THE REALIZATION OF BLENDED LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CURRENT SOUTH AFRICA

A. Vlok

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (SOUTH AFRICA)

Abstract

Institutions of higher education in South Africa are in the process of developing curricula that can embrace the developmental needs of the government, the private sector, local communities and the greater society. New and often remedial curricula need to be designed for offering to often underprepared students where some student populations are described as suffering from cultural deprivation and who is living in a culture of poverty. To address the matters such as of not being able to buy textbooks and paying for transport the development of curricula has taken a strong focus towards Blended learning. The focus on education is no longer just about putting pen to paper, memorizing facts and sitting in a structured class environment. Today higher education development is improving learning through technology, as evidenced by the rapid adoption of technology-assisted teaching methods and blended learning models. This paper debates the readiness of the South African society and the current infrastructure of the country to support in this approach. The study used a narrative approach while combining statistical secondary information with personal reflections from current students enrolled at universities Cape Town on the engagement of Blended learning. The result of this study presents the inadequacies in country infrastructure, digital uptake amongst society and data costs. The study undeniably points out the difficulties and barriers that educators face in offering Blended learning curricula. This research engages with greatly with the country’s key digital statistical indicators and therefore the information is ever changing. Regular follow up studies will be needed to suggest the trajectory of digital engagement and the successes or failures Blended learning as an educational approach.

Keywords: Blended learning, Higher education, digital learning.