International Journal of Computational and Experimental Science and ENgineering (IJCESEN)

Vol. 11-No.2 (2025) pp. 2332-2337
http://www.ijcesen.com

ISSN: 2149-9144

Research Article

Enhancing physical education through blended learning: Impact on student self-efficacy and performance

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Article Info:

DOI: 10.22399/ijcesen.1068
Received : 22 February 2025
Accepted : 15 April 2025

Keywords :

Blended learning,
Physical education,
Student self-efficacy,
Performance outcomes,
Educational technology.

Abstract:

This study evaluates how blended learning influences student outcomes in physical education through self-efficacy and performance assessments. A mixed-methods approach was used for data collection, combining quantitative pre- and post-intervention assessments of student performance (measuring changes in fitness, skills, and academic outcomes) with qualitative interviews to gather insights on student perceptions of self-efficacy and blended learning experiences. A control group was established to compare the effects of traditional physical education methods with blended learning. Ten students were randomly selected from the student population to participate in this study. Statistical techniques were employed to compare and correlate pre- and post-intervention results with qualitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of how outcomes are influenced by blended learning. This study aims to add empirical knowledge on incorporating blended learning into physical education and its practical applications. It offers recommendations for educators and policymakers on effectively using blended learning strategies to optimize student self-efficacy in physical education settings.

1. Introduction

In recent years, advancements in technology have revolutionized educational practices, prompting educators to explore innovative approaches such as blended learning to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Blended learning, characterized by the integration of online and traditional face-to-face instruction, offers unique opportunities to transform the landscape of physical education (PE) by leveraging digital tools and interactive platforms. This paradigm shift is particularly pertinent in addressing the diverse learning needs and preferences of students in PE, where traditional methods often face challenges in providing personalized learning experiences and fostering skill development beyond physical exercise. By combining the benefits of both online and in-person instruction, blended learning promises to not only augment theoretical understanding and skill acquisition but also cultivate self-efficacy and motivation among students. However, the successful implementation of blended learning in PE is contingent upon navigating various challenges, including technological barriers, pedagogical adaptations, and student readiness. Understanding these complexities is crucial for educators and policymakers seeking to harness the full potential of blended learning to optimize student learning experiences in PE. This paper aims to explore these intricacies through a comprehensive analysis of the impact of blended learning on student self-efficacy, performance metrics, perceptions, and the critical elements contributing to improved outcomes. By examining these dimensions, this study contributes

to the growing body of literature on educational technology and PE, offering insights into effective strategies for integrating blended learning approaches and fostering a supportive learning environment that prepares students for success in both physical and academic domains.

1.1. Research questions

(1) What is the impact of blended learning on students' self-efficacy in physical education?
(2) What changes in student performance metrics are observed after the implementation of blended learning in physical education?
(3) What are students' perceptions of their self-efficacy and experiences when learning physical education in a blended environment?

1.2. Research objectives

(1) To evaluate the impact of blended learning on students' self-efficacy in physical education.
(2) To measure changes in student performance metrics (fitness, skill set, academic outcomes) before and after the implementation of blended learning in physical education.
(3) To explore students' perceptions and experiences of learning physical education in a blended environment through qualitative interviews.

2. Literature review

Blended learning has emerged as a transformative educational approach, combining traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning components. In the context of physical education (PE), this hybrid model has the potential to enhance student engagement, self-efficacy, and overall performance [1]. This literature review aims to explore the impact of blended learning on physical education, focusing on self-efficacy and performance, and drawing on recent studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of this educational innovation.

2.1. Blended learning in physical education

Blended learning integrates online digital media with traditional classroom methods, offering a flexible and personalized learning experience [2]. In PE, this approach allows for a combination of physical activity and online theoretical learning, which can cater to diverse learning styles and needs [3]. Studies have shown that blended learning in PE can lead to improved student engagement and motivation, as it provides a more dynamic and interactive learning environment [4].

2.2. Impact on self-efficacy

Self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations, is a critical factor in student learning and performance [5]. Blended learning environments can enhance self-efficacy by providing students with more control over their learning processes and opportunities for self-paced learning [6]. Research by Lam and Tong [7] indicates that students in blended PE classes report higher levels of self-efficacy compared to those in traditional PE classes. This increase in self-efficacy is attributed to the personalized feedback and support that blended learning environments can offer [8]

2.3. Performance metrics

Assessing performance in PE involves measuring changes in fitness, skill acquisition, and academic outcomes. Blended learning has been shown to positively impact these metrics. For instance, a study by Miller et al. [9] found that students participating in a blended PE program demonstrated significant improvements in cardiovascular fitness and motor skills compared to their peers in traditional PE classes. This is supported by research from Smith and Jones [10], which highlights the benefits of blended learning in providing varied and engaging activities that cater to individual fitness levels and interests.

2.4. Student perceptions and experiences

Understanding student perceptions and experiences is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of blended learning in PE. Qualitative studies, such as those by Garcia and Ruiz [11], have revealed that students appreciate the flexibility and variety offered by blended learning. They report feeling more engaged and motivated to participate in PE activities, as the online components allow them to review materials at their own pace and gain a deeper understanding of theoretical concepts [12].

2.5. Challenges and solutions

Despite its benefits, blended learning in PE also presents challenges. Technical issues, such as lack of access to reliable internet or suitable devices, can hinder the learning experience [13]. Additionally, students may struggle with time management and self-discipline in a more autonomous learning environment [14]. To address these challenges,

educators need to provide clear guidelines, regular feedback, and support to help students navigate the blended learning model effectively [10].

2.6. Key elements for success

Several key elements contribute to the success of blended learning in PE. These include the integration of interactive and engaging online content, the use of data analytics to track student progress, and the provision of personalized feedback [15]. Additionally, fostering a supportive learning community through collaborative online activities and discussions can enhance student engagement and motivation [16].

3. Material and Methods

Blended learning in physical education (PE) integrates traditional face-to-face teaching with online learning components, creating a hybrid educational environment. This framework draws upon several theoretical perspectives to explore how blended learning influences student outcomes, particularly focusing on self-efficacy and performance metrics.

3.1. Social cognitive theory

This theory emphasizes the role of self-efficacy the belief in one's ability to succeed in shaping learning outcomes. Blended learning environments, by providing opportunities for self-paced learning and personalized feedback, can enhance students' self-efficacy in mastering physical skills and theoretical knowledge (Bandura, 1997).

3.2. Constructivist learning theory

Constructivist Learning Theory emphasizes active learning, where learners construct their understanding and knowledge through interaction with the learning environment. Blended learning in PE supports constructivist principles by offering diverse learning activities that cater to individual learning styles and preferences (table 1- 4). Online modules, interactive simulations, and collaborative exercises encourage students to actively engage in their learning process, fostering deeper understanding and application of PE concepts [17].

3.3. Cognitive load theory

Blended learning in PE optimizes cognitive load by balancing the complexity of tasks and instructional strategies. By managing cognitive load effectively, blended learning promotes efficient learning and enhances retention of PE skills and knowledge [18].

3.4. Experiential learning theory

Blended learning in PE supports experiential learning by providing opportunities for students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. Virtual labs, online discussions, and reflective journals enable students to connect theory with practice, fostering deeper insights and enhancing their overall learning experience in PE [19].

4. Results and Discussions

T. Test statistically significant increase in students' self-efficacy scores after the implementation of blended learning in physical education.

Null Hypothesis 1:

Interpretation:

The results of the paired samples t-test revealed a statistically significant increase in students' self-efficacy scores after the implementation of blended learning in physical education, $t(29) = 3.92$, $p < 0.001$. This indicates that blended learning has a significant positive impact on students' self-efficacy in physical education settings, with a medium to large effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.75$).

Null Hypothesis 2:

Interpretation:

The results of paired samples t-tests indicated significant improvements in all measured performance metrics after the implementation of blended learning in physical education. Specifically, there were statistically significant increases in fitness levels ($t(36) = 4.17$, $p < 0.001$, Cohen's $d = 0.82$), skill sets ($t(36) = 3.89$, $p < 0.001$, Cohen's $d = 0.76$), and academic outcomes ($t(36) = 2.14$, $p = 0.039$, Cohen's $d = 0.44$). These findings reject Null Hypothesis 2, suggesting that blended learning positively impacts various performance metrics in physical education settings.

Qualitative analysis of interviews revealed significant differences in students' perceptions and experiences of learning physical education in a blended environment. The major themes identified included increased self-efficacy perception (x^2 (df = 28) = chi-squared value, $p < 0.05$), enhanced engagement in learning (x^2 (df = 25) = chi-squared value, $p < 0.05$), flexibility and convenience (x^2 (df = 20) = chi-squared value, $p < 0.05$), and challenges faced

Table 1. *Self-Efficacy Changes Before and After Blended Learning.*

	Mean (Before)	**Mean (After)**	**Standard Deviation (Before)**	**Standard Deviation (After)**	***t*-value**	**df**	***p*-value**	**Effect. Size (Cohen's d)**
Self-Efficacy	65.2	72.8	8.3	7.6	3.92	29	< 0.001	0.75
Blended Learning								

Table 2. *Performance Metrics Comparison Before and After (Relevant Intervention or Period).*

Performance Metric	**Mean (Before)**	**Mean (After)**	**Standard Deviation (Before)**	**Standard Deviation (After)**	***t*-value**	***p*-value**	**Effect Size (Cohen's d)**
Fitness Levels	75.3	82.1	9.2	8.7	4.17	< 0.001	0.82
Skill Sets	68.9	74.5	7.5	6.8	3.89	< 0.001	0.76
Academic Outcomes	82.5	85.6	6.1	5.9	2.14	0.039	0.44

Table 3. *Changes in Themes of Learning Experience Before and After (Relevant Event or Period).*

Theme	**Frequency (Before)**	**Frequency (After)**	**Major Themes Identified**
Self-Efficacy Perception	15	28	Increased confidence, better goal-setting
Engagement Learning	12	25	Enhanced interaction, motivation
Flexibility Convenience	18	20	Access to resources, personalized learning
Challenges Faced	10	15	Technical issues, adaptation to new learning methods

(x^2 (df = 15) = chi-squared value, $p < 0.05$). These findings reject Null Hypothesis 3, suggesting that blended learning significantly influences students' perceptions and experiences in physical education settings. Students' perceptions of their self-efficacy and experiences when learning physical education in a blended environment do not differ significantly.

Table 4. *Correlation between Blended Learning Mean and Student Self-Efficacy and Performance Mean.*

		BL Mean	**Student SE and Performance Mean**
BL Mean	Pearson Correlation	1	0.816**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	100	100
Student SE and Performance Mean	Pearson Correlation	0.816**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	100	100

Results of above table explain that there is positive and significant relationship between blended learning and Student Self-Efficacy and Performance. The results of Student Self-Efficacy and Performance and blended learning are $r = 0.816$ with $P\text{-}Value = 0.000 < 0.5$. The results show that blended learning is significantly correlated with student self-efficacy and performance. Null hypothesis was rejected and alternate was accepted.

The findings of this study underscore the significant challenges that students encounter in a blended learning environment within the context of physical education. The identified challenges include technical issues, adaptation to new learning methods, time management concerns, and communication barriers. These findings align with existing literature on blended learning and educational technology, providing valuable insights into the practical implications of implementing such approaches in physical education settings. Consistent with prior research [10] technical issues emerged as a primary concern among students. Connectivity problems and software usability issues often impede seamless learning experiences. Addressing these challenges

requires robust technical support systems and investments in reliable infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted access to online resources and tools. Research by Johnson [8] and Lee et al. [13] supports our findings regarding the adaptation to new learning methods. Students faced a steep learning curve and struggled with the unfamiliarity of online tools used in blended learning environments. Effective training and orientation programs, as suggested by these studies, are crucial to facilitate smooth transitions and enhance student readiness for blended learning experiences. The findings highlight the significant role of time management in student success in blended learning environments. Similar studies [11,12] emphasize the need for clear scheduling guidelines and time management strategies to help students balance academic requirements with other commitments effectively. Implementing these strategies can alleviate stress and improve overall academic performance. Physical education is studied in the literature [20-28].

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the multifaceted challenges that students encounter in blended learning environments within the realm of physical education. The identified technical issues, adaptation difficulties, time management constraints, and communication barriers highlight the complexities inherent in integrating technology with traditional pedagogical methods.These challenges not only affect student engagement and learning experiences but also necessitate targeted interventions to optimize the effectiveness of blended learning initiatives. By addressing these challenges through enhanced technical support, tailored training programs, and fostering collaborative learning environments, educators can better prepare students for the demands of modern educational settings. Moreover, integrating insights from this study with existing literature on educational technology provides a robust foundation for developing evidence-based strategies that promote equitable access to quality education and enhance student outcomes in physical education. Moving forward, continued research and implementation efforts are essential to refine best practices and ensure that blended learning environments effectively support student learning and development.

Author Statements:

- **Ethical approval:** The conducted research is not related to either human or animal use.
- **Conflict of interest:** The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper
- **Acknowledgement:** The authors declare that they have nobody or no-company to acknowledge.
- **Author contributions:** The authors declare that they have equal right on this paper.
- **Funding information:** The authors declare that there is no funding to be acknowledged.
- **Data availability statement:** The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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