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EFL Students' Attitudes towards Blended Learning.

**Case study: Master one English Students at Abbes Laghrou
University**

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the Requirements for Masters' Degree in Foreign Language and Culture**

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Dedication

I am so proud to dedicate the fruit of my studies to my precious parents.

To my small family, my wonderful brothers and beloved sister.

To all my colleagues, and best friends who made my life special

(Khouloud, Tiba, Amina, and Mohamed).

To my close friend and partner in this work (MARIR Nassima).

To all my teachers who stood by my side and pushed me to hold on and never give up,

especially my dear teacher (Mr, BEDIAF Abdel-Khalek).

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especially (L&G family) who made my life different.

- **Hanane**

Dedication

I dedicate this simple and humble work to:

My beloved country Algeria

My parents who have been supporting and guiding me throughout the
years of my life to reach this level.

All my brothers who have been always on my side.

My grandmother.

All my colleagues and friends especially Bouhlala Hanane & Saoudi Tiba

My dearest teacher Kalli Imène

All teachers in the department of English over the five years.

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Abstract

Higher education institutions recently have moved from its comfort zone by adopting the blended learning method under some imposed conditions, seeking improvements of the learning quality. In this regard, the current research seeks to find out attitudes towards blended learning among EFL learners in Abess Laghrour university of Khenchela. The study aimed at answering the three formed research questions. To achieve the goals of this study, a quantitative design using descriptive method was employed. Moreover, the study sample consisted of 50 Master One students out of 144 students at the English department who were randomly selected of different ages and genders to respond the distributed questionnaire. The findings affirm that EFL students hold positive attitudes towards blended learning, also it seems as the preferred learning approach even when students are beginners at experiencing it, because of its flexibility, self-directed learning (SDL) and the social interaction. Like most studies, this study encountered a few limitations that should be taken into consideration .The first limitation concerns the lack of previous studies conducted on this approach at university, another issue emerged when administering the questionnaire is that the majority of students were not attending their physical classes. Furthermore, it is limited to the sample and the instrument used in this study. The study concluded with some recommendations, most important of which are the following: stakeholders should make use of learners' positive attitude to create a strong inclination of blended learning for the coming years.

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List of abbreviations and Acronyms

BL	Blended Learning.
CD-ROM	Compact disc read-only memory
CMS	Content Management System.
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease-19.
E-Books	Electronic Books
EFL	English for Foreign Language.
E-learning	Electronic Learning.
ELT	English Language Teaching.
FtF teaching	Face-to-Face teaching.
HE	Higher Education.
IT	Information Technology
ICT	Information Communication Technologies.
LMS	Learning Management System.
MCQ	Multiple Choice Questions
QST	Question.
SDL	Self-Directed Learning.
SIS	Student Information System.

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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

A sudden breakout of COVID-19 pandemic has called for a pause in the ways and means of learning in higher educational institutions. Therefore, this prolonged period of forced closure had pushed educators towards a more extensive use of technology to grant continuity of studying, this is where blended learning comes in as an alternative method of teaching imposed by corona virus pandemic, and it is the mixture between the E-learning and the traditional methods of teaching. Measuring students' attitudes is the first step to take before starting such a project. However, no researches have been carried out on EFL learners' attitude towards the implementation of this new method, and there were no information about how students would react towards it. Accordingly, it is important to explore EFL learners' attitudes towards this learning model.

2. Research Questions

The research problem of this study leads to the following research questions:

1. What are students' view about the advantages and the effectiveness of blended learning?
2. How do students perceive about the challenges they face by Blended learning?
3. How do students perceive the future of blended learning?

3. Research Aim and Objectives

3.1. Research Aim

The present study aims at finding out attitudes towards blended learning among EFL students at the English department in Abbes Laghrour University.

3.2. Objectives

The main objectives of this research:

1. To get feedback from students about advantages and effectiveness of blended learning.
2. To find out students' views towards the challenges faced blended learning.
3. To find out students' perceptions about the future of blended learning.

4. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study emerged from the researcher's personal experience, and the fact that it is the first study to be conducted in the field of English language teaching in Khenchela University. The greater need for using this approach justifies the need for questioning students about their attitudes. The results of the study will be of a great benefit to the following:

-Researchers, who would improve their skills, knowledge and strategies while engaging in the research.

-University administrators, will be informed about the strengths and weaknesses of this method based on students responses .It will help to determine what specific areas they should focus more and further enhance in order to make it responsive for students, they may also arrive at adapting it in the higher educational system for the coming years. This study will aid them organize the enrolment procedures accordingly.

-Future researchers, this study will be a useful reference for them if they would plan to make any related study precisely.

-Teachers, can also gain significance in this study; they will understand their students' behaviors and achievements, which lead them to be more flexible in using blended learning models, and to make the teacher-student relationships even better.

5. Research methodology

5.1. Choice of the method

A quantitative approach using non-experimental descriptive design is proposed for this study. This method allows the researcher to transform the collected data into statistics and it quantifies behaviors, opinions and attitudes of a large sample; furthermore, it allows the generalization of results to the entire population.

5.2. Sampling procedures

Master one students of English at Khenchela University are 144 represent the entire population of the present study. The sample particularly comprises of 50 participants who were selected from the five groups using simple random sampling.

5.3. Data gathering tools

To have significant answers about the research questions and to achieve the intended objectives, and to extract precise and valid data, one questionnaire was designed for students. Since it is the most common method of data collection on attitudes from a large group of participants. The researcher used MCQ and a Likert scale. It was administered face-to-face to students during study days.

6. Limitations and scope of the study

Although the research has reached its aim, there were some unavoidable limitations, which are

- The main limitation of this research embedded in the fact that blended learning is relatively new, which hinders the respondents understanding of the concept at the beginning.
- There was a huge gap between theory (literature review) and practice of this method at the university.
- Students' responses and reactions to the implementation of blended learning may have differed under a different blended learning models or different instructors.
- A difficulty have been emerged to get students' responses for the questionnaire because the majority of them were not attending their classes.
- The lack of any previous or even related studies about blended Learning in the EFL context at the university library.

This study is limited to the sample, instruments and specifically to Mater one EFL students' attitudes towards blended learning at the English department in Abbas Laghrour University during the academic year 2020-2021.

7. Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structurally organized into two main chapters. The first chapter provides a theoretical framework of the research, it is composed of two sections; the first section includes the various definitions, components dimensions and models as well as its future of blended learning. The second one is devoted for attitudes its definition, role adding to that some studies done about students' attitudes towards blended learning. The second chapter is composed of two sections the first one represents the methodology, sampling procedures and data instruments used to reach the designed objectives, concerning the other section it is

concerned with the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the results followed by the recommendations and some suggestions for future and a general conclusion.

This chapter covers the various definitions given to the term blended learning and its components. Then, discusses the advantages and the challenges of this method. Furthermore, it takes a look at the future of this method. Finally, discusses students' attitudes towards the blended learning model.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Section One: Blended Learning

1. Definition of distance education

Distance learning or distance education is a field of education in which the teacher and Students are geographically separated and this distance is filled by using technological resources. The teacher and the learners may communicate asynchronously and synchronously. Mehrota, et all (2001) define distance learning as “Any formal approach to instruction in which the majority of instruction occurs while educator and learner are not in each other’s physical presence” (p. 1). One more definition of distance learning is “the distance education may be defined as the family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviors are executed apart from the learning behaviors. Including those that in a contiguous situation would be performed in the learner’s presence, so that communication between the teacher and the learner must be facilitated by print, electronic, mechanical, or other devices”(Moore, 1977, p. 8; cited in Beth H).

1.1. Types of Distance Education

Distance education has had a remarkable effect on the field of education since its advent in the 19th century as correspondence study. Palloff & Pratt (2007) state that amongst the different types of blended learning that have emerged nowadays are fully online courses, hybrid or blended courses, and technology-enhanced courses consisting of integrating technology components into face-to-face traditional courses.

2. Blended learning

2.1. The emergence of the term ‘blended learning’

According to Singh (2003), the concept of blended learning is “rooted in the idea that learning is not just a one-time event—learning is a continuous process.” It is generally associated with the implementation of digital practices into the classroom (Macdonald, 2008). Evidently, it was initially rooted in the business world, afterwards deployed in higher education (HE) and lately adopted in language learning and teaching. Tomlinson & Whittaker (2013); Macdonald (2008).

2.2. The definition of blended learning

The consensus lack on a clear definition over twenty years and so, is mainly due to the wide nature of the term blended learning, the developed technologies and the different approaches used by teachers in classes (Ossiannilsson, 2017). Among the various names given to the term blended learning are “The hybrid learning, technology-mediated instruction, technology-enabled (enhanced) learning, web-enhanced instruction, and mixed-mode instruction are often used interchangeably in the research literature (By Bates, 2016, 2017; Commonwealth of Learning, 2015; Daniel, 2016; Martyn, 2003, cited in Ossiannilsson, 2017, p. 7).

The first literal use of the word ‘blended’ refers at ‘creating a mush’. It can also hold other positive connotations coffee, perfume for instance. Indicating the mix of amazing ingredients to get ‘something special for others to consume’ (Thorne, 2003, p. 17). Singh and Reed (2001) described blended learning as being an educational mode of learning where more than one approach is being used to enhance the learning outcomes. Blended leaning is a term generally associated with the implementation of digital practices into the classroom (Macdonald, 2008). Stacey & Gerbic as well go a step further

introducing blended learning as “a widely-accepted term to describe the range of teaching and learning strategies which have arisen from the mixing of different physical or virtual environments in universities, communities and the corporate sector”(Stacey & Gerbic, 2009, p. xvi). Another definition offered by Keengwee & Agamba (2015) “The intentional, complimentary fusion of online and face-to-face teaching and learning into a harmonious whole” (p. 144). Almost the same definition given by Tomlinson & Whittaker (2013) “in ELT ‘blended learning’ is the term most commonly used refers to the combination of face-to-face teaching with computer technology (online and offline activities /materials) (p. 12). One more definition is that “Blended learning environments include not only the physical presence of teachers and students but also the students’ ownership and control of the time, place, setting, path, and pace at which their learning takes place (By Banditvilai, 2016; cited in Ossiannilsson, 2017).

According to Stacey & Gerbic have not limited the amount of either methods “blended learning can be placed somewhere between fully online and fully face-to-face courses” (p. 2). However, (Allen, Seaman & Garrett (2007); cited in Stacey & Gerbic, 2009, p. 2) provided the percentages of the courses to be called blended as the following “blended or what is also termed hybrid learning as courses where 30% to 79% of the content is delivered online.” (p. 2). In this respect, Macdonald (2008) demonstrated “the online discussions do not replace the face to face discussions, but both collaborative approaches run parallel” (p. 47). This idea supported by Bourne and Seaman (2005) “the time has come to reject the dualistic thinking that demand choosing between conventional face-to-face and online, a dualism that is no longer tenable, theoretically or practically (cited in Garrison & Vaughan, 2008. p. 4).

Unlike the definitions found for blended learning, Garrison & Vaughan (2008) defined blended learning as a worthwhile coherent mode of delivery, which includes the

strengths of both methods face-to-face and e-learning to achieve satisfying experiences. One different definition of Stain & Graham (2014) in which they states, “blended courses typically mix synchronous with asynchronous activities” (p. 26).

Additionally, Mortera (2002) have explained blended learning as an unparalleled experience by which there is a switch from environments that are fully online like, videoconferencing, to others that are mediated solely by computer using CD-ROMs and, Internet. Likewise, switching from settings, which are just face-to-face by using computer and online technologies to optimize learning.

Researchers as Oliver & Trigwell (2005) have criticized definitions given to blended learning, as it is ‘ill defined’ (p. 17). Adding to that they claimed that the e-learning itself is remarkably ‘muddled’ and hard to define. Some argued that it is no more relevant. Yet, others expected from the blended learning to be a mainstream taking new directions.

As a conclusion, “The different definitions of blended learning make us to reflect on the complexity and richness of this type of learning and educational processes” Mortera, G. F. (2002).

3. Components of blended learning

3.1. Face-to-face learning

Face-to-face learning or physical classroom is the most traditional type of learning, in which it occurs in a formal on-ground teaching and learning with no technology use. It allows a live interaction between students and teachers (Department of education and early childhood development, 2012). Macdonald (2008) also explained that face-to-face sessions are valuable to focus on the content, or when the subject is complex or difficult to understand.

3.2. E-learning

There are wide range of e-learning definitions some of them are the following “E-Learning refers to the use of internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance. It is based on three fundamental criteria:

- 1) Learning is networked, which makes it capable of instant updating, storage/retrieval, distribution and sharing of instruction or information.
- 2) It is delivered to the end-user via a computer using standard Internet technology.
- 3) It focuses on the broadest view of learning solutions that go beyond the traditional of training ...” (by Rosenberg, 2001: 28-29; cited in Fersaoui, 2015). It has also defined as “The use of new multimedia technologies and the internet to improve, the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services, as well as remote exchange and collaboration” (By EC, 2001; cited in Raymond, 2016). In general, the key element in this method of teaching is the use of the internet to send trainings to students through an online medium.

3.2.1. Forms of e-learning

Electronic learning is classified into two forms synchronous and asynchronous learning.

3.2.1.1. Synchronous learning and its technologies

Synchronous learning is “Exchange and sharing of online resources and information in real time and at the same time” (keengwe & Agamba, 2015, p. 34). This form of learning allows participants to take part in learning at the same time while they can be situated anywhere in the world. The technologies that are used in synchronous learning are capable of engaging people in different locations at the same time and create a complete, rich learning experience among students include the following (Obasa et. al., 2013; McGreat & Elliott, 2014; cited in

Raymond, 2016).

- **Audio conferencing:** This is the real time discussion between students or between students and their teachers. Electronic means such as Skype can be employed to make audio conferencing possible.
- **Chat:** This enables students to ask questions and get immediate response as in traditional classroom learning.
- **Instant messaging:** These are short messages sent via internet from one to another, it allows instantaneous messages to be delivered and contact is made between students and teachers.
- **Video conferencing:** Video conferencing enable students to see their teachers live, as in the traditional classroom.
- **Web conferencing:** This format allows students to make presentations to their classmates and teachers just as in the traditional classroom setting.
- **White boarding:** Teachers can explain ideas, issues, and theories through the written word by using a mouse or an electronic stylus with a tablet.
- **Application sharing:** Participants have the ability to work on documents such as Google doc together at the same time, from different locations and editing rights are giving to all people involved in the learning process.

3.2.1.2. Asynchronous learning and its technologies

Cheung and Hew (2006) define asynchronous learning as “the exchange of messages via computer network where participants need not be online simultaneously” (p. 2). Cited in (Hew & Cheung 2014). In the other hand, keengwe & Agamba (2015) define asynchronous learning as “exchange and sharing of online resources and information at different times” (p.34). This form of learning gives an opportunity for learners to study at a convenient time

and place. The tools that are used in this form of learning include the following (Obasa et. al., 2013; McGreat & Elliott, 2014) cited in (Raymond, 2016).

- **Databases:** Participants can have access at any time to many resources that are Provided by a database. Therefore, they can use those resources for their studies whenever they want.
- **Document libraries:** These enable students to follow their progress and track their learning, they can have very long break in their studies but, access to a document library service means that they will be able to resume their study from the same point at a later date so they don't need to go over what has already been covered.
- **E-books:** Electronic books serve as a compliment to other teaching and learning activities these e-books can be download and read offline. Students can highlight main ideas and made notes on pages just as they do to a physical book.
- **E-mail:** Enables instructors to share lessons, assignment, and instructions so that students will have excess to their course materials. The only problem with e-mails is that immediate feedback is not assured as in the case of traditional learning.
- **Streaming audio:** It takes the form of pre-recorded lessons, audio materials are available and can be replayed several times by students until they understand the lecture.
- **Streaming video:** Video streaming involves the streaming of videos of pre-recorded lectures, students can download these videos and watch them several times until they gain a full understanding of the lesson.
- **Web logs:** Blogs are mostly used to pass information and announcements to students.
- **Website links:** Website links create a resource that directs students to additional resources on external web pages.

The above applications allow teachers and students to experience ‘real life’ classroom activities, the only difference here is that there is no physical contact among students.

4. Advantages and challenges of blended learning

More important than its technical definitions is its characteristics, usefulness as well as the drawbacks. Like any other learning method, blended learning come up with unique pros and cons that are important to consider when adopting it.

4.1. Advantages of blended learning

Students are adolescents and their connection with digital devices cannot be neglected if managed properly. Bringing pleasant benefits to students, teachers and administrators rather than previous methods of teaching and learning (Stain & Graham, 2014). Likewise, Stacy & Gerbic (2009) demonstrate “Many studies show that blended learning is both an effective learning model and a popular choice amongst students” (p. xiv).

Many would find it challenging to manage study alongside a regular job or other commitments. Hence, blended learning offers students a flexibility and freedom to get access to the material whenever their schedule is free in terms of time and place by posting lectures and instructions online. In addition, both teachers and students may profit from less travel time and cost (Stain & Graham, 2014). In this respect, Macdonald (2008) confirmed that blended learning is a new regime that offers students ‘a great flexibility’. Students are able to get involved in the course and present their projects “if they cannot travel, and are not excluded from the learning materials” (24, City Univ., UK, as cited in Macdonald. 2008, p. 50). She also added “a range of online tools can be deployed as a partial substitute for face-to-face meetings...such tools may reduce some of the geographical hurdles to synchronous meetings” (p. 51).

Graham & Stain (2014) indicate that blended learning may overcome shyness and frustration they encounter in face-to-face classes whenever they commit mistakes. It also increases social communication because they have more real times with teachers and between peers, unlike the latter due to the limited time and curriculum of the physical settings. Similarly, Garrison & Vaughan (2008) point out that new learning relationships will be launched and expanded beyond the fixed time of classroom. Supporting this idea, Macdonald (2008) confirmed in this setting is not the content accessible on the web itself that matters, but the feeling of contact students gain. Moreover, “blended courses produce a strong sense of community among students than either traditional or fully online courses” (by Rovai and Jordan (2004) as quoted in Garrison & Vaughan, 2008, p. 26); Stain & Graham (2014).

The blended learning method offers sufficient time on task to reflect and accomplish tasks and assignments adequately, especially with the help provided by the computer and the internet simply with one click (Stain & Graham, 2014). Not to mention that the e-learning portion of blended learning that allows taking advantages of the grammar checker for self-revision, as well as facilitating writing instead of handwriting they can type. On the other hand, the face-to-face meetings provides real life examples so they can simplify complex subjects for students. It is undeniable that the use of information communication technology (ICT) creates an interesting and motivating environment for students. Therefore, good results will be expected.

Students differ in the way they learn, as it is hard for some to learn with other people especially if they have different learning styles. As Stain & Graham (2014) demonstrate thanks to the developments in the educational discipline and the technological tools, students will be able to take some ownership; self-direct learning, in which they realize their gaps then eventually choose aspects of the course they believe it will successfully meet their needs for better grasp of the material. Taking in consideration the ability to decide the pace of their

learning; moving either slowly or fast throughout the course. At the same time, keeping away from approaches where teachers are the center to learning and teaching (Macdonald, 2008).

Macdonald in her book emphasized, in this new learning model, students are given the freedom to personalize resources; they solely receive useful and relevant knowledge that meet their needs and interests, which definitely contribute in a way in bridging their skills (Macdonald, 2008). Additionally, students can reach several resources and lectures online and can return to whenever they want without relying only on what teachers and libraries offer them with.

Blended learning is an interesting source of developing diverse skills. Amongst enriching the e-learning experience and the mastery of technological tools and techniques. Moreover, developing evaluation skills of the learner himself, fostering language-learning skills, asking questions. As well as the huge amount of new knowledge gained through the self-discovery accompanied with critical thinking skills (Macdonald, 2008). Furthermore, immediate feedback on students' questions, grades also including correcting assignments are provided without waiting until the next class time.

The blending design is a favorable solution for institutions that suffer from crowded classrooms, global health issues as well as low budgets and that to attain both effectiveness and efficiency in learning. As Garrison & Vaughan (2008) illustrated "blended learning is an approach to educational redesign that can enhance and extend learning and offer designs that efficiently manage large classes" (p. 7).

Blended learning is considered the natural best fit that meet students' needs and gaps, as Singh (2003) comments "Blending provides various benefits over using any single learning delivery medium alone.

4.2. Challenges in implementing blended learning

As there are numerous advantages, the complex nature of blended learning instruction also incites the existence of a number of challenges which might have some consequences on the quality of learning process and may hinder its expansion and application in various settings.

Hofmann (2014) stated the challenge of overcoming the idea that blended learning is not as effective as Face-to-Face training, since students are attracted to the traditional classroom in which they understand their roles and what is required, they understand that they can be successful learners. However online learning technologies have changed these expectations. Students are traditional academics' as they used to rely on the teacher: listen, read and take notes, it is a hard task for their teachers to help them develop the habit of learning through an instruction that adds a virtual element (Graham & Allen, 2009). In addition, Lopez-Perez, Perez-Lopez, and Rodriguez-Ariza (2011) noted that keeping learners' engagement in the online component of the course is challenging when students gave more value to FtF classes.

A modern study on the problems of implementing blended learning among university instructors revealed that the most common challenges were the lack of support for learning critical functions of the learning management system (LMS), in addition to discomfort with understanding and implementing an effective online pedagogy (Mozelius & Rydell, 2017).

Also, the instructors' lack of pedagogical and technological skills is source of problem for them, they have to spend more time in few tasks such as redesigning the module, Preparing for the materials to be uploaded, and difficulty in finding the right blend for their curriculum (Gedik et al, 2013). "Course redesign is not. Just about putting courses online. It is about

rethinking the way we deliver instruction in the light of the possibilities that new technology offers.” (Garrison & Vaughan, 2007, p. 272).

Teaching in blended learning requires teachers to have technological competence. They must have the necessary technological and pedagogical support from their universities in order to motivate them in integrating technology with traditional method of teaching. The struggle in fully adopting technology for teaching as reported by (Brown, 2016) might be viewed as distraction and disruption to instruction. “Teachers need to leave their teacher preparation programmes with a solid understanding of how to use technology to support learning. Effectiveness use of technology is not an optional add-on or a skill that we simply can expect teachers to pick up once they get into the classroom.” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, p.32). Finally, teachers should have at least the required knowledge and skills to make the right blending in teaching and learning process as such, the use of technological tools should best meet the needs of the learners while ensuring the appropriateness of right blended learning nature of the course (Lee, Lim, & Kim, 2017).

Gedik et al (2013) state additional barriers to blended learning such as the complexity of the study, where students are supposed to engage in and complete tasks in two environments while they lack in competency to create a harmony between the two environments; face to face and online. Hofmann (2011) also adds up some other challenges that blended learning faces like finding the best match between the delivery medium and performance goals, and maintaining that online resources offer interactivity rather than just instructing learners because too much lecture, reading, or content in any format (including the traditional classrooms) is disengaging and after a while even the most motivated students will have a difficult time retaining information since they will not read everything they receive.

Moreover, in terms of technological aspects Chen et al. (2015) added that the challenges of technological accessibility cannot be ignored, blended learning requires learners to have access to technology both hardware and software, whether provided by themselves or by their university.

As for students, the issue of participation becomes the most outstanding barrier for the implementers of blended learning while blended learning is supposed to improve students' participation in learning, several studies reported that this aspect has been an issue in blended learning implementation. Some students are unable to meet the needs of blended learning which require high level of student discipline, responsiveness and responsibility (Heaney & Walker., 2012) because of some level of autonomy and freedom offered in blended learning courses, students are required to have higher level of self-discipline in their online component. Boelens et al. (2017) reported that procrastination considered as a major problem among students due to the enormous flexibility and autonomy granted to online learners.

Despite these challenges of blended learning method, the advantages that it can bring about to teaching and learning environment are essential and crucial to consider as various studies show that it provides flexibility, enhances learning autonomy, improves motivation, and accessibility; thus, it reduces the teaching and learning gap exists between teachers and students.

5. Dimensions of the blended learning

The blended learning environment is a combination of different dimensions. The current blended learning programs may combine one or more dimension. In this regard, Graham (2006) identifies four key dimensions classified as space, time, fidelity and humanness. (Cited in Stacey and Gerbic, 2009, p. 2). Yet, according to Singh (2003) dimensions are categorized into five dichotomous as the following;

- 1) Offline / online learning; The blended learning experience at its basic level mixes online learning which generally refers to the use of internet with the offline learning which takes place in a more traditional manner.
- 2) Blending self-paced and live, collaborative learning; Self-paced learning involves the learner's management and control of his own learning. Whereas, the collaborative learning involves peers interaction and communication as well as knowledge sharing. The collaborative learning may require a monitor to follow the process.
- 3) Blending structured and unstructured learning; blended learning occurs in unstructured forms through using e-mails, meetings and so on. Unlike the other forms of learning, that implies an organized content in a specific order.
- 4) Blending custom content with off-the-shelf content; off-the-shelf content as its name suggests is ready made course, it saves time with a lower price. This type of content is available immediately after purchasing, you do not need to create a course but simply download the program and add it to your LMS (Learning management system). However, the customized content is specifically developed to meet some needs and requirements.
- 5) Blending learning, practice, and performance support; It is considered the best form of blending that complements learning, in which it profits from the workplace training and reliance on platforms and tools to eventually improve performance and results in learning.

6. Models of blended learning

Blended learning comes in a wide variety of implementation models, those models help to understand the many ways in which online learning blends with and supports traditional learning strategies.

Stacker and Horn comes with a typology of four models reduced from an original six. The original six were: (1) Face-to-face driving model, in which classroom learning is supplemented with online learning, it allows teachers to use technology in classroom in particular situation. (2) The rotation model, requires students to rotate their learning setting from traditional classroom to working online according to pre-scheduled sessions. (3) The flex model, which involves full online learning, students independently draw up a work schedule and they are not limited in time, and support is provided by the teacher to those who need help; (4) The online lab, in which students take some additional online courses on-campus to supplement their traditional studies. (5) The self-blend model, which involves self-selected subjects to learn, students supplement their traditional classroom by taking an additional online course off-campus. (6) The enriched virtual model, where students with limited time can meet their teachers online and selectively come to have face-to-face classes. Stacker and Horn decide to delete model (1) as insufficiently different to (2) and (3), and to combine (4) and (5). Thus, the new four models are the rotation, flex, self-blended and enrichment virtual model. Also, they note many changes of the rotation model the most important one is the 'flipped classroom' in which students study online in order to receive basic content such as lectures and instructions, while the precious class-time is used for important things like discussion, working in groups, evaluation and tackling difficult problems. Cited in (Bryan and Volchenkova, 2016). Hockly (January 2018) asserted that "There is clearly no one 'right blend' due to the wide range of contexts in which blended learning can take place, the varying needs of learners, and the different models, content and approaches that can inform course design"(p. 99).

7. Requirements of implementing blended learning

Darrow et al. (2013) identified a road map for effective implementation of blended

learning. They came up with a six element strategy for planning and implementing blended learning which includes leadership, professional development, teaching, operations, content, and technology it offers general guidelines to follow in implementing their blended learning programs.

The first element is leadership, leadership needs to occur at every level of an organization .For the successful implementation and adoption of blended learning, leadership is the first component needed and it is the foundation from which all other components develop. Successful leaders collaboratively identify common aims and objectives concerning blended learning and then communicate them, after that formal and informal processes are established that road and monitor progress towards the goals on a weekly and monthly basis.

The second element is professional development, which considered as an important component for on going implementation of goals and for the roadmap. A coordinated and systematic professional development plan, based on previous goals, should be in place. professional development be customized according to the requirements of the blended learning teachers and administrators.

The third element is teaching, teachers are crucial to the blended learning implementation, they need to understand the pedagogical change in their teaching to successfully transform classrooms and teaching to a blended model. Teachers organize their classroom and schedule their day according to the chosen Models of blended learning, teaching strategies will also change. The adopted pedagogical approaches and the classroom teachers' activities will be the most important piece to a successful implementation of blended learning.

The fourth element is operations successful implementation of blended learning needs the use of digital learning systems that enable teachers, administrators, Students and parents to know new data about Students, their achievements and the ability to easily adapt instruction based on student performance. Administrative systems include Learning Management System (LMS), Content Management Systems (CMS), Student Information Systems (SIS), and related systems that provide administrative, teacher, and student data.

The fifth element is content the decision to purchase or build digital content is important in the implementation of online and Blended learning program s teachers could create their own content or they may use content from an online provider.

The sixth element is technology: It is the most important element required for the successful implementation of blended learning in which technology infrastructure is crucial, this includes a dependable telecommunication network, software, and hardware devices. Trainers and learners need easy access to technology in addition to an effective technology support to maintain positive momentum in teaching and learning in the E-learning component of blended learning method.



Figure 01: The six elements for planning and implementation of blended learning

8. The future of blended learning

Teaching and learning are smoothly reshaped as the world becomes increasingly dependent on technology (Allen & Seaman, 2011; cited in Keengwe & Agamba 2015). Despite the fact that the future is something hard to be expected. Yet, the emergence of blended learning as a major trend in higher education is obvious in the coming years (Graham, 2006; as cited in Alebaikan, 2013). This is illustrated by Stacey and Gerbic (2009), “Blended learning is now constantly positioned as one of the emerging trends in higher education and therefore is of particular strategic importance in the future of universities, their students and teachers as well as in the widening community of professionals education and training” (p. 1).

According to Garrison & Vaughan (2008), the educational institutions must recognize that the approved method should address changes that meet the needs and correspond the technological innovation wave. To serve a generation of learners that grew up in a 'digital age, without a doubt they prefer such environments. Hence, this requires different ways of learning rather than the classical methods of delivery (Keengwe & Agamba, 2015); (Alebaikan, 2013).

COVID-19 seems the key factor that pushes this model forward in schools and worldwide, becoming ‘the ideal solution’ for a post-pandemic society; shifting from a luxury to a necessity (Stain & Graham, 2014). Adding to that great options, freedom also the distance technology instruments provided by blended learning which opened new opportunities in the domain (Macdonald, 2008); (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008). To sum up, Thorne (2003) asserted that “blended learning is the most logical and neutral evolution of our learning agenda” (p. 1).

Section Two: Students Attitudes towards Blended learning

9. Definition of Attitudes

There are many definitions of the term attitude some of them are the following: “An attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related.” (Albarracin & Al. 2005) cited in (Nedjah, 2010). Attitudes are positive or negative views about a person, object, idea or situation which influences individual behavior (Marianne & Elaine, 2005) cited in (Alpine, 2015). In addition, “attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor.” (Early & Chaiken, 1993: 1). Cited in (Nedjah, 2010). To summarize attitudes are views that represent an individual’s like or dislike for an item and they can be positive, negative or neutral.

9.1. Components of Attitudes

Attitudes are classified into three general components: affect, cognition, and behavior. “Affect can vary from pleasurable (feeling good, happy) to unpleasurable (feeling bad, unhappy). Behavior can range from favorable and supportive (e.g., keeping, protecting) to unfavorable and Hostile (e.g., discarding, destroying). Likewise, cognition or thoughts may vary from favorable to unfavorable (e.g., supporting versus derogating arguments), (Breckler, 1984, p. 1191). Cited in (Paul, 2004).

10. The role of attitudes in learning

Attitudes play such a pivotal role in learning. Owing the fact that to form studies in the educational system learners’ likewise teachers’ attitudes towards the various aspects of the educational domain are needed. Learners preset attitudes with their own ways of thinking,

and according to teachers' behaviors, traits of personality they display in the classroom, also the way of teaching and interaction in that environment. Accordingly, these would determine the extent of like or dislike. Then later on as learners get involved in actual learning experience they may adjust, dismiss or even make entirely new attitudes (Ali Ahmed, 1989).

Attitudes in learning have been considered a prime factor that determine learners' outcomes. In the same context, the ones who held positive attitudes towards their teachers and learning task will improve and keep their interests, as well as bring better comprehension of the material has been taught. This is supported by Şenay Şen (2013), "Attitudes towards learning are important factors on the learners' level of goal setting, problem solving abilities, their beliefs towards learning, their inner and external motivations in the process of learning and all the academic performances they perform"(p. 947). Furthermore, rises their learning expectations, decreases their anxiety levels and turns the classroom into an enjoyable setting. For teachers a good student is the one that holds a positive attitude towards learning and 'eager to learn' (Güngör & Açıkgöz, 2006: 502; Cited in Şenay Şen 2013). While those holding negative attitudes influence their desire for learning, and the classroom for them turn into a boring environment. Additionally, becomes a demanding task of the teacher to change such negative attitudes (Ali Ahmed, 1989).

To conclude, "Learning is basically an individual performance. For that reason, positive or negative attitudes towards learning are valuable for the success of learning" (Şenay Şen, 2013, p. 947).

11. Students attitudes towards blended learning in the EFL context

Few studies were conducted to examine students' attitudes towards blended learning in the EFL context.

Azamat, et all (2018) examined students' attitudes towards blended learning and related concepts. The study was carried out on 162 students (100 females and 62 males, with the mean age of 18.80 and its standard deviation of 1.16). The results revealed that students prefer blended learning to traditional classroom in EFL context. Yet, they liked to take exams in paper-and-pencil form rather than in digital form. In the other hand, some students prefer sending assignments online, while others prefer submitting them personally. They also trusted digital English teaching and learning materials. Students' English proficiency level were in positive correlation with their preferences towards blended learning for EFL purposes.

Dr. Aida (2018) investigated students attitudes towards implementing blended learning in teaching English in higher education institutions, in AL-Quds Open university. E-learning strategies where used along with traditional teaching methods of four language skills, the study sample was 60 undergraduate students divided into to an experimental group and a control group. Students' attitudes where compared between the control group and the experimental group to measure students attitudes towards learning English and the potential of available technology to develop language skills and learning autonomy. The results of the study revealed that students' attitudes toward the integration of blended learning had a positive effect in improving students' language skills and autonomous learning as well as learner motivation.

Mohammed (2015) investigated the perceptions and attitudes towards blended learning for English courses : a case study of students at university of Bisha. The study highlights the concept of blended learning courses and E-Learning from students' points view, the researcher conducted a survey through a questionnaire at university of Bisha ,English department from 8 levels of undergraduate program in both girls and boys, there were 130 participants enrolled in English . The results of the study indicated that in general

the students' perceptions and attitudes towards blended learning were positive in terms of three domains in the questionnaire. Moreover, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning process, as well as learners can choose their time and place of studying according to their own schedule.

Fatima et al (2018) examined the attitudes of students toward blended learning at university of Jordan. The study was carried out on 250 students. Those students were selected to answer the questionnaire. The results of the study revealed that blended learning is useful to students also they know when and how to use the resources provided to them through blended learning. Furthermore, the results indicated that blended learning is more effective than traditional way of teaching to enhance skills and knowledge, and the electronic resources that are used in e-learning portion have a great effect on students life to take responsibility for their own learning process. In general learners have shown positive attitude towards blended learning method.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the researchers shed light on the concept of blended learning, its components and the related elements. In addition, discusses the possible pros and the inevitable cons. It also highlights the role of attitudes in learning. Finally, attempted to determine students' attitudes towards the blending model in the EFL context in previous studies.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology and data analysis

Introduction

This chapter represents the practical part of the research. It comprises of two sections, the first describes the adopted methodology that allows answering the research questions, the instrument being used, the description of the population and the sampling that were chosen for this research study. The second one is devoted for data analysis, discussions and interpretation.

Section One: Research methodology

1. Research methodology

This study is based on a quantitative research, using a descriptive design. This kind of design allows to have a direct measurement and a statistical data as well as generalization of the results over the population.

2. Population of the study

The present research targets Master one students at the English department at Khenchela university, The questionnaire was distributed manually to 50 students from the five groups out of 144 students using a simple random sampling. This level is selected for the reason that Master students are supposed to have a considerable background knowledge and an important vision about the implementation of BL, since they have dealt with both methods traditional and the e-learning. Additionally, this category of students are competent enough to estimate their educational progression and express their attitudes and perceptions properly

3. Research methods and instruments

There is an attempt to investigate EFL students' attitudes towards blended learning. In this regard and to achieve the intended purposes and answer the research questions, a single questionnaire was used as a data gathering instrument.

3.1. Description of students' questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into four sections. The first is the background information with MCQ (multiple Choice Questions) seeks to obtain some basic details about the participants' information. To know whether it has to do with their degree of involvement in the blended learning. The three other sections are in the form of the five option Likert scale, it is a method to construct and score attitudes, in which students respond to each statement by indicating varied degrees of agreement or disagreement This is usually done by the choice of one of the following five options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Section Two: Data Analysis, Interpretation and discussion of the findings

This section details the results depicted from students' questionnaire with a small description of each with illustrated by histograms and pie charts to help to show the patterns of the quantitative data clearly.

4. Analysis of the findings

4.1. Students' questionnaire analysis

- **Section One:** Background Information

QST 01: What is your gender?

Male	Female
15	35

Table01: Students' gender

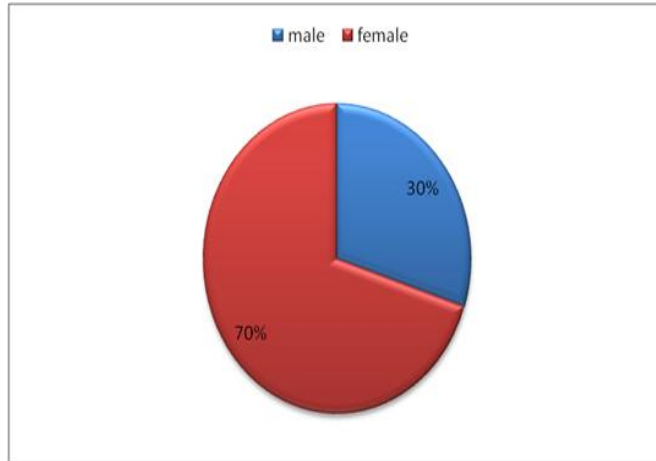


Figure 02: Students' gender

The present study sample consisted a large majority 35 (70%) of females, and 15 (30%) of males.

QST 02: What is your age?

21-25 years	25 years and more
30	20

Table 02: Students' Age

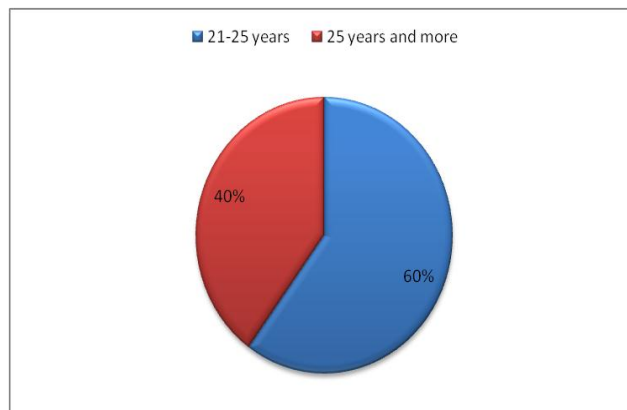


Figure 03: students' age

In this question, it is observed that the majority 30 of the participants' age ranges between 21-25 years forming up 60%, whereas the rest ranges from 25 years and more making 40% of the total number.

QST 03 How do you consider your level of proficiency in English?

Poor	Average	Good	Advanced
1	10	36	3

Table 03: Students' level of proficiency in English

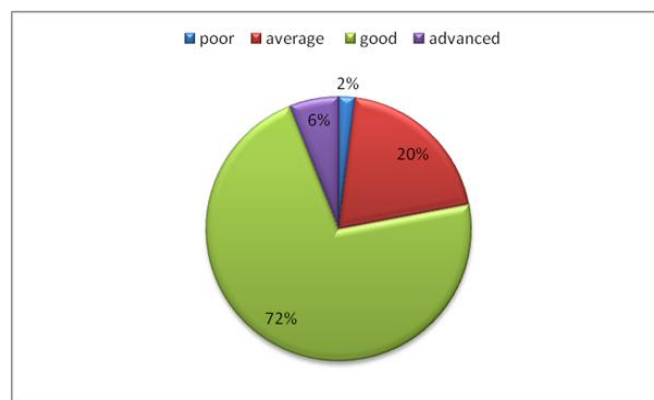


Figure 04: Students' level of proficiency in English

This question is meant to know students' level of proficiency in the English language. A great number of students rated their English proficiency at a 'good' level 36 making 72% of the whole sample, while 20% of them considered their level as average. Some believed that they have an advanced level making up 6%, and only one participant with the percentage of 2% considered his level as poor.

QST 04 What is your occupation?

Working	Other responsibilities rather than study	All
14	24	12

Table 04: Students' occupation

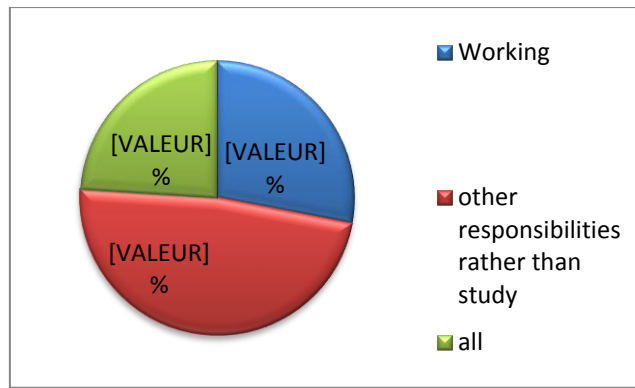


Figure 05: Students' occupation

The figure (5) represents the participants' occupation, 28% are working, less than a half of participants 48% have other responsibilities rather than study and an acceptable number 24% of them are having both work and other responsibilities besides to study.

- **Section Two** students' view towards the advantages of blended learning

	SA	A	N	D	SD
QST 1	36 %	58 %	6 %	0 %	0 %
QST 2	38 %	50 %	6 %	4 %	2 %
QST 3	60 %	22 %	16 %	0 %	2 %
QST 4	28 %	28 %	8 %	32 %	4 %
QST 5	36 %	34 %	12 %	14 %	4 %

Table 5: Students' attitudes towards the advantages of blended learning (Qst 1-5)

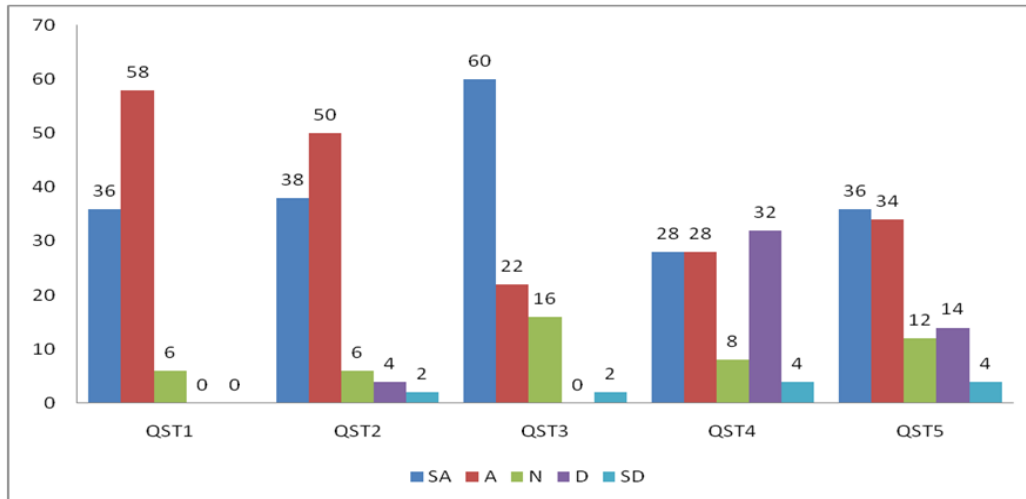


Figure 6: Students' attitudes towards the advantages of blended learning (Qst 1-5)

QST 01: Blended learning grants students a flexibility; the option of coming to class or just following the learning progress from home whenever their schedule is free.

According to the histogram figure(6), the majority 36+ 58 making up 94% of the students who chose to agree with the flexibility provided by blended learning,3 informants with the percentage of 6% preferred to be neutral. Yet, no one chooses to disagree.

QST 02: Students can decide either moving slow or fast throughout their learning process according to their gaps and needs.

As it is presented the results figure (6), it shows that the highest proportion of the respondents 18+ 29 making 88% agreed that through blended learning method they can control the speed of their learning, 6% of students do not have a clear overview, however, only a few 2% + 4% who are not persuaded with this idea.

QST 03: Blended learning offers students intensive guidance from teachers when they learn in physical and virtual settings.

Overwhelming percentages 82% of respondents express their strongly agreement concerning the intensive guidance they receive in both settings, 16 % of students did not give an obvious

attitude towards this statement. Whereas, the minority which represents 2% indicates their rejection.

QST 04: Students feel better when receiving feedback on their questions and grades privately rather than face-to-face.

Results show that 28% represents the students who are strongly agree and 28% those who agree, the highest number indicate their refusing 36%, in the other side, only 8% who have no comment by choosing the option ‘neutral’.

QST 05: Students are not limited with teachers’ lectures; instead, they can depend on themselves in choosing resources they really need.

Results of this statement reported that the majority 24%+ 44% (70%) of the participants agreed that students can personalize resources in this method, 14%+ 4% were against the idea , and the remaining 12% of students did not state their opinions about the subject.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
QST 6	24 %	44 %	22 %	8 %	2 %
QST 7	50 %	32 %	12 %	2 %	4 %
QST 8	20 %	50 %	12 %	16 %	2 %
QST 9	38 %	44 %	10 %	8 %	0 %
QST10	32 %	46 %	10 %	12 %	0 %

Table 5.1: Students’ attitudes towards the advantages of blended learning (Qst 6-10)

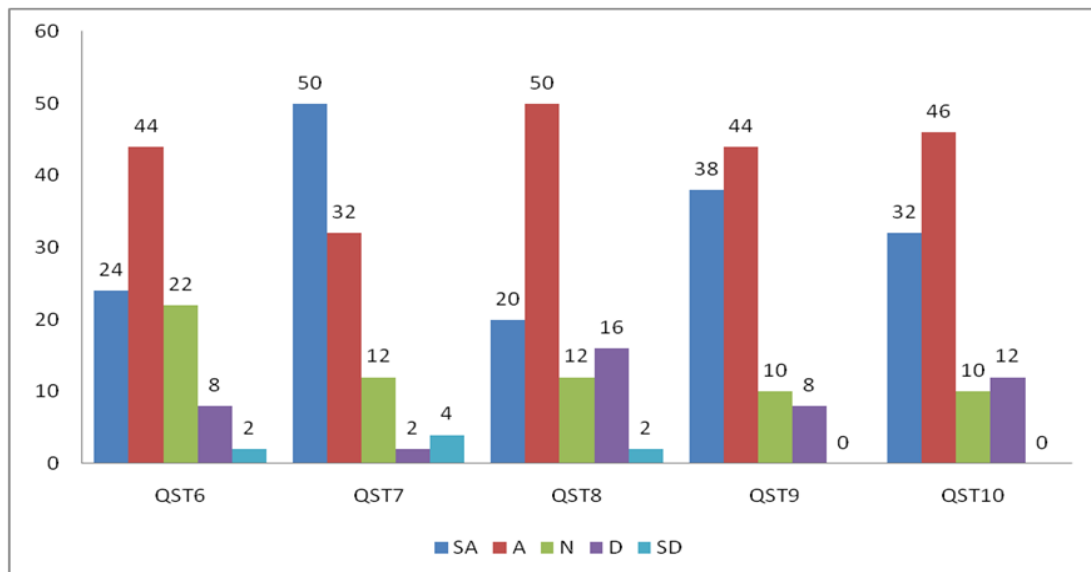


Figure 6.1: Students' attitudes towards the advantages of blended learning (Qst 6-10)

QST 06: Courses designed for blended learning are useful, interesting and motivational.

According to the participants, a great number scored 44%+ 24% agreed that BL courses are interesting and motivating. However, a small number of students who represent 2%+ 8% were against the argument, a considerable number 22% of them have no comment by choosing 'neutral'.

QST 07: Blended learning provides a less risky environment for students and teachers, especially with the recent health conditions (Covid19) in the country.

A highest number of students 50%+ 32% strongly agreed with the statement. Yet, only a few of them who are not persuaded with the idea. On the other hand, 12% of respondents do not care and have not a clear idea.

QST 08: Blended learning reinforces social interaction and community spirit with teachers and between peers, furthermore relationships beyond class times.

In this question, the participants were asked about whether blended learning is helps in social interaction within and beyond the classroom. The results show that 50% of the students agree,

20% strongly agree, while (18%; D/A) disagreed the idea, and 12% of the informants were unsure.

QST 09: Blended learning encourages students’ self-autonomy in learning, so they become responsible for their own learning.

As it is presented in the figure above (6.1), the majority of the respondents (41) making up 38%+ 44% from the total sample agree that blended learning increases their self-autonomy. While, only 8% who were not convinced with that. To end up with 10% of them neither agree nor disagree.

QST 10: Blended learning fits students’ different individual learning styles and needs.

It is explicitly seen in the figure (6.1) that the overwhelming percentages of the responding students 32%, 46% strongly agree. While, 10% of them have no idea about. The remaining (6) making 12% from the whole ratio, were against the idea.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
QST 11	30 %	44 %	18 %	8 %	0 %
QST 12	40 %	30 %	16 %	12 %	2 %
QST 13	36 %	42 %	12 %	8 %	2 %
QST 14	20 %	32 %	22 %	18 %	8 %

Table 5.2: Students’ attitudes towards the advantages of blended learning (Qst11-14).

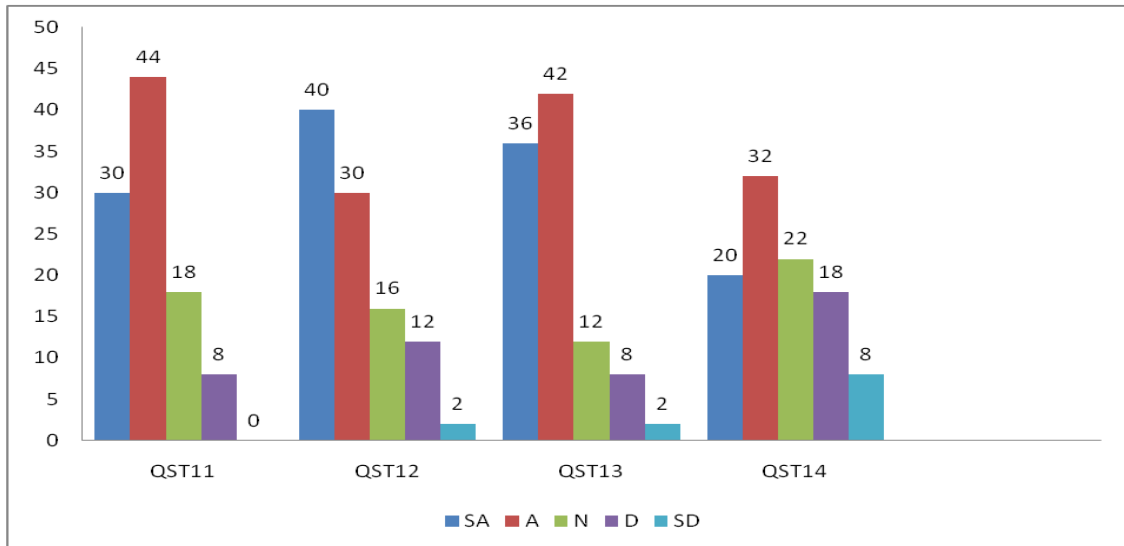


Figure 6.2: Students' attitudes towards the advantages of blended learning (Qst11-14).

QST 11: Blended learning is an opportunity to develop students' critical thinking, language-learning and digital skills and techniques.

The objective of the statement 11 is to show whether blended learning is developing certain skills according to students' views. The figure (6.2) above reveals that the majority of students (16+ 3) making 74% of the whole sample are agree with this idea. However, only 4 of the respondents making 8% who were disagreed. Moreover, 18% were unsure about the idea.

QST 12: Blended learning provides sufficient time on task; enough time for performing tasks. Depending on the results presented in the graph above (6.2), it is clear that the highest percentages 20 making (40%) and 15 making 30% strongly agree with the idea that the blended learning method offers enough time for performing tasks, 16% are unsure about the idea. However, a minority 6+1 making 14% who expressed their rejection concerning this subject.

QST 13: Blended learning offers better preparation for exams and lessons.

Results revealed that almost all the respondents (35 SA/ A) expressed their agreement about the blended learning offers a better preparation for exams by an estimated 78%, 12% preferred to be neutral. Whereas, the least degree 4+1 making 10% of students express their disagreement to this concern.

QST 14: Outcomes in blended course are better than those in the traditional learning.

The figure above (6.2) indicate that 10+ 16 of students making up 52% believed that their outcomes are enhanced comparing to the traditional method of learning.11 informants making 22% could not decide about this concern. On the other hand, the remaining13 students out of the whole sample forming 20% expressed their negative attitude concerning this idea.

- **Section Three: Challenges Faced by Students in Blended Learning**

	SA	A	N	D	SD
QST1	20 %	40 %	22 %	16 %	2 %
QST2	24 %	50 %	12 %	14 %	0 %
QST3	38 %	42 %	10 %	6%	4 %
QST4	44 %	32 %	14 %	6 %	4 %
QST5	30 %	44 %	16 %	8 %	2 %

Table 6: Students' attitudes towards the challenges of blended learning (Qst 1-5).

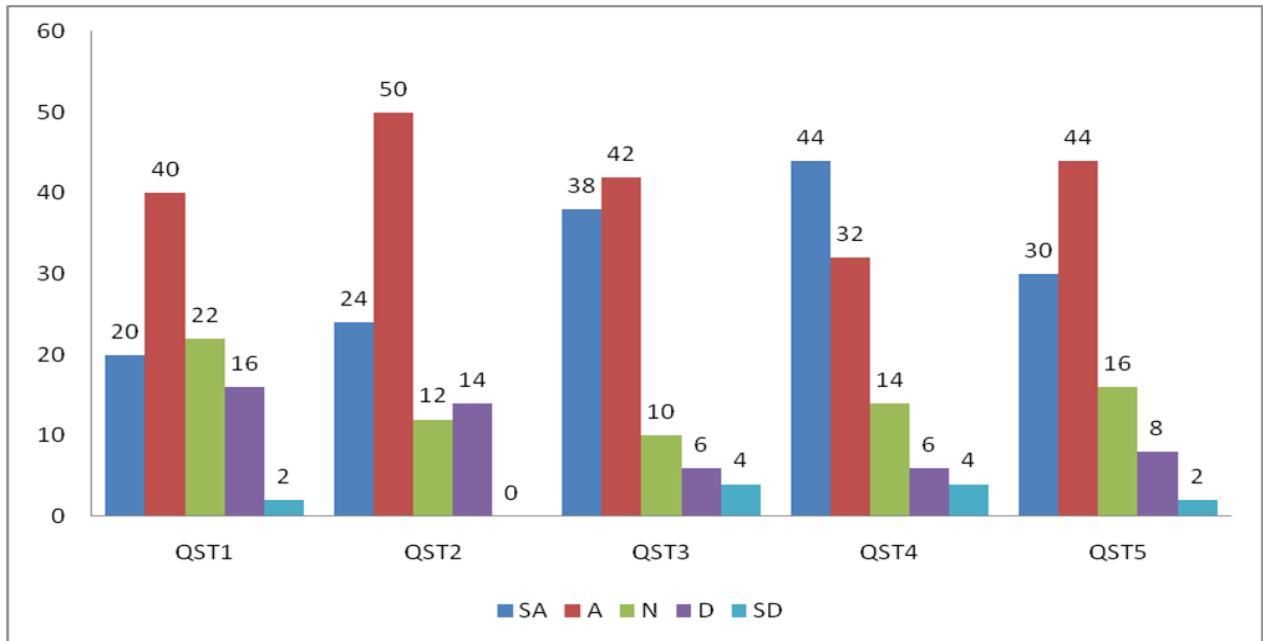


Figure 07: Students' attitudes towards the challenges of blended learning (Qst 1-5).

QST 01: Blended learning contributes to my social isolation.

Overall most students said that blended learning contributes to their social isolation (40% agree and 20% strongly agree). However minority (18 % SA/A) disagree with that while, 22% of the participants wear neutral.

QST 02 students face difficulties in using e- learning platform that is used in blended learning.

Majority of learners (74% agreement) face difficulties in using E-learning platform. However, (14%) disagree with that, (0%) strongly disagree and 12% were neutral.

QST 03 students do not have constant access to the internet.

Most respondents (80% agreement) reported that they do not have constant access to the internet while (10% disagreement) reported that they have constant access to the internet in the other hand 10% of students were neutral.

QST 04: Students are easily distracted by the internet, so they use it for entertainment instead of study.

High percentage of participants (76% SA /A) said that they are easily distracted by the internet. (10% D/SD) were against this idea and 14 % were neutral.

QST 05: Students lack the competency in organizing their virtual and real times.

74% (SA /A) of students said that they lack competency in organizing their virtual and real time ,while 10% (SD/D) do not face this challenge and 16% of them were neutral .

	SA	A	N	D	SD
QST6	40 %	42 %	10 %	8 %	0 %
QST7	24 %	50 %	18 %	8 %	0 %
QST8	18 %	48 %	12 %	16 %	6 %
QST9	32 %	42 %	14 %	10 %	2 %
QST10	30 %	36 %	18 %	12 %	4 %
QST11	44 %	36%	8 %	6 %	6%

Table 6.1: Students’ attitudes towards the challenges of blended learning (Qst 6-11).

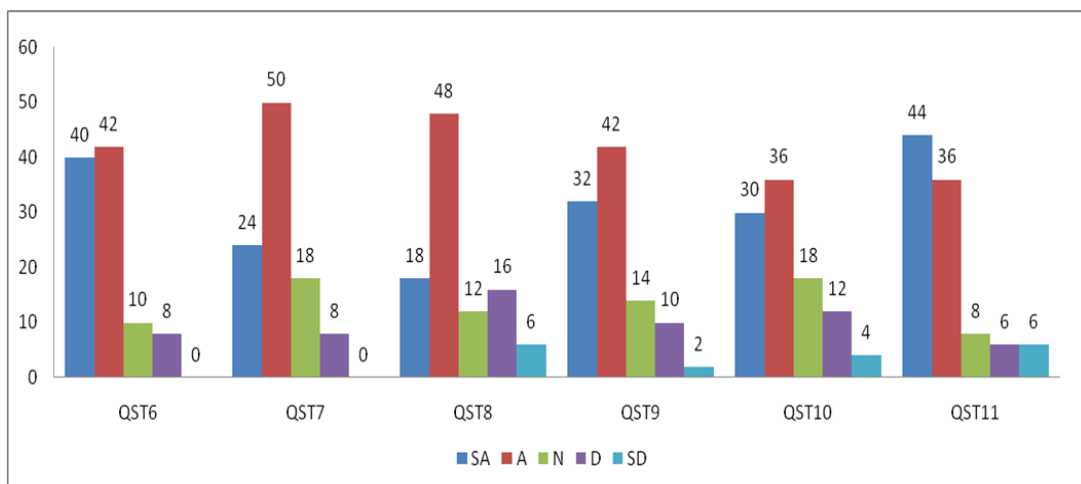


Figure 7.1: Students’ attitudes towards the challenges of blended learning

(Qst 6-11).

QST 06: all students have technology devices such as smartphones, electronic tablets, or laptops for study purposes.

Results revealed that 82% (SA/ A) of participants agree that not all students have technology devices 8% of them were against this idea while 10% do not care.

QST 07: Difficulties in managing the group work in an online setting.

A noticeable number of participants 74% (SA/A) react positively towards having difficulties in managing the group work in an online setting. On the other hand, small portion of participants (18%) preferred the neutral position when responding to this statement, the left portion (8%) expressed a negative attitude.

QST 08: Providing effective feedback is more time consuming when electronic media are used, comparing with traditional assessments (e.g. paper-based).

Depending on the results it is clear that the highest percentage of students 66% (SA/A) see that providing effective feedback using an electronic media is more time consuming than the traditional assessments, 12% of them prefer to be neutral. However, 22% (SD/D) expressed their rejection to this idea.

QST 09: Students procrastinate their study (revision, and doing assignments...).

Results show that 74% (SA/A) of students procrastinate their study. However, 40% were neutral and 12% (SD/D) do not procrastinate their study.

QST 10 students' lack technological competency.

Results of this statement show that 66% of participants do not have the technological competency and 16%, which is the minority, have competency while 18% preferred to stay neutral.

QST 11 Students become heavily dependent on technology in their study rather than being creative.

80 % (SA/A) of students felt that they become more dependent on technology in their study rather than being creative. Whereas, a portion of the remaining students (8%) abstain to hold an attitude. The left portion (2%) expressed a negative attitude.

- **Section Four: Views about the Future of Blended Learning**

	SA	A	N	D	SD
QST1	40 %	44 %	10 %	6 %	0 %
QST2	34 %	54 %	10 %	2 %	0 %
QST3	22 %	46 %	16 %	14 %	2 %
QST4	32 %	42 %	10 %	14 %	2 %

Table 07: Students' attitudes towards the future of blended learning (Qst 1-4).

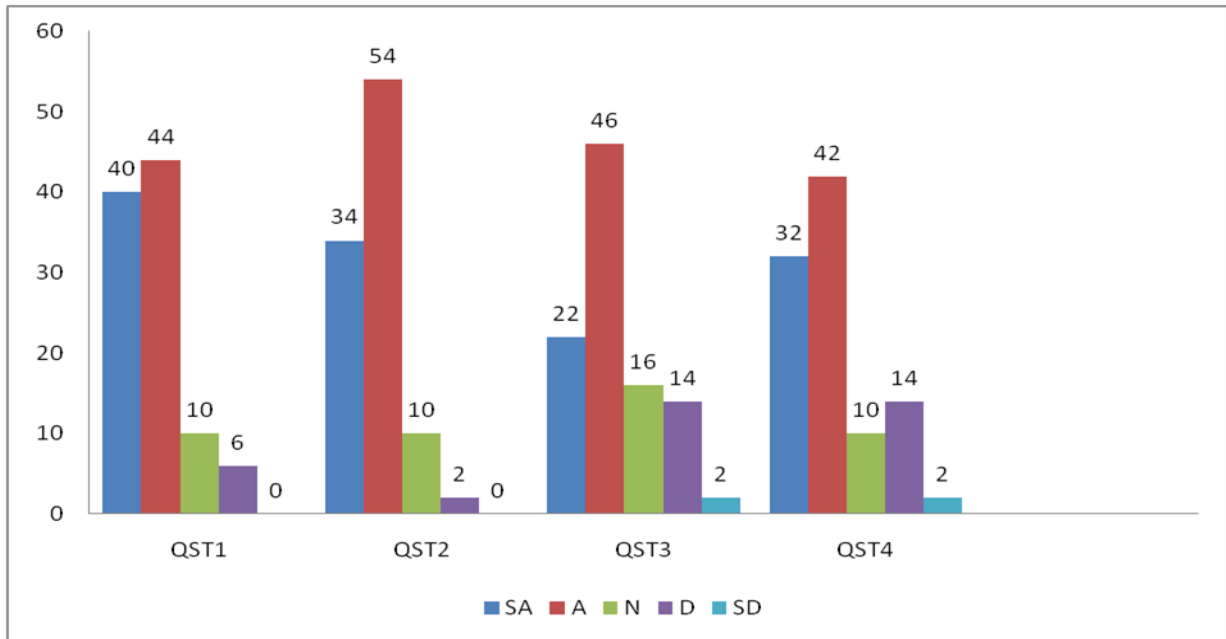


Figure 8: Students' attitudes towards the future of blended learning (Qst 1-4).

QST 01: Challenges faced by learners can be solved in the future.

Results show that there is a general agreement 84% among learners that the challenges faced by learners in blended learning can be solved in the future. On the other side, 10% of them preferred holding a neutral stand.

QST 02: Tools with which the blended learning experience are delivered need to be reliable, new and easy to use.

The majority of students (88% strongly agree/ agree) consider the delivery tools in blended learning need to be reliable, new and easy to use. Few of them (10%) preferred neutral position, while 2% disagree with this idea.

QST 03: Blended learning is not recommended when the topic can be better explained in either fully online or traditional method alone.

Majority of learners (68% SA/A) see that blended learning is not useful when the topic can be better explained in either fully online or face-to-face ,yet 16% of them they don't care and 16% (D/SD) of participants rejected this idea.

QST 04: The need for training students in digital technologies in the future.

74% (SA/A) of the participants reacts positively towards the need for training students in digital technologies in the future, 10% were neutral and 16% of them disagreed with this idea.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
QST5	36 %	34 %	14 %	12 %	4 %
QST6	36 %	36 %	18 %	10 %	0 %
QST7	40 %	28 %	22 %	4 %	6 %
QST8	24 %	38 %	16 %	12 %	10 %

Table 7.1: Students' attitudes towards the future of blended learning (Qst 5-8).

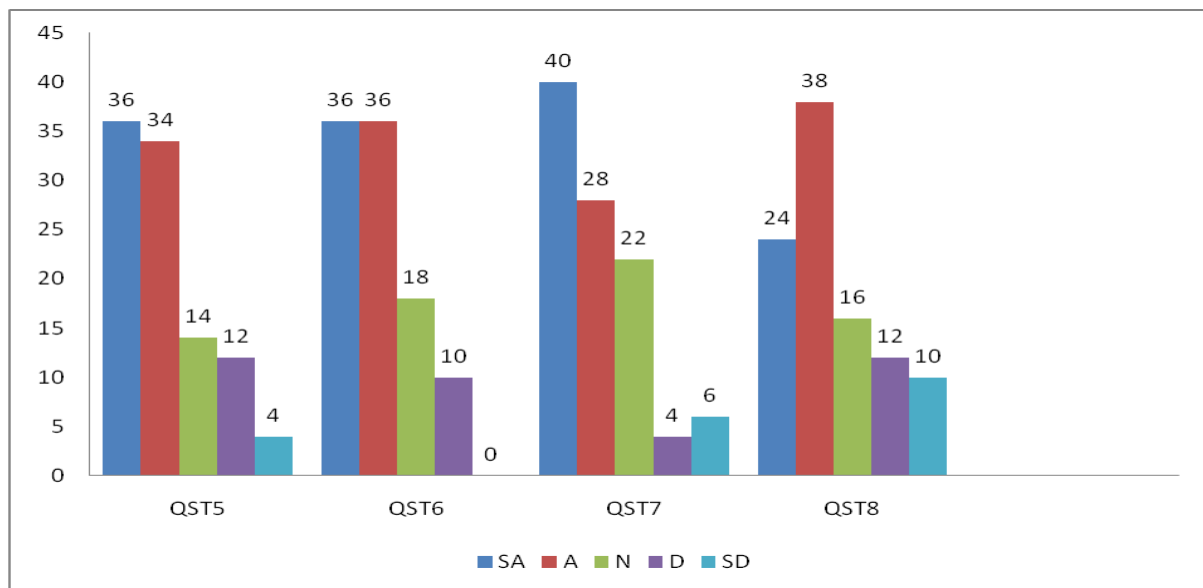


Figure 8.1: Students' attitudes towards the future of blended learning (Qst 5- 8).

QST 05: Providing other different learning tools in e-learning portion in blended learning is necessary in the future (social media, zoom, google meet, websites, blogs...).

According to a high percentage of students(70% SA/A) having diversity of tools in the electronic learning portion of blended learning is necessary, while 16% do not see that as an important thing and the rest were neutral.

Qst 06: learning is the ideal compromise for a post pandemic society.

Most respondents (72% SA/A) believe that blended learning is the best solution for a post pandemic society, 18% do not have any idea about that and 10% do not believe that blended learning is the best solution.

QST 07: Blended learning seems to be the best solution, due to its accessibility and flexibility that does not exist in either fully online or traditional method alone.

68 % (SA/A) of learners believed that blended learning is the best solution because of its accessibility and flexibility, 10% do not believe in that. While, 22% were neutral.

QST 08: want to continue using this method in the future.

Majority of respondents want to continue using blended learning in the future. However, only 22% refuse that and 16% do not care whether they continue using it or not.

5. Discussion and interpretation of the findings

Higher education surprisingly depended on a new approaches of learning that encompasses the contribution of both remote and traditional methods. This study was conducted aiming to have a clear image about attitudes among educators towards the blended learning model; three main research questions have been formed.

The set of questions that have been asked in the background information section were designed to know whether the participants' personal information has to do with their degree of involvement and satisfactory in blended learning. With regard to the participants' responses in this study. Results revealed that the study is dominated by females and most of

students are younger their ages ranges from 21 to 25, having good level of proficiency besides to that a great number of them are having responsibilities and job. This refers to the fact that they do not care for the physical presence in classes, and are able to understand the material in their own schedules in terms of time and place. As well as using their personal resources without much reliance on the teacher. In addition, they can control the pace of their learning to meet their needs, interests and their learning styles; by moving slowly if there is gaps to fill or subjects that take time to be understood, or going fast when the course is easy and the knowledge is already known. Furthermore, they t is of paramount importance because it allows them manage between several responsibilities, study and maybe job all at once, with a social distance in the view of the recent health issues (COVID-19 outbreak).

The blending design is the favourable method among students since it provides an immediate private feedback, so they have not to wait for the next class to discuss the course and getting grades. The implementation of the technological practices and the diversity of settings made learning more enjoyable, students motivated, and having positive attitudes towards learning, thus their results enhanced rather than previous modes of delivery. Students liked the social interaction and the idea that they are no more separated, even making relationships beyond the class time. Furthermore, students valued the new digital and critical thinking skills they developed. The most significant advantages is intensified guidance and the enough time specified for preparing for exams and performing tasks.

Ultimately, conclusions that can be drawn from the two sections is that students in this study expressed positive attitudes towards the effectiveness and the advantages of blended learning.

Although blended learning has plenty of benefits, still there some challenges which are mainly related to the e-learning portion of blended learning. Some of these challenges are related to the category of technological sufficiency such as, the lack of constant access of

internet, as well as insufficient access to technology because not all students have devices such as the electronic tablets, smartphones or laptops for their learning process. Some other challenges are related to technological competency such as having difficulties in using e-learning platform. In the other hand, there are self-regulation challenges which includes difficulties in organizing virtual and real time, managing group work in an online setting and procrastinating their study. In addition, students become more dependent on technology in their study rather than being creative. This section revealed that students consider blended learning as a very challenging method of teaching.

According to students' responses, blended learning is the ideal compromise for a post pandemic society means that blended learning is not just a tentative resolution that will fade away. Therefore, in order to meet the needs of the changes happening in the educational system, majority of learners (84%) said that the challenges faced by blended learning must be solved in the future, since this method has a strong dependence on technological tools, these tools need to be new, reliable, and easy to use. Additionally, high percentage of students (70%) want to learn through different tools rather than e-mails, by using synchronous and asynchronous technologies, also they would like to have some trainings in digital technologies to facilitate their learning process. The findings of the fourth section indicates that learners want to improve BL through solving some challenges, as they would like to continue using this method in the future due to its advantages, especially its accessibility and enormous flexibility that does not exist in either fully online or traditional method alone. In general, students have positive views towards the future of blended learning.

To sum up, students' attitude towards blended learning are influenced by its perceived advantages, challenges and students' views toward its future. According to previous discussion of the questionnaire results, this study indicates that students have a positive attitude towards blended learning.

Conclusion

This chapter provides a clear answer for the research questions. The findings demonstrates generally positive attitudes towards blended learning.

General conclusion

Recommendations for the future

Depending on the previous discussion on students' attitudes towards blended learning and the findings of this study; the following recommendations are suggested:

- Administrators and managers must ensure that teaching approaches meet or exceed learning expectations.
- There is a severe need to inculcate awareness among the learners about the adoption of blended learning by higher educational institutions. Learners at their base should be clearly informed why such steps have been taken and how they can adopt for change.
- University administration should advantageously make use of the learners' positive attitude to create a strong inclination of blended learning.
- It is recommended from the stakeholders in higher education institutions adopt and implement blended learning method for the coming years.
- Blended learning is not simply a contemporary trend that will fade away, so in order to meet the needs of the changing world in the future, blended learning challenges must be solved.
- It is recommended that instructors enrich their virtual classes with technological tools of synchronous learning and other tools rather than just emails in the asynchronous learning.
- The ministry of education should work on improving blended learning application by providing training programs for the teachers on how to deal with technology and how they should work.
- Teachers themselves should be more prepared, and should be ready to work in conditions that demand quick adoption for the online platform.

- There is a need to strengthen the IT platform by making necessary changes.
- Developing the electronic learning in general is necessary since the covid-19 pandemic is still present in our lives thus it is possible to lock down again so we grant that study will not stop anymore.

Suggestions for Further Research

- The study suggests extensive similar studies to be done in all the Algerian universities, to have a comprehensive report on students' attitude towards blended learning.
- The study made use of only one instrument for data collection. The use of more than one method could be appropriate so as to compare the data, verify the results and to generate a conclusive, and a better report.
- Deeper studies are needed to determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of each individual activity and learning material used in the delivery of blended learning model.
- Further studies can investigate teachers' attitudes towards blended learning.
- Researchers should conduct further studies on the implementation of blended learning strategy over student achievement.
- Examining students' attitudes towards traditional learning and electronic learning.
- Further study to examine the preparations of educational institutions to welcome an expected shift from face-to-face learning to blended learning.
- Further studies can visit authorities and seek answers about their plans for the future.

General conclusion

This present study has dealt with EFL students' attitudes toward blended learning, its main concern was investigating students' perceptions towards the advantages, challenges, and the future of this new method. Taking into account the previous concern, three questions were formulated in an attempt to obtain reliable answers

- 1- What are students' view about the advantages and the effectiveness of blended learning?
- 2- How do students perceive the challenges they face by Blended learning?
- 3- How do the students perceive the future of blended learning?

The current study is total of two chapters. The first chapter deals with difference definitions of blended learning and its components, advantages, challenges, and future. In addition, it covers some previous studies about students' attitudes towards blended learning. The second one provides the description of the instruments, findings, data analysis, some recommendations and the conclusion of what has been discussed previously.

As a result of this research, it had been provided that students have positive attitude towards the advantages of blended learning, and they consider it as an effective method of teaching. Additionally, they perceive it as a challenging method. Furthermore, learners' hold a positive attitude towards the future of blended learning.

To conclude this study investigated EFL students' attitudes towards blended learning at university of Abbes Ighrour kenchela. The findings of the study could be of some value for students themselves, teachers, and administrators. On the Whole, the results from this study are supposed to open up areas for further research on blended learning. Such findings would improve the Algerian educational system.

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Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

We hereby invite you to participate in the following questionnaire, which aims at finding out Master students' attitudes towards blended learning. You are kindly requested to read the statements carefully and express the degree of your agreement. Remember that your participation will directly affect the success of the research we are undertaking, and your answers will be treated confidentially. We would very much appreciate your cooperation.

Note: The working definition we adopted in our study of the term **Blended learning** is the following: "The mixture between the e-learning and the traditional methods of teaching."

Section One: Background Information

- Tick (✓) the answer that best applies to you.

1. What is your gender?

- Female - Male

2. What is your age?

- 21- 25
- 25 and more

3. How do you consider your level of proficiency?

- Poor
- Average
- Good
- Advanced

4. What is your occupation?

- Working
- Other responsibilities rather than study
- All

- Tick (✓) in the statements you most agree with.

SA: Strongly Agree ; **A :** Agree ; **N :** Neutral ; **D:** Disagree ; **SD:** Strongly Disagree

Section Two: Students' View towards the Advantages of Blended Learning

	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
01	Blended learning grants student a flexibility; the option of coming to class or just following the learning progress from home whenever their schedule is free.					
02	Students can decide either moving slow or fast throughout their learning process according to their needs and gaps.					
03	Blended learning offers students intensive guidance from teachers when they learn in physical and virtual settings.					
04	Students feel better when receiving feedback on their questions and grades privately rather than face-to-face.					
05	Students are not limited with teachers' lectures; instead, they can depend on themselves in choosing resources they really need.					
06	Courses designed for blended learning are useful, interesting and motivational.					
07	Blended learning provides a less risky environment for students and teachers, especially with the recent health conditions (Covid19) in the country.					
08	Blended learning reinforces social interaction and community spirit with teachers and between peers, furthermore relationships beyond class times.					
09	Blended learning encourages students' self-autonomy in learning, so they become responsible for their own learning.					
10	Blended learning fits students' different individual learning styles and needs.					
11	Blended learning is an opportunity to develop students' critical thinking, language-learning and digital skills and techniques.					
12	Blended learning provides sufficient time on task; enough time for performing tasks.					
13	Blended learning offers better preparation for exams and lessons.					
14	Outcomes in blended course are better than those in the traditional learning					

Section Three: Challenges Faced by Students in Blended Learning

	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
01	Blended learning contributes to my social isolation.					
02	students face difficulties in using e- learning platform that is used in blended learning.					
03	students do not have constant access to the internet.					
04	Students are easily distracted by the internet, so they use it for entertainment instead of study.					
05	Students lack the competency in organizing their virtual and real times.					
06	Not all students have technology devices such as smartphones, electronic tablets, or laptops for study purposes.					
07	Difficulties in managing the group work in an online setting.					
08	Providing effective feedback is more time consuming when electronic media are used, comparing with traditional assessments (e.g. paper-based).					
09	Students procrastinate their study (revision, and doing assignments...).					
10	Lack of students' technological competency.					
11	Students become heavily dependent on technology in their study rather than being creative.					

Section Four: Views about the Future of Blended Learning

	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
01	Challenges faced by learners can be solved in the future.					
02	Tools with which the blended learning experience are delivered need to be reliable, new and easy to use.					
03	Blended learning is not recommended when the topic can be better explained in either fully online or traditional method alone.					
04	The need for training students in digital technologies in the future.					

05	Providing other different learning tools in e-learning portion in blended learning is necessary in the future (social media, zoom, google meet, websites, blogs...).					
06	Blended learning is the ideal compromise for a post pandemic society.					
07	Blended learning seems to be the best solution, due to its accessibility and flexibility that does not exist in either fully online or traditional method alone.					
08	Students want to continue using this method in the future.					

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تفصي آراء طلبة سنة أولى ماستر تخصص لغة إنجليزية في جامعة عباس لغرور خنشلة حول التعليم المدمج، واشتملت الدراسة على الأسئلة التالية (أولاً) ما هو رأي التلاميذ حول فوائد التعليم المدمج؟ (ثانياً) فيما تمثل رأي التلاميذ حول التحديات التي تواجه التعليم المدمج؟ (ثالثاً) ما هو اتجاه التلاميذ حول مستقبل التعليم المدمج؟ استعملت الدراسة أداة بحث واحدة والتي تمثلت في استبيان للطلبة، حيث اقتصرت عينه الدراسة على 50 طالب من مجموع كلي ما يقارب 144 طالب. تم تحليل النتائج كمياً وبناء على ذلك توصلت الدراسة إلى أن رأي الطلبة حول التعليم المدمج كان إيجابياً.

في النهاية أشارت الدراسة إلى بعض التوصيات أهمها: ان على وزاره التعليم العالي استغلال رأي التلاميذ الإيجابي وتبني التعليم المدمج في البرنامج التعليمي في المستقبل.