Lectures in Higher Education Using Teaching Strategies and Digital Tools to Overcome Challenges Faced in South Africa by Implementing Blended Learning

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Abstract : The Fourth Industrial Revolution has ushered in an era where technology significantly impacts various aspects of life, including higher education. Blended learning, which combines synchronous and asynchronous learning, has gained popularity as a pedagogical approach. However, its effective implementation is a challenge, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and technological obstacles faced in South Africa. This study focused on lecturers' teaching and learning practices to implement blended learning, aiming to understand the teaching and learning strategies used with the integration of digital tools to facilitate the blended learning approach within a private higher educational institution in South Africa. Using heutagogy and constructivism theoretical frameworks, the study aimed to uncover insights into the lecturer's teaching and learning practices to overcome challenges in designing and facilitating blended learning modules. Through a qualitative analysis, the themes of student engagement, teaching and learning strategies, digital tools, and feedback emerged, highlighting the complexities and opportunities in a blended learning classroom. The findings emphasize the importance of tailoring methods to students' needs and subject matter, aligning with constructivist principles. Recommendations include promoting professional development opportunities, addressing infrastructure issues, and fostering a supportive learning environment.

Keywords : blended learning, digital tools, higher education, teaching strategies
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