

ONLINE LEARNING AND BLENDED LEARNING

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Abstract: *Over the past decade, enabled by educational and technological innovations, teaching and learning in higher education has been suffering many changes, not only on instructional design and delivery but also on student advising and rating. Many promising practices have evolved to integrate the traditional learning with innovative means in order to create a new learning environment to maximize learning flexibility, enhance learning effectiveness and enrich learning experience. Blended learning, online learning and personalized learning are sample of these integrations.*

Key words: *blended learning, online learning and personalized learning, outbreak education, assessment methods, instructional means, levels of transformation.*

Introduction. The last couple of years since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, higher education institutions have been practicing blended learning, online learning and other modes of technology-mediated learning in order to support teaching and learning under stringent social distancing requirements so imposed. Though due to outbreak education in Kazakhstan decreased. Whereas lectures and tutorials have to be conducted online as far as possible, face-to-face sessions are still necessary, such as practicum sessions and laboratory classes.

Discussions and results. For those institutions without much experience of deploying such non-traditional modes of learning, the sudden conversion of the classroom-based sessions to online sessions has posed a lot of problems. At least, the teaching plan and curriculum as well as the instructional means and assessment methods need to be adjusted to accommodate a blended mode or a totally online mode of learning. Both teachers and students may not be readily adapted to and engaged in the new teaching and learning environment.

Without doubt, teaching and learning has undergone different levels of transformation to cope with the present abnormal circumstance, as so-called new normal. Enabled by educational and technological innovations, new practices of online learning and blended learning were decided. It is time for both educational researchers and practitioners to re-visit the practices to prepare for the challenges ahead. This special issue aims to report the latest research findings with promising results on how educational and technological innovations could effectively be applied to accommodate teaching and learning under strict social distancing requirements imposed by the pandemic. All these findings would contribute to derive new trainings that can be easy deployed to cope with similar circumstances in future.

Lynn, et al. presented a case study in scaling faculty development for emergency remote teaching owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. It aimed to examine the adaptation of an existing online, asynchronous faculty development resource at a university in the United States in support of the unanticipated need for instructors to practise remote teaching. A course, which was used to support instructors for transition to distance education, was adapted to address the institutional and instructors' needs as a result of the pandemic. Based on the reflective journal, analysis was conducted to provide some insights into the participants' learning experience.

Conclusion. The results showed a positive response from the participants in terms of the efficacy of the course in guiding them to achieve the course's learning objectives, even after scaling

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the course to accommodate a large number of instructors for remote teaching in a short amount of time while maintaining the integrity of learning outcome. Blended learning and learning analytics were found as the most popular means to achieve personalized learning.

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