



Opinion Article

Blended Learning is used to Support Reading Instruction in Elementary Schools

Paul Macaruso*

Community College of Rhode Island, Warwick, USA

Received date: 28 February, 2022, Manuscript No: er-22-55067;
Editor assigned date: 02 March, 2022; PreQC No. er-22-55067(PQ);
Reviewed date: 14 March, 2022; QC No er-22-55067;
Revised date: 24 March, 2022, Manuscript No. er-22-55067(R);
Published date: 31 March, 2022, DOI: 10.14303/2141-5161.2022.233.

***Corresponding Author:** Paul Macaruso, Community College of Rhode Island, Warwick, USA, E-mail: paulMacaruso@gmail.com

DESCRIPTION

When students struggle to read effectively by the end of elementary school, they are more likely to suffer for the rest of their academic careers, and such students have a higher rate of attrition in high school. Only 37% of fourth graders scored at or above a competency level on the national assessment for educational proficiency, according to a recent US government report. Reading results for pupils from low Socioeconomic Status (SES) backgrounds in the United States are much more concerning. In fourth grade, only 22% of these kids met or exceeded the competency level. Given the current scenario, educators must find and promote the most effective modes of reading instruction in primary schools, particularly for low-income pupils.

The potential benefits of blended learning as a type of reading instruction in primary schools need to be investigated further. Blended learning blends traditional classroom instruction with the use of digital technology. Within a charter school network, we had the chance to assess the effects of blended learning for kids in kindergarten through fifth grade. During the 2016–2017 school years, administrators in three schools decided to implement a blended learning programme. In the treatment schools, there were 2217 kids. Students in the treatment group were compared to 1504 students in three control schools who received conventional instruction. Prior to the adoption of blended learning, treatment children scored significantly worse on a standardised reading exam than

control students.

At the end of the school year, treatment kids outperformed control students on the reading exam, and group differences vanished. Further research found that reading progress was consistent across grades and ethnic groups. These findings support the use of blended learning in elementary schools for reading education.

BLENDED LEARNING

Blended learning, which has been gaining popularity in elementary schools, is defined by the mixing of teacher-led instruction with digital technology (Christensen et al. 2013). Pytash and O'Byrne (2018) define blended learning as mixing face-to-face education with online learning in a recent evaluation. Students can use digital resources at any time and from any location, and teachers can use online activities to tailor their instruction to fit the requirements of individual students, especially those at risk of academic failure. In fact, teachers can use the digital component's real-time performance data to deliver tailored education. Individualized training that targets skill gaps, as Shanahan and Lonigan (2010) point out, can yield encouraging results for at-risk students struggling with early reading.

According to Repetto, Spitler, and Cox (2018), the ability to use digital tools gives at-risk kids a sense of control over their learning and can create a more engaging atmosphere, instilling more drive in pupils. However, because blended learning is such a novel pedagogical technique, there isn't much research on it in elementary schools or with at-risk

Citation: Macaruso P (2022) Blended Learning is used to Support Reading Instruction in Elementary Schools. Educ. Res 13:2.

kids. In middle and high schools, there have been studies of educational programmes that combine blended learning features. Lenhard et al. (2013), for example, compared two reading comprehension programmes for sixth graders. The first method was teacher-led and taught multiple summary styles, whereas the second method used the digital programme conText to provide constructive comments on written summaries.

DIGITAL COMPONENT

Teachers were strongly urged to have pupils use the Core5 digital component in accordance with prescribed minutes during implementation training. Students are allotted recommended minutes on a monthly basis based on their risk level, which is determined by their Core5 progress and assesses their likelihood of completing all Core levels for their grade by the end of the school year. Teachers have access to an online implementation dashboard through which they can monitor student usage. The dashboard also provides information about students who are having difficulty with digital activities, suggests Lexia Lessons for teachers to teach, and gives students access to Lexia Skill Builders when they have completed a level.

Students were allowed to use the digital component of Core5 at various times in order to meet their prescribed minutes, according to information provided to us by school liaisons during ELA block, morning homeroom, before and after school, and even at home on weekends. Students had access to a variety of electronic devices (iPads, mini-laptops, desktop PCs) in classrooms, shared throughout

Classrooms via a "laptop cart," and in computer laboratories to facilitate use of the digital component at school. In upper grades, students in the control group had access to electronic devices to work on a variety of math programmes, Wonders, and Reading Plus.

The potential benefits of a blended learning approach to reading instruction in elementary schools were investigated in this quasi-experimental study. With large samples of kids in treatment and control groups from the same charter school network, we evaluated the use of blended learning. We discovered that the treatment group achieved considerably higher post-test reading scores than the control group after correcting for pretest differences between groups. The first research question is answered in the yes with this result. When compared to traditional education, the use of digital technology as part of blended learning helps pupils strengthen their reading skills.

We were able to compare groups of students receiving instruction in similar educational environments including administrative oversight and rules, ELA curriculum, and testing protocols by using treatment and control schools from the same charter school network. To encourage the less proficient readers in their schools, administrators of treatment schools choose to use a blended learning approach. Kids at these schools were compared to students in control schools, which were chosen because their ethnic characteristics were similar to those in the treatment schools. Scores on the NWEA MAP assessment confirmed concerns about fewer adept readers in the treatment group the protest mean for the treatment group was significantly lower than the control group.