

BLENDING LEARNING - A NEW EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM

^aLIUDMYLA HRYTSAK, ^bNATALIIA HRYTSAK,
^cNATALIIA MISHCHUK, ^dHALYNA ZHYRSKA,
^eVIKTORIIA HRYHORIEVA

^{a,b,c,d}*Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ternopil, Ukraine.*

Berdiansk State Pedagogical University, Berdiansk, Ukraine

email: ^ahrytsak1972@gmail.com, ^bgrycak78@urk.net,

^cmushchuk.nata61@gmail.com, ^dzhyrska14@gmail.com,

^evickyvickyua@gmail.com

Abstract: The article aims to explore blended learning as a novel educational paradigm. Blended learning is examined as a form of organizing the educational process that combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning. Furthermore, the study characterizes the state of blended education in Ukraine, elucidating its defining attributes, distinctive features, and prevalent trends. The analysis also encompasses the development of a blended learning strategy in Ukraine, outlining the key stages involved in its implementation. Additionally, the research determines the requisite legislative changes and requirements for higher education institutions. The study focuses on elucidating the fundamental nature of blended learning as a new educational paradigm. The object of the study pertains to the present state of higher education in Ukraine. Research methods employed in this work include description, analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and modeling. The present paper investigates the existing landscape of blended learning in Ukraine. Blended learning is comprehended as an emerging educational paradigm, encompassing the harmonious integration of traditional face-to-face instruction and distance learning modalities, serving as an effective means of implementing educational concepts. Concurrently, the salient features of blended learning are delineated, encompassing formal education within educational institutions, knowledge acquisition as a focal point, utilization of computers and mobile devices for educational objectives, and the incorporation of information and communication technologies during instructional sessions. The study undertakes an analysis of the methods and models employed in blended learning, while also delineating the associated merits and drawbacks of this pedagogical approach. Drawing upon the findings and the examination of the development strategy of blended learning in higher education institutions, a novel model is proposed, consisting of six distinct stages. Subsequently, a comprehensive description is provided for each stage, encompassing its present state, the characteristics of potential future modifications, and the legislative requirements and institutional mandates that are imperative for implementation. Throughout the investigation, it was ascertained that blended education, as a mode of organizing the educational process in Ukraine, is still in its nascent stage of development. This can be attributed to the adoption of blended learning as a response to the exigencies arising from military conflicts, rather than a deliberate shift towards a new educational paradigm. Consequently, the present state of blended learning is marked by inherent challenges in its implementation.

Keywords: Teacher, higher education institution, HEI, blended learning, student, traditional learning, university.

1 Introduction

Ukraine's contemporary education sector is experiencing noteworthy transformations. While the realm of secondary schools predominantly adheres to unified regulatory frameworks, compliance with which is obligatory for continued operations, the domain of higher education institutions lacks comparable regulation. Although legislative measures exist to govern the activities of higher education entities, the prescribed requirements are less stringent, granting rectors and institutional leaders considerable discretion in decision-making processes. Additionally, the higher education sector comprises a substantial proportion of private universities, academies, and institutes.

Consequently, the matter of blended learning assumes considerable significance within the context of higher education institutions as an educational paradigm. It is noteworthy that following the eruption of hostilities on February 24, 2022, blended learning has emerged as the optimal approach for delivering educational services, ensuring the safety of both students and educators while enabling the continuity of educational endeavors. Moreover, given the destruction or damage incurred by certain higher education institutions, and their proximity to conflict zones or occupied territories, blended learning has not only evolved as an educational paradigm but has become the sole viable option for facilitating educational activities. Thus, the relevance of this issue remains paramount in the present time.

2 Literature review

The issue of blended education as a novel educational paradigm has garnered attention from numerous domestic and international scholars. Notable among them are K. Bugaichuk (2016), N. Kurysh (2021), Yu. Ladanivska (2022), K. Lalima (2017), and K. Thorne (2022). Their respective studies offer significant insights into the implementation mechanism of blended learning, particularly in the context of traditional learning dominance and crises.

Renowned researcher K. Bugaichuk places significant emphasis on the intricate and time-consuming nature of implementing blended learning, necessitating thorough preparations within higher education institutions. In his article titled "Blended Learning: Theoretical Analysis and Strategy for Implementation in the Educational Process of Higher Education Institutions" (Bugaichuk, K., 2016, p. 2), he advocates that university administrations should prioritize the objective of integrating blended learning into their educational processes. Bugaichuk asserts that, before adopting blended learning, educational institutions must establish clear goals, define primary objectives, envision desired outcomes, and identify appropriate methods and approaches for implementation. Moreover, it is crucial to consider the technical capabilities of the HEI to effectively provide blended learning services to students. Additionally, attention must be directed toward evaluating the proficiency levels of the institution's teachers in utilizing information and communication technologies.

In her scholarly work titled "Implementation of the Bichronic Mode of Online Learning in Postgraduate Pedagogical Education Institutions" (Kurysh, N., 2021, p. 200), researcher N. Kurysh substantiates the significance of blended learning as a key component of modern Ukrainian higher education. Kurysh argues that transformative processes in education are influenced by crisis phenomena, such as the coronavirus pandemic. Consequently, the adoption of online learning has become imperative, serving as a means to ensure students' access to knowledge amidst the escalating prevalence of dangerous viruses and the limited availability of safe travel options. Through an analysis of existing research on blended learning, Kurysh discovers that approximately half of the surveyed students expressed support for a combination of online and in-person classes. This attests to the genuine societal demand for the implementation of this educational approach.

In his scholarly contribution titled "Blended Learning: How to Integrate Online and Traditional Learning" (Thorne, K., 2022, p. 21), researcher K. Thorne highlights that, in contemporary circumstances, blended learning represents the most effective approach for ensuring the quality of students' knowledge. Thorne posits that blended learning proves advantageous when students aspire to acquire both theoretical and practical knowledge. Accordingly, within the classroom setting, students can engage with available educational materials and partake in meaningful discussions with their instructors. Simultaneously, at home, students have the opportunity to cultivate their skills through independent assignments, which are electronically submitted, thereby facilitating practice-oriented components. Furthermore, Thorne contends that online classes should adopt a training format aimed at reinforcing foundational knowledge.

Nevertheless, the existing body of literature indicates that the topic of blended learning remains relatively underexplored in scientific research. This dearth of comprehensive coverage can be attributed to the prevailing prominence of traditional learning approaches, stemming from the technical constraints faced by higher education institutions and the proficiency levels of teachers in information and communication technologies.

The paper aims to illuminate the fundamental nature of blended learning as a novel educational paradigm. The research goal is

derived from the significance of blended learning in organizing the educational process within Ukraine and safeguarding the well-being and safety of students amidst military operations. Its implementation necessitates the development of a tailored strategy for blended learning in Ukraine, hinging upon enhancements to the regulatory and legislative framework, as well as fostering effective collaboration between university administrations, students, and teaching staff.

3 Objectives of the study

Aligned with the research purpose, the specific objectives are as follows:

- to elucidate the fundamental nature and conceptual underpinnings of "blended learning";
- to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of blended learning within the educational landscape of Ukraine;
- to formulate a distinct strategy for the advancement of blended learning within higher education institutions, tailored to the specific context and requirements.

4 Research methods

The study employed the following research methods: description, analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and modeling. The method of description was utilized to elucidate the fundamental nature of "blended learning," including its defining features, methodologies, and models. The method of analysis and synthesis facilitated the exploration of the current state of blended learning in Ukraine, examining the challenges and opportunities associated with this educational approach, and considering existing strategies for its implementation in higher education institutions. The method of comparison was employed to assess the advantages and disadvantages of blended learning, identify the factors contributing to difficulties, and explore prospects for further development. Lastly, the method of generalization allowed for the concise presentation of the study's key findings.

The modeling method employed in this study unveils the systematic framework for constructing a strategy aimed at the advancement of blended learning within higher education institutions in Ukraine. This method incorporates an examination of both causal and consequential relationships while forecasting trends in the field. Consequently, it is built upon the foundation of generalizing and analyzing the prevailing state of blended learning in Ukraine.

5 Results

The topic of blended learning holds significant relevance in the present-day context. Its pertinence arises from the substantial impact of the coronavirus pandemic and military operations in Ukraine on the organization of the educational process. Given these circumstances, the Ukrainian education system necessitated prompt and transformative measures that accounted for the interests of educators, educational institutions, as well as pupils, students, and learners. Moreover, the implementation of interactive and innovative learning approaches aimed to foster the advancement of European educational standards within Ukraine. Consequently, blended learning has emerged as a pressing issue for HEIs in our country.

At present, a universally accepted definition of blended learning remains elusive. The lack of a consensus can be attributed to several factors, including the relative novelty of the term and its limited incorporation into the legal framework of higher education in Ukraine, as well as the scarcity of comprehensive studies on blended learning. Broadly speaking, "blended learning" can be defined as "the organization of the educational process wherein a portion of learning occurs under the guidance of an instructor in a physical classroom, while another portion is undertaken independently by students outside the classroom through the utilization of electronic resources" (Caner, M., 2022,

p. 20). In essence, it represents the integration of traditional and distance learning approaches (Tolochko, S., 2021, p. 30).

It is worth noting that within the educational landscape of Ukrainian higher education institutions (HEIs), four distinct models of blended learning can be identified.

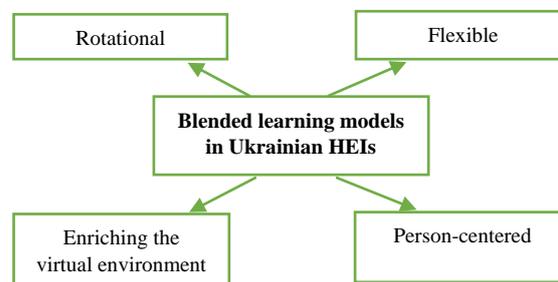


Figure 1. Blended learning models in Ukrainian HEIs.

The rotational model of blended learning entails students receiving a portion of the course material in the classroom and subsequently engaging with it at home through the utilization of electronic resources. In this model, teachers have the flexibility to offer some students the opportunity to access the material virtually, while others continue to receive instruction in a traditional classroom setting, after which the roles may be reversed—an approach commonly referred to as "rotation". This model is particularly advantageous when the course material is extensive and cannot be fully covered within a limited number of class sessions, or when visual content cannot be effectively reproduced using the technical resources available at the university. As a result, this form of blended learning facilitates the acquisition of foundational knowledge outside of the classroom, while offering opportunities for students to actively participate in discussions and explore complex topics during in-person sessions (Marienko, M., 2022, p. 540).

One manifestation of the rotational model is the implementation of a learning process where certain students attend classes in a physical classroom setting, while others engage in remote learning. After a designated period, the roles are reversed, and the students switch between in-person and remote learning. This approach not only alleviates the teacher's workload but also ensures the continuity of the educational process, particularly during extended unfavorable circumstances (McKee, M., Murphy, A., 2022, p. 548).

The flexible model of blended learning primarily focuses on the implementation of the educational process in an online format. This approach enables students to acquire knowledge predominantly through remote means, with visits to the educational institution limited to administrative purposes or examinations. Within this model, teachers maintain continuous electronic communication with students, soliciting feedback, offering guidance for further learning, coordinating the educational process, providing necessary learning materials, assessing assignments, and monitoring student progress. Additionally, the adoption of this model ensures a smooth transition back to traditional learning, minimizing any interruptions in the learning of new material (Krasulia, A., 2022, p. 5).

The person-centered model of blended learning focuses on providing information in a convenient and adaptable manner. Under this approach, students physically attend a higher education institution, but traditional classroom instruction is supplemented with the utilization of virtual space. As a result, instructional materials are presented through a combination of traditional paper textbooks, electronic manuals, demonstration programs, and educational websites. During classes, students often engage in videos, presentations, and educational films, and in certain instances, they may even participate in computer simulations or games to simulate real-world professional situations (Bugaichuk, K., 2016, p. 6).

The virtual environment enrichment model holds significance in the current stage of education. This model is characterized by conducting all training activities online, following a specially designed curriculum. Physical attendance at the educational institution is not required, or it may be limited to specific lessons. This model is particularly relevant for higher education institutions that have suffered extensive damage, and are located in occupied territories or war zones, where visiting the institution is infeasible from both technical and security perspectives. In such cases, education predominantly takes place through distance learning, with occasional classes held in remaining classrooms specific to certain disciplines. In instances where an educational institution is situated in a war zone or under occupation, education is solely conducted remotely (Kormiltsyna, S., 2016, p. 30).

In general, several characteristics of blended learning can be discerned:

- incorporation of formal training methodologies (Khader, N., 2016, p. 225).
- enhanced efficiency and optimization in delivering educational material (Stryuk, A., 2015, p. 13).
- utilization of computers and mobile devices for educational purposes (Osadcha, K., Osadchy, V., 2021, p. 412).
- integration of ICT into the learning process (Lalima, K., 2017, p. 130).

Blended learning in Ukrainian higher education institutions is implemented through various approaches. The first approach involves a combination of face-to-face and distance learning. This method is widely adopted and closely aligned with the capacity of teachers to deliver content through electronic resources as well as in traditional classroom settings. This form of education enables students to attend classes when there is no immediate threat to their safety and well-being, allowing them to physically gather in the same learning environment. In cases where students are unable to attend the educational institution and face potential risks to their life and health, distance learning provides the flexibility to study from home. Additionally, the integration of different modes of education ensures the

continuity of the learning process even when the physical infrastructure of the educational institution is not suitable, such as during renovation or repair work (State Education Quality Service of Ukraine).

The second approach involves blending face-to-face and distance learning within a single academic group. This method is employed when certain students within the group are unable to attend classes in person. By adopting this approach, educational activities can continue, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to pursue their studies. Students who can attend the educational institution receive traditional face-to-face education, while those unable to be physically present engage in remote learning. This approach is particularly relevant in situations where students from the same group are undertaking internships in different cities, enabling them to participate in the educational process despite their geographical constraints (Kurysh, N., 2021, p. 200).

The third approach involves blending independent study and classroom-based work. In this method, students have the option to either primarily engage in traditional face-to-face education with occasional periods of distance learning, or predominantly participate in distance learning with intermittent traditional classroom sessions. This approach provides flexibility, accommodating situations where a student may be ill or unable to exclusively rely on a specific mode of learning due to personal circumstances (Ladanivska, Yu., 2022, p. 52).

The fourth approach involves combining traditional textbooks with electronic resources. This blended form offers convenience in accessing a diverse range of knowledge. Electronic textbooks, in particular, provide an interactive learning experience, enhancing visualization and facilitating better comprehension. This approach proves beneficial for students studying in fields that demand meticulous attention to detail, such as medicine, engineering, and architecture (Thorne, K., 2022, p. 35).

In general, the advantages and disadvantages of blended learning for HEI students can be identified.

Table 1. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Blended Learning for HEI Students.

Number	Category	Essence
<i>Advantages</i>		
1	Lower time costs	During online classes, students allocate more time to the virtual learning environment, resulting in reduced time spent in physical classrooms. Consequently, this reduction in classroom time contributes to a decreased workload for HEIs, allowing for increased availability of classrooms. Additionally, teachers benefit from reduced on-campus commitments, as they spend less time physically present at the university
2	Independent study of the material	Blended learning allows students to allocate more time to self-directed study. Consequently, they can engage with the learning material at their convenience and during a timeframe that best suits their individual needs, thereby enhancing learning efficiency
3	Choosing a convenient mode of learning	Students and teachers have the flexibility to choose the mode of class participation that suits them best, whether it involves traditional in-person attendance, communication through chat or email, or engaging in video conferencing sessions
4	Choosing a convenient class schedule	The blended learning approach facilitates the organization of classes in various formats, such as question-and-answer sessions, discussions, polls, and other interactive activities, based on convenience and instructional objectives
<i>Disadvantages</i>		
1	Difficulties in time management	Optimal time allocation for studying the material and organizing the learning process can be challenging during both traditional and distance learning approaches
2	Technical problems	The educational process can be disrupted by the absence of computer equipment or reliable internet connectivity, leading to difficulties in accessing and participating in online learning activities
3	Lack of discipline	Students may exhibit low attendance or show a lack of engagement in remote classes, as the virtual nature of the learning environment reduces the ability to exert direct influence and supervision over their behavior
4	Poor quality of educational material	E-books and traditional textbooks may present different pedagogical approaches to learning and may lack consistency and alignment with each other. Additionally, electronic resources used in blended learning environments may vary in quality and reliability

Blended learning currently presents both advantages and disadvantages in the context of Ukraine. Its implementation in the educational system has been primarily driven by the need for

adaptation rather than a carefully planned strategy. As a result, the development of curricula for students across various disciplines did not adequately consider the specific requirements

of educational and professional programs, students' technological capabilities, institutional educational policies, or the availability of electronic textbooks in different fields. Consequently, this has led to organizational challenges and difficulties for students in acquiring knowledge. Nonetheless, despite these challenges, significant progress has been made in the field of education, enabling many students from occupied territories or war zones to continue their higher education (Korniyat, V., 2022, p. 195).

Currently, a unified blended learning strategy for Ukrainian higher education institutions is lacking. Each educational institution autonomously decides whether to adopt blended learning or maintain traditional learning, along with the choice of implementation methods, conditions, organization of the educational process, and distribution of teachers' workload. Consequently, the administration of each HEI independently implements blended learning based on their discretion (Kartashova, L., Sorochan, T., Sovkina, O., Sheremet, T., 2022, p. 50).

The researcher K. Bugaichuk proposes a distinct strategy for the implementation of blended learning in higher education institutions. This strategy is organized into well-defined stages that, when followed, contribute to the advancement of blended learning in higher education. Bugaichuk presents the strategy as follows (Bugaichuk, K., 2016, p. 10):

1. Goal establishment;
2. Model selection;
3. Consideration of technical and human resources;
4. Provision of methodological and regulatory support for changes (Bugaichuk, K., 2016, p. 15).

Moreover, considering the aforementioned aspects, we can propose our strategy for the development of blended learning in higher education. This strategy comprises sequential stages that can be applied to the development and implementation of this approach in universities where the security situation permits.

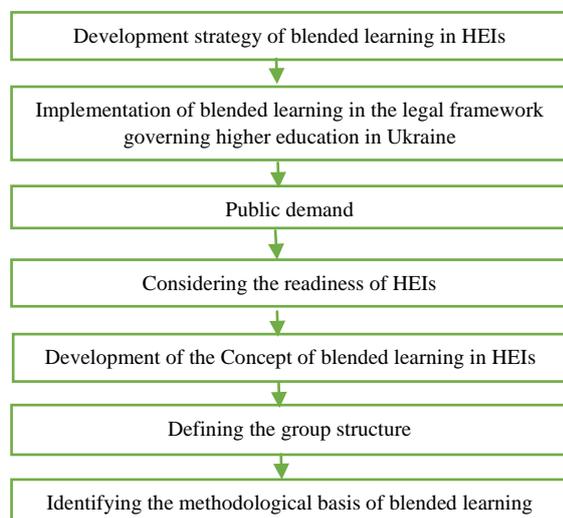


Figure 2. Strategy for the development of blended learning in HEIs

First stage: Incorporating blended learning into the legal framework governing higher education in Ukraine. Currently, the definition, implementation conditions, requirements, and conceptual framework for blended learning are not explicitly outlined in the legislation. This absence of clear guidelines hampers the progress of blended learning in Ukrainian higher education institutions (Kozinchuk, V., Kuzmenko, A., Malona, S., Matvienko, L., & Sonechko, O., 2022, p. 170).

Simultaneously, all higher education institutions (HEIs) adhere to the recommendations provided by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. These recommendations are outlined in

the document titled "Recommendations regarding the implementation of blended learning in institutions of professional pre-higher and higher education". According to this document, "blended learning" is defined as an approach, pedagogical and technological model, and methodology that combines online technologies with face-to-face interaction between students and teachers in the classroom. However, it is important to note that blended learning is not obligatory but rather an initiative undertaken by the respective universities. The document also makes a distinction between "blended learning" and "high-tech learning," although the differentiation lacks clarity, and the significant differences between these approaches are not explicitly addressed (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022, p. 28).

Therefore, it can be argued that current domestic regulations do not position blended learning as the primary form of education but rather prioritize traditional education as the most effective approach. Consequently, it is only through the amendment of regulations pertaining to blended learning in HEIs that a transition to subsequent stages can be considered advisable (Pysmenna, O., 2022, p. 210).

The second stage involves assessing the public demand for blended learning. Before implementing blended learning, it is crucial to determine whether there is a need for it among students and teachers. The evaluation should consider various factors such as the effectiveness of organizing the educational process, the enhancement of knowledge acquisition, the development of students' personal growth, and the opportunity to obtain a comprehensive education. Given the current security situation in Ukraine, the demand for blended learning arises from the necessity to ensure the safety and well-being of both students and teaching staff. It is essential to acknowledge that even though blended learning may present certain implementation challenges, they are secondary to the fact that traditional education is infeasible or morally and ethically unjustifiable in occupied cities, villages, war zones, or frontline areas.

In relatively safe regions of Ukraine where there are no significant enemy attacks or critical military installations, prioritizing the public demand becomes crucial. To assess this demand, surveys should be conducted among students and teaching staff, and various forums such as meetings, consultative gatherings, and Academic Councils should be organized. These platforms will facilitate informed decision-making based on well-founded conclusions (Petrenko, L., 2022, p. 207).

The third stage involves assessing the readiness of the HEI to implement blended learning. This assessment focuses on determining whether the HEI possesses the necessary material, technical, financial, and human resources to support blended learning. Specifically, it involves evaluating the potential economic costs associated with organizing activities that facilitate the implementation of blended learning, conducting cost estimates, developing budgets, and formulating financing programs. Material and technical resources encompass the availability of adequate computer and presentation equipment for such training, access to electronic resources and manuals, and the presence of online learning platforms and virtual communication tools. Human resources entail ensuring a sufficient number of teachers who possess the skills to conduct both traditional and virtual classes, thereby emphasizing the importance of teachers' proficiency in modern technologies (Buimister, L., 2022, p. 207).

The fourth stage involves the development of the Concept of blended learning in HEI within the respective institution. While changes to the legislative and regulatory framework for higher education are unable to address all aspects of blended learning, the development of a comprehensive concept becomes necessary. This concept serves as a policy document that elucidates the essence of blended learning, its defining features, characteristics, and operational peculiarities within the higher education context. Furthermore, the concept outlines the various

ways of implementation, the mechanisms through which it can be executed, and the methods and channels for exchanging educational materials between teachers and students. Essentially, the concept serves as a roadmap, providing clear guidelines on how blended learning should be implemented within the HEI (Horbatyuk, O., Polishchuk, S., 2023, p. 8).

The fifth stage involves defining the group structure for blended learning implementation. This step entails gathering comprehensive information about students in different groups within the higher education institution. The collected data may include parameters such as the number of students in each group, their age range, gender composition, individual preferences, and learning orientations. This information proves crucial in determining the optimal organization of blended learning, selecting appropriate models and types of learning, and identifying potential innovations. For instance, if a substantial portion of the student group resides in a different locality than the university, it becomes pertinent to consider the balance between traditional and online learning approaches (Kyrychenko, M., Prosina, O., Kravchinska, T., Shven, Ya., 2022, p. 115).

The sixth stage involves the identification of the methodological basis for blended learning. This entails assessing the availability of electronic textbooks specifically tailored to the relevant academic disciplines. It is crucial to ensure an adequate abundance of educational materials accessible in the virtual space, which facilitates the optimal acquisition of knowledge. This necessitates the existence of a wide range of freely available educational resources. In cases where the online resources are insufficient, the higher education institution should take the initiative to develop and expand the necessary foundations to support blended learning. By doing so, all students can be provided with ample resources for their learning needs.

6 Discussion

Despite the relevance of blended learning, there exist divergent perspectives on this matter. On one hand, some researchers highlight that blended learning has emerged as a necessity of the times, particularly during periods of conflict or war when it serves as the sole viable method of imparting knowledge to students. These proponents underscore the numerous advantages and opportunities associated with blended learning. Consequently, these scholars express confidence that a majority of HEIs will transition to blended learning in the foreseeable future.

On the contrary, some researchers hold a less optimistic view. According to their perspective, blended learning was introduced before the February 24, 2022 war and the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, providing Ukrainian HEIs ample time to develop distinct and tailored blended learning models that align with their specific institutional needs. However, these researchers argue that various challenges arose during the implementation phase, impeding the rapid adoption of blended learning. As a result, the anticipated swift implementation of blended learning did not materialize as envisioned.

Considering the divergent perspectives, the existing material and technical infrastructure of Ukrainian higher education institutions, the proficiency level of educators in information and communication technologies, and the absence of comprehensive regulations in the legislative domain, it can be inferred that the implementation of blended learning within Ukrainian HEIs will be a protracted process. This process entails incorporating foreign experiences while adapting them to the Ukrainian education system and the exigencies of wartime conditions.

7 Conclusions

The present article elucidates the advancement of blended learning as an emerging educational paradigm. It posits that blended learning in Ukraine represents a novel approach to

organizing the educational process, functioning as a transitional phase between traditional and online instruction by encompassing both modalities. Consequently, blended learning is characterized as a progressive stage in the evolution of domestic higher education.

The concept of "blended learning" is explicated, elucidating its essence as a mode of organizing the educational process that integrates traditional and distance learning approaches. Notably, key characteristics of blended learning encompass the utilization of information and communication technologies for educational purposes, the incorporation of computer devices and smartphones in instructional delivery, the emphasis on class effectiveness, and the formal presence within physical classrooms. To enact blended learning, diverse models such as personality-oriented, flexible, rotational, and virtual environment enrichment models are employed. Prominent approaches to implementing blended learning include combining face-to-face and distance learning, integrating independent study with classroom activities, and incorporating a blend of traditional textbooks and electronic resources.

The current state of blended learning in Ukraine is depicted, revealing that its utilization within Ukrainian higher education institutions is predominantly a response to contemporary challenges rather than a thoroughly planned educational paradigm. Specifically, blended learning was extensively adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the wake of the war outbreak on February 24, 2022, it has become a means of imparting knowledge while ensuring the safety of students. The primary advantages and disadvantages of blended learning in Ukraine are examined, highlighting both the possibilities and challenges associated with this approach for Ukrainian students. The author appraises K. Bugaichuk's strategy for the advancement of blended learning in higher education institutions, which entails justifying the purpose of blended learning, determining the appropriate model, assessing the technical infrastructure and human resources of the institution, analyzing the existing methodological framework for blended learning, and securing regulatory support for the educational process.

A self-developed strategy for the advancement of blended learning in higher education institutions (HEIs) has been formulated. The authors have provided a solid rationale for their strategy, which encompasses various stages that facilitate the development and implementation of blended learning in the higher education context. These stages consist of:

- 1) implementing blended learning within the legal framework governing higher education in Ukraine;
- 2) taking into account the public demand for blended learning;
- 3) assessing the readiness of HEIs to embrace blended learning;
- 4) developing the Concept of blended learning specific to HEIs;
- 5) defining the appropriate group structure for blended learning;
- 6) identifying the methodological foundations of blended learning.

In summary, research on blended learning will continue to grow in importance in the coming years. Furthermore, it is foreseeable that blended learning will emerge as the predominant approach across all types of Ukrainian HEIs, irrespective of the security circumstances. The implementation of blended learning will also have a profound impact on the educational paradigm and policies of Ukraine, necessitating revisions to the regulatory and legislative frameworks governing higher education.

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