group is designated to one particular station for a fixed time and then they will rotate to another station. Each station signifies some activities in which students will be involve and one of the stations must have some online activity. For example a class is divided in 3 small groups A, B and C. Group A is involve in online activity (like online practice and games , quiz, videos etc.), group B is involve in teacher led instructions and group C is involve in hands on activities or paper pen assignments. After the fixed time interval all three groups rotate their positions and in this manner each group must encounter each station at least one time.

#### 1.2. Lab Rotation Model

Unlike station rotation model, in lab rotation there are different settings for traditional face to face interaction and online learning. In classroom, teacher first give a brief introduction of topic and then students move to computer lab to further study it. This model is more beneficial for weak students because they can spend more time with teacher for clearing their doubts before moving to computer lab. In this, learning can be individualised or in small group and they can learn on their own pace while using computer for online learning.

### 1.3.Flipped Classroom Model

This model is totally opposite to traditional classroom model because here learner get the first-hand knowledge at home. Teacher assign homework to students which involve watching videos, PowerPoint slides, documents prepared by her or by some third party. Students write down their doubts and questions related to that topic and later discussed about them with teacher at class. In this way students get deeper understanding of topic and explore it more at classroom. In this model students get more chance to interact with teacher individually. This blended learning is more personalised and self-paced.

### 1.4.Individual Rotational Model

This is same as station rotation model but the only difference is that instead of small groups here students engage in different activities individually and one of the activity must involve computer assisted learning or online learning. Here student doesn't have to go through all the stations. He can skip one or two station if he has clear understanding of the concept.

## 2. Flex Model

This model needs a large space room and sufficient number of computers or laptops because each student will be engage in their online work on laptops individually. In this model, teacher first teach students and then ask them to do online activities related to the topic. During online learning students use various software like YouTube, Google forms, slide share, web quest, Google classroom etc. In classroom teacher can't sit at just one place. She should walk around in class so that she can monitor and guide students in right direction.

Students are agency of their own and teacher target weaker students and give them more time. Teacher continue to assess students timely so that she know which student need more time to do a task. Teacher provide instructions to individual students or small groups

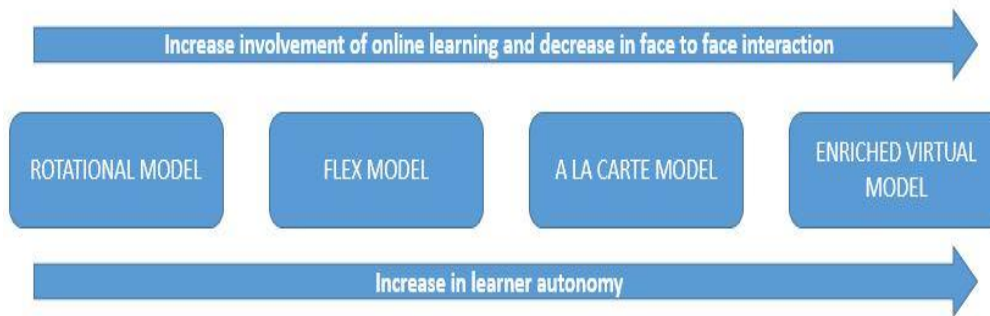
## 3. A La Carte Model

In this model, in addition to traditional brick and mortar learning experience students themselves choose entire online course with an online teacher of record to enrich their knowledge. Student can get online education at any place either its classroom or home or some any other place the only condition is the availability of internet connection.

It is more individual and self-paced approach as compared to all the above models. This model is mostly chosen when there is unavailability of proper resources and desire courses in the school.

## 4. Enriched Virtual Model

In this model the whole learning take place online but still student do visit schools rarely to submit their assignments or clearing their doubts. Its fully individualised and students have whole control on their learning. This model has maximum student's autonomy. There is very less involvement of interaction with teacher. Students feel more comfortable because they can work according to their schedules and take help of teacher whenever needed.



## Features of Blended Learning Strategy

Feature of blended learning based on the integration of modern digital learning with traditional classroom learning. It enrich students' knowledge because it give many opportunities to students to explore their learning. The teaching learning process is enhanced with involvement of online mode learning. It make the class more interactive and interesting. Students get the chance to learn in different learning environments like classroom, lab room, home.

### 1. Online and offline learning

Online learning means learning which can only happen if there is availability of internet connection. It involve various online activities like video conferencing with teacher or with peers, watching videos available on online platforms like YouTube, solving online quiz given by teacher as on Google form etc.

Offline learning involve traditional classroom learning and that computer assisted learning in which there is no need of internet because material is created by the teacher.

### 2. Instructor involvement

Blended learning is a complex strategy. There is need to properly plan and design it before implementing in class. Therefore it increase the role of a teacher and not every teacher can pull it off. Teacher should have thorough knowledge of students' attributes and learning styles before using this strategy. In this teacher play the role of an instructor, guide, facilitator and mentor. Teacher guide and facilitate students to construct their ideas in right direction. Teacher has more time to pays attention on academically weaker students. Teacher makes online quizzes and games to assess students' performances and give them immediate feedback.

### 3. Student centered

Blended learning give students some autonomy on their learning which help them to

Learn at their own rate and make the learning more personalised. Now education is not bound to brick and mortar like structures, in fact now learners can get education in their familiar environments like at home.

### 4. Peer interaction

Rotational model and flex model of blended learning involve group based activities. These group activities provide opportunity to learners to interact with their peers. During these interactions they discuss on some topic, search on it, share their ideas and tutor to weaker students and then they reach to some conclusion which at last they discuss with teacher. These peer interactions develop communication skills, leadership, and social skills in students.

### 5. Flexibility

Flexible in terms of time - learner has the control over his time. He can devote time according to his learning pace. He can study according to his own schedule.

Flexible in term of resources - online learning allow learner to use various resources which he find interesting and valuable.

Flexibility in terms of place – As in enriched virtual model, learner is flexible to choose his place. He can study at home, in class or at any other place with the condition that he has ICT device with him from which he is learning.

6. Synchronous and asynchronous learning

Both are the part of online learning. Online interaction which happens in real time is synchronous learning.

## Conclusion

Blended learning is the demand of present era. The features and models -of blended learning bring positive changes in the learning of the students because they will learn according to their own pace, anywhere and anytime. New learning material will keep their interest high and motivate them which will make learning permanent.

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