Two-Day Workshop

On

Development of Action Plan for Blended Learning Practices
In Higher Education

Organized by

Netaji Subhas Open University, Kolkata

In collaboration with

Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, New Delhi

26th & 27th May 2022
NSOU HQs

Report Prepared by
NSOU Project Team Members

Prof. Anirban Ghosh, Director-CIQA
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REPORT

Programme File:

Date: 26-27 May 2022

Venue: Subhas Chandra Sabhaghar, NSOU HQs, Salt Lake, Kolkata

Mode: F2F

Participants: 43 (Female-15; Male-28)

Nature of Participants: Selected faculties from colleges, invited members of DDEs, nominated faculties from School of Studies, NSOU and Heads of Regional Centres, NSOU

Genesis of the Workshop:

With the active support of Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), Netaji Subhas Open University successfully completed the project entitled **'Implementation of Blended Learning in Higher Education Institutions in West Bengal'** through *'Enhancing Capacity of Higher Education Teachers in the State of West Bengal'* in the year 2021-22. Under this project, five workshops (F2F & blended) were conducted at different zones across the state of West Bengal and around 267 HE teachers were oriented with latest concept of pedagogy and blended learning relevant to the present context of imparting education. The other important outcome of the project is the development of 4-week MOOC titled "**Foundations of Heutagogy".** The non-print material like Audio-video lecture and e-text with MCQs have already been developed as per 4-quadrant approach.

Reflections from the 5 workshops:

Educators have been working hard to ensure that their students are engaged and learning digitally, and they are facing a flood of emotions while transitioning from remote to hybrid and/or fully in person. Blended learning (hereafter to be referred as BL) methodology generic enough to be applied in different type of courses at the University: theoretical / practical, compulsory / voluntary attendance, for students with / without computer skills and for students with intrinsic / extrinsic motivation. The best way to support all learners during this time of uncertainty and flux between the remote and in-person worlds is to continue planning for remote learning—because it's the only way to be consistent, accessible, and nimble enough for the changing tides, while also leveraging all of the skills the students gained in the new self-directed world of learning. A series of 5 workshops held at RCs and HQs of NSOU documented that the key attributes to BL environment are:

- Increased student engagement in learning.
- Enhanced teacher and student interaction.
- Responsibility for learning.
- Time management and flexibility
- Improved student learning outcomes
- Enhanced institutional reputation.
- More flexible teaching and learning environment
- More amenable for self and continuous learning
- Better opportunities for experiential learning
- BL shifts the teacher's role from knowledge provider to coach and mentor
- Facilitation tools and techniques for Andragogy, Heutagogy, Cyberogogy and Peerogogy towards an eclectic strategy

Rationale/Need of the 2-day workshop on 'Development of Action Plans for BL practices in Higher Education'

Many factors must be considered when choosing how to blend in-person and online teaching and learning activities. In some cases, most interactions between students and the teacher, as well as the direct delivery of instruction, take place in person in the classroom, while materials and possibly some additional activities are delivered online. In other cases, most of the class activities occur online, with infrequent meetings in person to solve problems and support community building. In some blended arrangements, students may choose which activities to complete online and which to complete in a classroom. Ideally, blends are personalised/contextualised so individual students/Institution have the blend that best fits their life circumstances and learning needs.

Due to the effectiveness of these workshops, the Project team continued the successful outcomes and lessons learnt for a rational implementation of BL practices. For this, a road map to

institutionalize the BL practices, the **2-day workshop on 'Development of Action Plans for BL practices in Higher Education'** was conceptualized.

Project Team:

Members	
Project Adviser	Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, CEMCA
Project Director	Professor Anirban Ghosh, NSOU
Facilitator/Mentor	Mr. Purandar Sen Gupta, Master Trainer, nominated by CEMCA
	Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, CEMCA
	Professor Anirban Ghosh, NSOU
Project Coordinator	Dr. Ritu Mathur Mitra, NSOU
	Dr. Papiya Upadhyay, NSOU

Objectives of the Workshop:

This workshop focused to delineate strategies and implementation on blended learning with the following objectives-

- To plan, implement, coordinate and monitor operationalisation and quality assurance of the programmes in HEIs and technology-enabled learning
- To develop an Institutional action plan for BL practices in HEIs
- To institute a policy that can ensure quality learning and bridge gaps between facilitator and learner with changing context.
- To prepare a draft plan of action, appropriate for individual institution with the help of a standard template

Methodology:

- Human Process Laboratory
- Lecture
- PPT Slide Presentation
- Focused Discussion
- Activity and participatory approach
- Brainstorming
- Quality Circles

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP

Day-1-26/05/2022

Inaugural session

In the Inaugural Session, Professor Anirban Ghosh, Director-CIQA, NSOU welcomed the august congregation and set the tenor of the workshop. Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi, Sr. Programme Officer, CEMCA fortified the theme and activities of the 2- day workshop in his elucidative speech. The Key-note speaker Dr. Chinmoy Kumar Ghosh, Former Director, National Centre for Innovation in Distance Education (NCIDE), IGNOU raised a pertinent question if teachers were interested in a blended teaching or blended learning approach. He also highlighted two key issues relating to blended learning and blended teaching. The teachers have the dual role in this process. In one hand they may adopt the blended teaching approach for their students but at the same time they have to learn how the various components would be judiciously blended for their effective teaching. C. A Sri Kishore Sengupta, Registrar, NSOU congratulated the project team for carrying out such a significant task and thanked CEMCA for all the support to accomplish the objectives. Professor Subha Sankar Sarkar, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, NSOU, appreciated CEMCA's initiative in promoting blended methodologies for a learner-centric sustainable and lifelong learning. On this occasion, the e-content of the 4-week MOOC on "Foundations of Heutagogy" was released by the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor. Dr. Ritu Mathur Mitra, Associate Professor of History, NSOU proposed the vote of thanks.

The workshop progressed through the following technical sessions:

Session-1: Blended Learning in response to NEP 2020 BLP in NEP 2020 and visions for the future, barriers and successes within Indian context:

Dr. Panigrahi enunciated the tenets of NEP 2020 and articulated the need of technology-enabled learning for realising the goals of education for sustainable development.

Session-2: Blended Learning Initiative:

Mr. Purandar Sengupta facilitated the session with a snap recap of the BL workshops held earlier and ensured that all participants are sensitised on Blended Learning training of higher education teachers of West Bengal (all five trainings of CEMCA-NSOU). He categorically presented the intervention strategies used by some of the HE teachers who were participants to the 5 workshops.

Session-3: Participant's reflections on Blended Learning training:

Prof. Anirban Ghosh narrated the backdrop of the BL implementation in Higher Education through capacity building of HE teachers and academics. He presented the consolidated report of the 5 workshops for a vivid understanding of the audience regarding intent and extent of the present workshop. Video clippings of few participants in the form of bytes were played to establish the opportunity to train 267 enthused participants those who shared the experiences with the lessons learnt.

Session-4: Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice:

Dr. Panigrahi and Mr. Sengupta introduced the Action plan template to the participants and explained various components to engage the 43 participants (grouped into 8 circles) to prepare action plans for their respective institution. They were endowed with the opportunity to discuss various components of blended learning to be addressed in the institution level and alignment with courses and curriculum.

Day-2-27/05/2022

Session-5: Review of day-1 programme

Three willing participants were invited to sum up the Day-1 activities/excerpts-

- 🞦 Mr. Aritra Basu, DODL, RBU narrated the happenings of inaugural session
- 🞦 Dr. Srabanti Choudhury, NSOU discussed the backdrop of the BL implementation and narrated the technical sessions of Day-1
- 🞦 Mr. Ashok Kr Atta, Bagnan College explained the steps of activity involved in preparing the Institutional Action plan.

Session-6: Institutional Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice

The eight groups of participants were deeply engaged in developing action plans for their respective Institution. This session was guided by Dr. Panigrahi, Mr. Sengupta and Dr. P. Upadhyay.

Session-7: What needs to be in place to operationalise an Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice?

This session involved group work and plenary discussion as to what needs to be done to operationalise an Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice at home institutions:

- Institutional SWOT analysis
- Does a Blended Learning policy exist?
- Is there a need for faculty institutional Blended Learning guidelines?
- Status of Staff capacity for Blended Learning Practice.
- What staff development is required on Blended Learning

These were deftly addressed by the participants in drafting the action plans for their Institutions in the prescribed template.

Session-8: Developing and setting up an institutional Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice:

Group work continued and the facilitators guided the groups to review institutional Blended Learning Practice in their particular context keeping in view the vision and mission of the respective HEI.

Session-9: **Developing and setting up an institutional Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice:**

Group work to review institutional Blended Learning Practice was concluded and each Institution Action plan so far developed was presented by a representative of that Institution. A total of 16 Institutional Action Plans draft were developed and submitted in the dedicated workshop WhatsApp group. After each presentation, the house was open for questions/suggestions and further inputs. There was a vibrant atmosphere of discussion and exchange of ideas and thoughts during this session.

Closure and Way Forward:

The 2-day workshop was summarized by Prof. Someswar Bhowmik, O-i-C, CoEdn, NSOU. It was followed by an end note by Prof. Ghosh and Dr. M. R Panigrahi and C.A Kishore Sengupta, Registrar, NSOU. A couple of participants were invited to share their experiences. At the end participation certificates were distributed to all participants. This was followed by a group photograph. A feedback form was released in the dedicated Workshop WhatsApp group. The participants were requested to fill-out the google form and submit their responses.

The workshop eyed to engage academic & administrative staff of the HEIs together with representatives from almost all the DDEs in West Bengal to develop a trajectory on present needs of higher education including open and distance mode through the development of action plan for Bended Learning practices as an expected outcome of the workshop. This

academic endeavour would help to realise the key targets of NEP 2020 and UN-SDG-4 by 2030.

The entire 2-day workshop was skilfully compered by Dr. Papiya Upadhyay, Asst Prof of Education, School of Education, NSOU.

Analysis and interpretation on feedback:

Though there were 43 participants, feedback from 35 participants through google form were received. The google form was designed to capture the views of the participants on two aspects viz. i) Workshop Evaluation and ii) Outcome Evaluation.

Table-1: No. of Respondent

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	23	65.71
Female	12	34.29
Total	**35**	**100.00**

Section I includes-

    a) Workshop Content,

    b) Workshop Handouts,

    c) The activities and

    d) The facilitators

Section II includes-

    a) Personal Reflection (learning chronicle, your skills and abilities, learning style),

    b) Activities/Facilitation – gathering documents (proving learning, types of Documents),

    c) Integration – Putting it all together: (goal setting, learning outcomes,

    d) Confidence to complete Action Plan for BL practices,

    e) Confidence to implement BL practices,

    f) Ability to identify your skills and abilities

Analysis and interpretation on Section I:

As per Table 2, majority of the participants agreed that the workshop contents are relevant, comprehensive and easy to understand. Workshop contents was not satisfactory only to 11% of participants. During the workshop, all the relevant handouts were circulated among the participants through whatsApp group in PDF version. Majority of the participants (approx 89%) were satisfied with the handouts which they received and agreed that the handouts supported the presentation, provided useful additional information and were clear and well-

organized. The whole workshop was based on activities to prepare the action plan for implementing blended learning practices. All most all the participants agreed that the activities carried out during the workshop was very effective and learning experience to them. As far as workshop facilitator's quality, majority of the participants opined that the facilitators were knowledgeable, well prepared and responsive to the participants' questions.

<div align="center">Table 2: Workshop Evaluation</div>

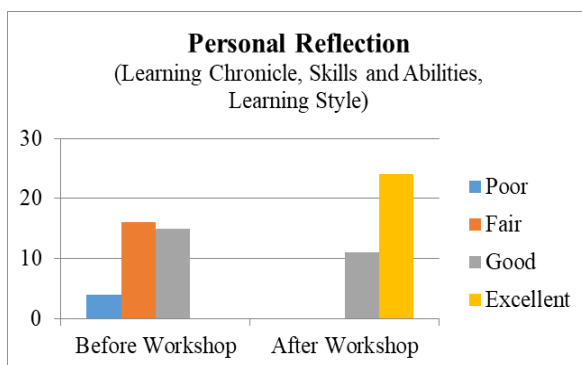| Responses	Workshop Content			Workshop Handouts			The activities	The facilitators		
	Relevant	Comprehensive	Easy to understand	Supported presentation material	Provided useful additional information	Were clear and well-organized	Were useful learning experiences	Knowledgeable	Well-prepared	Responsive to participants' questions
Strongly Disagree	4	3	4	4	3	4	1	4	3	3
Disagree	0	3	1	2	3	0	0	0	1	2
Agree	8	7	9	11	12	5	3	8	9	7
Strongly Agree	23	22	21	18	17	26	31	23	22	23
Total	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**

<u>Analysis and interpretation on Section II:</u>

The parameters of section II were identified to measure/ evaluate the outcome of the 2-day workshop. The outcome of the workshop was measured through six parameters by evaluating the performances changes after the workshop.
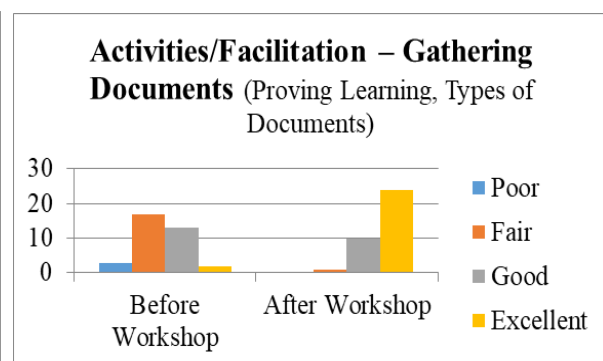
Fig1: Personal Reflection (learning chronicle, your skills and abilities, learning style) and Fig.2: Activities/Facilitation – gathering documents (proving learning, types of documents) indicate that there was a significant changes after the workshop among the participants.

Fig.1

Fig.2

Fig.3: Integration-Putting it all together: (goal setting, learning outcomes) and Fig.4: Confidence to complete Action Plan for BL practices, show that after workshop, the participants

Fig.3

Fig.4

Fig.5: Confidence to implement BL practices and Fig.6: Ability to identify your skills and abilities indicate that through the workshop, the participants have gained confidence and acquired sufficient knowledge and competencies to implement blended learning practices.
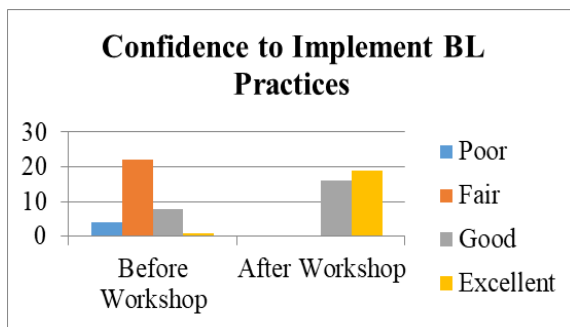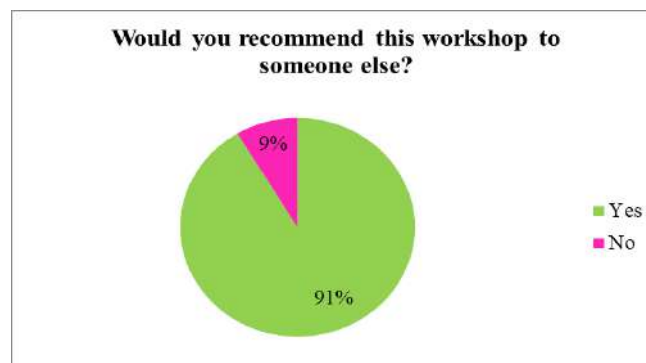

Fig.5

Fig.6

At the end of the google feedback form, the participants were asked whether they prefer to recommend this workshop to their colleagues. In response to this question, 91% of the participants says, yes, they will recommend their colleagues to participate in this type of workshop to improve the teaching learning process through blended learning.

Recommendations:

- More teacher training, soft skill development, technical awareness programme may be organized to implement the action plan.
- Financial support is required to develop BL related infrastructure.
- Better infrastructure and recruitment of technical officers is required
- Hands-on training on development of MOOCs to complete the action plan may be helpful.
- Continuous professional development programmes are crucial towards techno-pedagogic environments.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE:

Date & Time	Activity	Responsibility / Resources
Day 1: Thursday 26th May 2022		
10h00 – 10h30	Registration	
10h30 – 11h15	Opening of the Workshop; Workshop expectations	Dr. Anirban Ghosh Dr. Manas Ranjan Panigrahi Dr. Chinmay Kumar Ghosh CA Kishore Sengupta Dr. Subha Sankar Sarkar Sri Purandar Sengupta
11h15 – 11h30	Tea	
11h30 – 12h15	Blended Learning in response to NEP 2020 BLP in NEP 2020 and visions for the future, barriers and successes within Indian.	Manas Ranjan Panigrahi
12h15-13h00	**Blended Learning Initiative**: Facilitator ensures that all participants are sensitised on Blended Learning training of higher education teachers of West Bengal (all five trainings of CEMCA-NSOU)	Purandar Sengupta

13h00-14h00	Lunch	
14h00 – 14h30	**Participant's reflections on Blended Learning training:** Videos will be played and opportunity to trained participants to share the experiences.	Anirban Ghosh
14h30 - 16h30	**Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice:** Facilitators introduce various components to be discussed and engage stakeholders to prepare action plans for the institution. **Activity:** Opportunity to discuss various components of blended learning to be addressed in the institution level and alignment with courses and curriculum.	Manas Ranjan Panigrahi Purandar Sengupta Participants

Day 2: Friday 27th May 2022		
10h00 – 10h30	Review of day 1 programme	Participant
10h30 - 11h30	Institutional Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice	Manas Ranjan Panigrahi Purandar Sengupta
11h00 – 11h30	Tea	
11h30 – 12h00	What needs to be in place to operationalise an Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice? Group work and plenary discussion as to what needs to be done to operationalise an Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice at home institutions: - Institutional SWOT analysis - Does a Blended Learning policy exist? - Is there a need for faculty institutional Blended Learning guidelines? - Status of Staff capacity for Blended Learning Practice. - What staff development is required on Blended Learning	Participants and Facilitators
12h00 – 13h00	Developing and setting up an institutional Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice Group work to review institutional Blended Learning Practice	Participants
13h00 - 14h00	Lunch	
14h00 - 16h00	Developing and setting up an institutional Action Plan for Blended Learning Practice Group work to review institutional Blended Learning Practice Presenting Institutional Plan	Participants
16h00 - 16h30	Closure and Way Forward	

Template

Development of Action Plan for Blended Learning Practices in Higher Education

Name of the Institution:

Institutional Address:

Details about the Team:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

About the Institution: (within 100-200 words including vision and mission)

_____

_____

_____

_____

A. **INSTITUTIONAL AWARENESS REGARDING THE PRADIGM SHIFT FROM TRADITIONAL LEARNING TO BLENDED LEARNING**

Dimensions of Change	Outcome of Change

B. **ATTITUDE OF THE INSTITUTION TOWARDS BLENDED LEARNING**

Beneficial Aspects	Institutional Perspective	Situational Perspective
Challenging Aspects	Institutional Perspective	Situational Perspective

C. Institutional Policy on Blended Learning

D. Logical Rationale for promoting Blended Learning in the Institution

From the perspective of Institutional Administration	
From the perspective of Faculty Members	
From the perspective of students	

E. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY PERTAINING TO BLENDED LEARNING

Existing Staff earmarked for Blended Learning System	Staff to be recruited for Blended Learning System	Functional Distribution of the existing Staff (with Job Profile)	Functional Distribution of the New Staff (With Job Profile)

F. TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT STRATGY PERTAINING TO THE STAFF MEMBERS ENGAGED IN BLENDED LEARNING

Functionaries to be Trained	Topic of Training	Expected Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Means of Verification

G. COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FUTURISTIC SUCCESS IN BLENDED LEARNING SYSTEM

BROAD GOAL	* * *
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	* * *
TIME FRAME	
ESTIMATED HUMAN RESOURCE	
DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE	
STRATEGIC TASKS	
PROCESS FLOW FOR TASK IMPLEMENTATION	
CONTINGENCY PLANNING & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	
MONITORING SYSTEM	
EVALUATION SYSTEM	

H. RESULT CHAIN

OUTPUT	OUTCOME	SOCIAL IMPACT
CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS	**CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**	**CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**
OUTPUT INDICATOR	**OUTCOME INDICATOR**	**IMPACT INDICATOR**

MEANS OF VERIFICATION	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	MEANS OF VERIFICATION

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The Project Team concedes the support and cooperation of the following Academia for successful completion of the outcome-based workshop:

- Netaji Subhas Open Universitry, Kolkata
- Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, New Delhi
- Higher Educational Institutions of West Bengal
- Directorate of Distance Education of KU, VU, RBU, West Bengal