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## A CASE STUDY REGARDING CHALLENGES OF BLENDED LEARNING PRACTICES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL OF PUNJAB

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Blended learning, challenges, Public Schools, Punjab, Pakistan	Blended learning is rising in fame such as it has been verified to be an operative method to overwhelmed at several restrictions associated with old-style teaching methods. For the operative implementation of blended learning not just necessitate physical resources, but traditional values over the societal and educational environment is as well a significant issue. The main objective of this research was to highlight the challenges of blended learning in public schools of Punjab (province of Pakistan). The paradigm of this research was pragmatism. An explanatory mixed methods design was adopted to conduct research. For quantitative data 72 headteachers were randomly chosen from four districts of Punjab. The sample considered helpful to better understand practices of blended learning in public schools and the related challenges. The study results established that several issues prerequisite government attention like low budget and maintains of the technical tools. The timing of classwork and teachers' responsibilities in the context of blended learning is an intriguing topic that might be explored more in future research.
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### INTRODUCTION

The teaching and learning model have been changed because of blended learning environment, which wants multiple parts of both the learners and teachers, additional abilities and skills are desirable (Liu, 2019). At that time, blended learning denoted face to face and online learning, dependent on program to which course and teaching technique may be personalized by digital tools, in utmost circumstances, to encounter the different desires of learners (Fazal & Bryant 2019). In Pakistan blended learning as teaching method amplified from 2009 (Sethiy, Schofield, McAleer & Ajjawi, 2018). Blended learning is rising in fame such as it has been verified to be an operative method to overwhelmed several restrictions associated with old-style teaching methods (Alammary, 2019). As consequence, number of teachers has struggled to apply blended learning

to increase their learner learning in different programs (Laer & Elen, 2018). For this challenge, they developed diverse blended learning modules and implemented dissimilar blended learning prototypes (Liu, 2019). In this connection, previous researches reveal the implementation of blended learning in diverse programs and its possible benefits for education (Budiman, Efendi & Riyanto, 2018; Davies, Snape, Penny & Alan, 2013; Büşra & Vardar, 2021; Garcia & Mora, 2020).

When teachers use blended learning method in classroom, high-speed internet, and innovative workspaces are needed by participants (Liu, 2019). The teachers also need technical expertise, suitable sources, and be individually devoted to creating the event collaborating. Evenhanded face-to-face classroom, informational sittings might be placed the student in an inactive part and student might be lost attention (Dridi, Radhak, Mercer & Boer, 2020). In education field, Pakistan, like the other South Asian countries, is undergoing considerable technical changes. In Pakistan, the concept of e-Learning was first presented at the Allama Iqbal Open University in year 2000. The framework was called open learning institute of virtual education. The Virtual University of Pakistan began offering courses via ICT and national television channels. Aside from these two colleges, there are no other public or private universities in Pakistan that have fully integrated modern technological methods like blended learning (Soomro, Bano, Bhatti & Ali, 2018). Though, in Pakistan, the benefits of blended learning are not deprived of the possible challenges. Blended learning method might decrease into a trick of problems that the schools and teachers' aspect in the course of education activities (Naeem & Khan, 2019). In schools, it is remaining tough to retain the checkered on how much learners are motivated, furthermore, how much the teachers are cooperative, and how many facilities are provided (Fazal & Bryant 2019).

### **Rationale of Research**

The usage of blended learning in Pakistan is yet in basic phases. Pakistan is developing country, and the blended learning is a novel concept in Pakistan. In Pakistan, usage of blended learning in schools' institutions is new trend that is encountering resistance in its ample implementation in schools (Naz, Shah, & Majoka, 2021). Consequently, from Pakistan, there are few types of the researches, that are thus commonly emphasis on the implantation, contrast old-style and online teaching but missing blended learning challenges in schools. Therefore, the objective of this research was to reconnoiter the challenges about the practices of blended learning in Pakistani schools.

### **Significance of Study**

Exploration of old-style teaching and blended learning is exciting subject. Preliminary literature hunts in near records, counting ProQuest, Google Scholar, Wiley, and one exploration showed that in Pakistan, investigation on blended learning challenges in schools has been less devoted. The finding of study, though, wants to be understood with thoughtfulness. This research creates most important involvement to highlight the blended learning challenges in schools, mainly in Pakistan.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

From previous few years, education has endeavored to move from old-style to supplementary learner-centered methods through an opinion to hopeful learners to takings charge for their education (Garcia & Mora, 2020). To support this change in teaching methods, teaching methods are transformed from traditional to blended learning (Alammary, 2019). Blended learning brings

the benefits of both face-to-face and online learning together. It's not a new concept, but it's a creative one: combining technology with traditional teaching approaches to prepare students with 21st-century skills such as cooperation, creativeness and problem-solving abilities (Soomro et al., 2018). Blended learning such as simply merging self-learning and face to face learning is far-off since perfect. Through this method teachers' emphasis on the interdependencies among online education and classroom education (Liu, 2019). Teaching activities through the blended learning are sustained over huge change of face to face and online instructional interventions (Laer & Elen, 2018). At this time blended learning denoted to such as self-learning, dependent on program to courses and teaching method might have personalized over support of digital tool, in utmost circumstances, to encounter different requirements of learners (Fazal & Bryant 2019).

The developing vision is of an equally deferential association among education through online and face to face teaching in the schoolroom, and the notion that 'for each may be prepare its appropriate work' is nowadays compressed in the idea of blended learning (Fresen, 2018). To this expiration, schools have ongoing to transform through integrating blended learning methods, after the awareness that dynamic learner education is indorsed through tractability to ensure teaching activities, dissimilar education methods, also a variety of digital tools and possessions (Garcia & Mora, 2020). According to the school departments, blended learning is program of formal education, through this method a learner studies via the online supply of courses and teaching through approximately group of learner regulator in excess of track, time, period, pace and place (Dridi et al., 2020). Consequently, the blended learning has been increasing in fame by means of it has verified to be operational and operative method to overwhelmed numerous restrictions associated to old-style method of teaching (Alammary, 2019). A research by Carr and Fund in 2000, shows that blended learning enhance the learners' worth through the online learning as well as guidance and support from teachers by face to face meetings (Budiman et al., 2018).

For well understanding of the whole blended learning method in schools, it is vital to appearance at the classifications and types of digital tools and objective of mixing from broader standpoint (Liu, 2019). In spite of the current consideration to the blended learning method, here is slight experiential indication of how teachers and learners understand the method (Garcia & Mora, 2020), and problem they facade and, mainly, how schools face challenges to gadget blended learning method (Fresen, 2018). In schools, some challenges of blended learning method are related to the implementation (Dridi et al., 2020). The deficiency of incorporation in the blended learning method in class room was renowned as important challenge (Liu, 2019). For reason that, educational institutions and schools are looking for ways to implement blended learning, aimed at providing additional new education that is learner-centered (Yeigh et al., 2020). The blended learning such as simply merging self-learning and face to face learning is far-off since perfect (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). While blended learning is made known to, consideration is frequently paid to the implementation of digital tools, though strategy of the definite suitable content is leftward by low budget and too little time to make a fruitful programmer (Alammary, 2019).

Researches revealed that, using of digital tool and cooperating among learners and distributing with numerous technological problems are the substance of worry for several school teachers (Budiman; Efendi; & Riyanto, 2018). School principals and teachers recognized a lot challenges that are expansion of time obligation, defining the suitable extents on face to face and online

courses, scheming course and deficiency of technical maintenance (Dridi et al., 2020). Blended learning is rising in fame such as it has been verified to be an operative method to overwhelmed several restrictions associated with old-style teaching methods. In Pakistan blended learning as a teaching method amplified from 2009 (Sethi et al., 2018). These courses through blended learning are mainly planned on the revolution prototypical, comprising face to face Traditional teaching sessions as well as online learning (Naeem & Khan, 2019). For example, in Pakistan blended learning disclose the dissimilar methods through which blended learning has been executed and the dissimilar problems that are restricted and inadequate resources, teachers' change for new roles, learners' hope for interface, and difficulties by courses and content (Arif, 2017).

Blended learning would not be beneficial to developing countries like Pakistan until and unless conditions that inspire its adaption are consistently present in the higher education institutions, such as computer literacy, ICT penetration concerns, and a reluctance to move away from old-style learning approaches, and electric power outages and English language obstacles (Soomro et al., 2018). To this expiration, schools have ongoing to transform through integrating blended learning methods, after the awareness (Aristovnik, Keržič, Ravšelj & Umek, 2020) that dynamic learner education is indorsed over tractability to ensure teaching activities, dissimilar education methods, also variety of digital tools and possessions (Garcia & Mora, 2020). For the operative implementation of blended learning not just need physical resources, but traditional values through the societal and educational environment is as well as significant issue (Fazal & Bryant 2019). A whole redesign of blended learning courses are needed for successful implementation in education specially in school sectors (Naeem & Khan, 2019). But for redesign of courses teachers needed the extra time (Sethi et al., 2018). The method of extra time could be in form of helping learners outside the classroom, assisting them managing the technical problems (Fazal & Bryant 2019).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The main objective of this research was to comprehend the practices, and challenges of blended learning in public schools of Punjab (province of Pakistan) that are aimed to attain by using the different methods and prodecures through the supporting tools and techniques to conduct the research.

### **Research Questions**

1. How do headteachers explain the implantation of blended learning in the public school of Punjab?
2. How do headteachers describe the challenges of blended learning in the public school of Punjab?

### **Mixed Methods Design**

An explanatory mixed methods design was adopted in this research. It is a two-stage guideline for blended methods. In general, qualitative data aids in clarifying the preliminary quantitative results when using a mixed-method strategy (Plano, Clark & Creswell, 2006, p. 71, Diop & Liu, 2020).

### **Sampling & Participants**

The participants in study were schools' headteachers. 72 headteachers were chosen at random from four districts of Punjab for quantitative data to better understand the practice of blended learning in public schools and challenges. In this connection, six headteachers were selected for

individual interviews using purposeful sampling procedure in the current research study. In this regard, selected standards were based on those schools' where blended learning was actively working.

**Data Collection**

First stage of this research was included compilation of quantitative information throughout the organization of the closed-ended questionnaire. Headteachers accounted their measure of conformity for all the 33 items and parallel four-point Likert scale (Never = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Almost Always = 4). The second stage of this research was based on qualitative data. The information was collected by semi-structured interviews from six head-teachers of public schools. The idea of data collection approaches denotes in over-all to suitable usage of methods for collection data and analysis (Jean & Boyle, 2018). The one-to-one interview is repeatedly noticed as a communication between the interviewee and interviewer, through semi-structured interviewer probes questions and interviewee replies (Stake, 2000). The researcher generated observation, and field notes instruments. For the review of transcribed files of interviews, files sent to the participant, and then reverted to the researcher after accomplishment of member checking.

**FINDING OF STUDY**

The findings have been presented in this section as outcomes of mix method research consists of constant interaction among collection of data and analysis of data used in this research (Jean & Boyle, 2018). In thi connection, the quantitative data analyzed over variance, with reference to mean scores on closed-ended questionnaire. For qualitative data, accessible data sources NVIVO software was used for thematic analysis, to classify, establish, and improve understandings into themes.

**Table 1**

*Statistical Package for Social Science for Statements' Analysis*

SN	Statements	M	SD
Q1	All teachers are familiar with the term "blended learning in the institution.	3.93	.952
Q2	Blended learning allows differentiated instruction inside the classroom.	3.79	1.145
Q3	Technology must be shared when using blended learning instructional method.	3.48	1.139
Q4	Public schools are furnished with vital resources that may fuel blended learning.	3.32	1.132
Q5	Public school teachers are trained to trust blended learning instructional method.	3.25	1.294
Q6	School administrators supposed to see blended learning technique inside classroom.	3.49	1.099
Q7	School is providing professional development that dedicates on blended learning.	3.47	1.084

**Table 1a**

*Statistical Package for Social Science for Statements' Analysis*

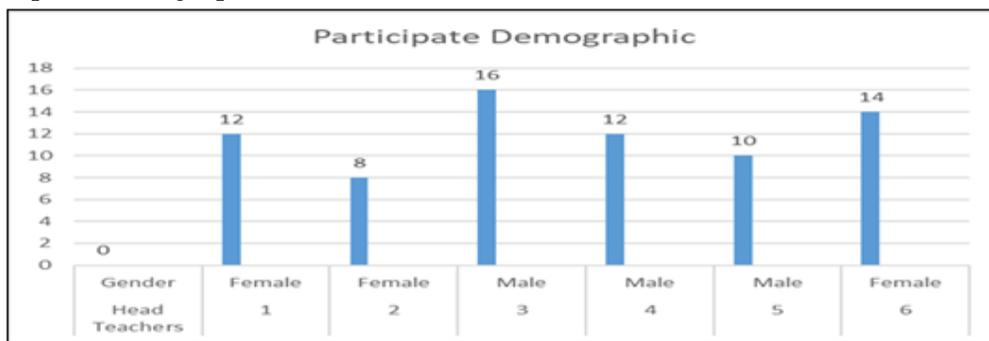
SN	Statements	M	SD
Q8	I would attend blended learning workshops via professional development initiatives.	3.16	1.235
Q9	Use of a blended learning strategy in the classroom will boost student achievement.	3.22	1.162
Q10	When diversity of instructional modalities is used in classroom, learners learn better.	3.88	1.058
Q11	Blended learning method in learning escalations concern of learners toward courses.	3.18	1.229
Q12	Blended learning method includes supporting student learning styles to the learning.	3.74	1.066
Q13	Blended learning method makes easier to organize course materials in classrooms.	2.60	1.139
Q14	Blended learning method as teaching tactic & classroom activity improves day by day.	2.84	1.296
Q15	Blended learning method for teaching strategy escalations the quality of courses.	3.72	1.257

### Qualitative Finding

The participants of this study were school headteachers, who have experience as a head eight to sixteen years. In this connection, qualification of participants: two headteachers were master, three were M.Phil. and only one head teacher was Ph.D. Based on head teachers' considerations on the challenges they come across in the blended learning and their recommendations for the enhancement, three themes emerged and were categorized, these were: (1) challenges regarding technology (2) challenges regarding teaching pedagogic, and (3) challenges regarding societal in study.

**Figure 1**

*Participants Demographic*



### Challenges Regarding Technology

Limited resources of the technical arrangement of the institutes, low budget, don't have latest digital tools, and issues related to electricity and internet were challenges that were highlighted by headteachers of school. Participant 2 specified that "high costs of gadgets is a big challenge for schools because we have a low budget and digital tools are really very expensive." Moreover, participant 3 also supported above statement "at this time, we cannot buy novel kinds of digital tools, because we have enough amount for maintenance." Headteachers of schools highlighted the issues of a low budget to implement blended learning effectively because schools have less amount to maintain the digital tools and to purchase novel types of technical tools. Moreover, participant 6 added that "everyone knows that technology should be related with electricity and internet, in our country net speed and load shading is a big problem". Such as P1 explained as, "schools managing all this with limited resources." Participant 4 defined, "challenges regarding technology are not almost receiving technology to effort on the systems. Somewhat, they contain confirming the achievement of the blended learning by using and supportive the suitable digital tools."

### Challenges Regarding Teaching pedagogic

The perspective of the interviewees about the practices of teachers in school after the impact of technology, headteachers highlighted the challenge regarding the acceptance of technology and the blended learning concept. Such as participant 1 stated, "teachers initially not accepted the change, they prefer the traditional method of teaching rather than blended learning." Similarly, Participant 4 highlighted that, "the teachers who were not born in ultimate of the technological era, will not accept change". Most of participates defined that teachers' attitude and behavior is also a big challenge for successfully implementing blended learning in school because teachers

feel burden when they deliver lecture and use different activities of blended learning combine. Study concluded that schools' teacher doesn't accept change easily because blended learning method is time-consuming and needs extra struggles. Main barrier to realizing blended learning as a teaching method was receipt by the teachers. Participant 3 defined, "Yes, sometimes they feel burden as teaching through blended learning needs extra activities to coverage of syllabus." But Participant 5 stated that "If teacher is interested and positive, he will accept all technology at his clearance particularly if he perceives it from his learners." They believed that teaching through the blended learning method was time-consuming and required more work, according to findings, acceptance of blended learning was a major impediment to the adoption of blended learning.

### **Challenges Regarding Societal**

In Pakistan, the learners in public schools mostly belong to poor families. As participant 5 said, "the learners in public schools mostly belong to poor and uneducated backgrounds. They don't accept change. There is need to change the mindset". Similarly, participant 2 stated, "biggest challenges of schools are dealing learners' inspiration, motivation, and devotion; it is essential to generate courses and to also provide accurate suggestions to the learners through the usage of blended learning." Societal norms and values also challenge for the implantation of blended learning because parents of students can't afford expensive digital tools and they think maybe it is waste of time and money. Participant 3 highlighted the challenges regarding the parents, "Parents complained that their children request for digital tools like tabs or mobile, but we are not having enough money and can't afford". Participant 6 "parents say that they cannot afford. They are able only to feed their children. So, teachers only guide them about e-learning in covid situation."

### **DISCUSSION**

The main objective of this research was to comprehend the practices, and challenges regarding blended learning in public schools of Punjab (province of Pakistan). Pakistan is the developing country and the blended learning is a novel concept in Pakistan. For this purpose, participants in this study were schools' headteachers. 72 headteachers were chosen at random from the four districts of Punjab for quantitative data to better understand the practice of blended learning in public schools and challenges. Six headteachers were selected for individual interviews using the purposeful sampling procedure. Consequently, participant tendency accepted in direction of in an optimistic way as they are conscious of concept blended learning but then again still it's not established execution of blended learning successfully because of different challenges. The headteachers of schools pointed out diverse technological challenges, instructional challenges, and societal challenges. Limited resources of the technical arrangement of the institutes, low budget, donot have the latest digital tools, and issues related to the electricity and internet were challenges that were highlighted by headteachers of school. The researches revealed that using digital tools and cooperating among learners and distributing with the numerous technological problems are a substance of worry for the several school teachers (Budiman; Efendi; & Riyanto, 2018).

The school principals and teachers recognized a lot of challenges that are the expansion of time obligation, defining the suitable extents on face to face and online courses, scheming course, and deficiency of the technical maintenance (Dridi et al., 2020). The research probe that low budget and time management are also big challenge in public schools. While blended learning

is made known, consideration is frequently paid to the implementation of digital tools, though the strategy of the suitable content is leftward by the low budget and too little time to make a fruitful program (Alammary, 2019). In this connection, the headteachers believed that teaching through the blended learning method was time-consuming and required more work, according to the findings, acceptance of blended learning was the major impediment to the adoption of blended learning. This study explored that most teachers not accepted the change. Teachers do not want to accept blended learning in Pakistan because most teachers don't like to leave the traditional method of teaching. Teaching activities through the blended learning are sustained through the huge change of the face to face and online instructional interventions (Laer & Elen, 2018).

In Pakistan blended learning discloses the dissimilar methods through which blended learning has been executed and the dissimilar problems that are restricted and inadequate resources, teachers' adjustment for the new roles, learners' hope for the interface, and difficulties by the courses and content (Arif, 2017). Some teachers feel burden because teaching through blended learning needs extra activities to the coverage of the syllabus. Blended learning method might decrease into a trick of problems that the schools and teachers' aspect in course of education activities (Naeem & Khan, 2019). The biggest challenges of schools are dealing with learners' inspiration, motivation, and devotion; it is essential to generate the courses and to also provide accurate suggestions to the learners through usage of blended learning. In schools it remains tough to retain the checkered on how much learners are motivated, furthermore, how much the teachers are cooperative, and how many facilities are provided (Fazal & Bryant 2019). In the Pakistani public schools mostly, learners belong to poor families. Parents cannot afford digital tools like tabs and mobile, so students can't practice at home. Consequently, for the operative implementation of the blended learning not just necessitate physical resources, but traditional values through societal and educational environment is as well as significant issue (Fazal & Bryant 2019).

## CONCLUSION

This study was deliberate to explore challenges of public schools in Pakistan after implementation of the blended learning method. In this case study, six headteachers were participants in the individual interviews. Selected standards were based on those schools' where blended learning was actively implemented. Throughout this research, researcher was capable to describe the challenges regarding blended learning via the interviews of headteachers of public schools. The headteachers lead the school and manage all academic and administrative tasks. The finding of this study highlighted technological challenges, instructional challenges and societal challenges in schools. The schools' teacher didn't accept change easily because blended learning method is time-consuming and needs extra struggles. The main barrier to implementing blended learning as teaching method was receipt by the teachers. Headteachers of schools highlighted issues of a low budget to implement blended learning effectively as schools have less amount to maintain the digital tools as well as to purchase novel types of technical tools. Blended learning is also challenged by societal norms and values since parents of students cannot afford pricey digital equipment and believe it is a waste of time and money. The evidence presented above suggests that government assistance is required to cope with situation and to improve usage of blended learning in public schools. If government increases school budgets to purchase innovative and cutting-edge digital equipment, it will benefit school administration as well as instructors and pupils.

### Recommendations

While this study was supported by the small number of participants. It is the suggestion that different stakeholders of schools' teachers, students, and parents can be involved for further research, that would be supportive contribution to highlight operative use of blended learning. The results of the study established that there are several issues that need the attention of the government like low budget and maintains of technical tools. For the acquisition and provision of equipment and software required for blended learning, separate budgeting headings should be maintained. The department heads should establish comprehensive system for integrating blended learning into teaching and learning process. The school curriculum should be changed according to need, and a technological concept should be introduced. The timing of classwork and teachers' responsibilities in context of blended learning is an intriguing topic that might be explored more in the future research. Since the blended learning method is still evolving, new researches must be accompanied to define its viability concerning the school teachers and school development.

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