

“A Study the Perspective of Executives, Teachers, Parents and Students Toward Hybrid Learning in Banwangthong Wattana Primary School of Thailand”

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Abstracts

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the education industry, leading to inadequate student education and a shift towards technology and online learning. Despite the recovery, the pandemic has accelerated the transformation of teaching-learning paradigms, making it crucial to adopt long-term policies to equip students with 21st-century skills.

The objective of the research was to examine the viewpoints of various stakeholders at Banwangthong Wattana Primary School, located in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. These viewpoints would form an integral component of examining the implementation of Hybrid learning, with potential applicability to other schools in Thailand that share a similar environment. The study employed a case study design, utilizing a qualitative methodology that involved conducting semi-structured interviews with six individuals who were selected to represent different functions within the school. These individuals included the Academic Assistant Principal, who represented the administration function, two students who served as learners, two teachers who acted as instructors, and one parent who played the role of a supporter. The participants selected for this study were an Academic Assistant Principal and several teachers, chosen through purposive sampling. The sample population consisted of parents and students who were selected using convenience sampling. The data derived from the interviews underwent thematic analysis.

The results of the study indicated that both educators and parents expressed significant worry over student engagement and concentration during online instruction. All relevant parties collaborate to facilitate the advancement of online teaching and the advancement of Pedagogical and Technological Proficiencies through self-development.

Keywords: Hybrid learning; Primary School; Online class

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, which originated in December 2019, has had a significant impact on various sectors. The education industry has experienced significant impacts across all levels. Nevertheless, there are advantages and disadvantages to consider. The shutdown of educational institutions results in an inadequate provision of education for students. Conversely, it speeds up transforming the teaching-learning paradigm.

The closure of educational institutions, including schools, colleges, and universities, has been seen, leading to the implementation of digital platforms to ensure the ongoing provision of education. Hence, the utilization of e-learning serves as a means of bolstering the educational system by facilitating the implementation of remote work arrangements, as highlighted by Davi, L. (2020:1). Educational institutions must implement academic interventions that encompass both students and parents. The implementation of lockdown measures has expedited the use of diverse digital platforms to enhance the accessibility of the teaching and learning process while maintaining the quality of education provided.

The academic year of 2020-2021 presented significant challenges for educational institutions, students, and academic leaders. In light of the escalating number of COVID-19 cases, scholars have been endeavoring to enhance the availability of online learning alternatives for students. There have been attempts to incorporate flipped classroom methodologies, wherein students participate in active learning while professors adopt the role of facilitators and offer supplementary assistance and support (Kemp, N., & Grieve, R., 2014:1). Nevertheless, the researcher posits that hybrid learning, sometimes referred to as blended learning, is poised to endure as a lasting educational modality, exerting a significant influence in the reformation of educational institutions.

In Thailand, numerous educational institutions have adapted their instructional approaches to incorporate a blend of traditional classroom instruction and online learning modalities. Banwangthong Wattana Primary School, located in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand, has implemented a transition from traditional on-site learning to a hybrid learning model starting in the academic year of 2020. The utilization of this instructional approach has the potential to become the prevailing standard, as it allows instructors to reimagine and modify the educational material, particularly in fields where educators encounter difficulties in delivering captivating learning experiences to students within an online instructional framework (Rodriguez, A., 2020:1).

Numerous studies have been conducted on the utilization of digital teaching and learning methods in higher education systems. However, there is a dearth of research on the consequences of extended lockdowns and the subsequent reliance on digital modes of instruction in primary-level educational systems. The findings will enable us to gain insights from various stakeholders within the educational institution, encompassing the administrative, instructional, parental, and student perspectives, about hybrid learning. The education sector can utilize these viewpoints in several domains to enhance solutions and regulatory standards for sustainable development.

Problem

Several studies have indicated the adverse consequences associated with remote learning during the period of enforced confinement. There exists compelling evidence indicating that pupils are experiencing a decrease in academic achievement during periods of lockdown, as compared to the levels of learning observed in a standard academic year. The observed losses are apparent over the whole spectrum of ages under investigation, encompassing all three academic domains, namely mathematics, spelling, and reading.

The Kenan Foundation Asia has identified three potential implications in the Thai education system that have arisen as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak and will require attention and resolution. 1) The issue of educational inequality is exacerbated by the lack of access to advanced technological resources, such as laptops equipped with state-of-the-art video conferencing software, among a significant number of Thai students. 2) Perpetuating Inefficient Pedagogical Approaches: A limited number of Thai educators have undergone formal instruction in utilizing technology for remote instruction, while numerous students, particularly those residing in rural regions, face a dearth of technological resources, hence impeding the attainment of equal e-learning opportunities. 3) Inadequate Teacher Support: It is widely acknowledged that teachers play a crucial role in our societies, sometimes being undervalued despite their significant contributions to our collective welfare (Keenan Foundation of Asia, 2020:online).

Ms. Treenut Thienthong, a former Minister of Education, delivered a presentation on the research findings conducted by the Thailand Physical Activity Knowledge Development Center (TPAK), which is affiliated with the Population and Social Research Institute at Mahidol University. According to the Education Ministry (2021:online), the study examined data about the behaviors and impacts associated with online learning. The findings indicated that an escalation in the quantity of homework assignments was correlated with the manifestation of sedentary tendencies, heightened stress levels, and increased anxiety among students.

In light of the various concerns expressed by students regarding online learning, it is imperative for Banwangthong Wattana Primary School to strategically structure its organizational framework and curriculum to optimize the advantages of hybrid learning while effectively addressing the identified issues. This research endeavor aims to comprehensively explore the viewpoints of all individuals involved in the educational institution on hybrid learning. The findings of this study may serve as a basis for further investigation, encompassing the various challenges associated with hybrid learning and the necessary restructuring of educational institutions to accommodate digital pedagogy.

Literature Review

Presently, hybrid learning is a widely adopted term, especially in academic, business, and higher education environments. The definition of the term is inherently challenging because it is employed in a multitude of ways by various individuals. In general, hybrid learning is frequently defined in three ways (Whitelock, D., and Jelfs, A., 2003: 99-100): 1) The amalgamation of conventional online learning methodologies with web-based platforms; 2) The integration of instructional resources, such as textbooks, with media in e-learning environments; and 3) The integration of various pedagogical and informational methodologies, regardless of the technological platform employed.

Blended learning, according to Graham, C.R., (2004:1), is an amalgamation of in-person and online learning. Conventional in-person instruction entails direct student-teacher interaction, whereas online learning streamlines the learning process through the utilization of conventional or online approaches, devoid of personal student-teacher contact. Under extreme restrictions, students have been utilizing their free time to study the performing arts and, whenever possible, to meet their instructors in person.

Utilizing information and communication technologies, the hybrid learning model is an innovative approach to education (Piaget, Jean, 1967:1). The hybrid learning model was formulated around the year 2000 and has since been implemented in universities, training institutions, and countries including North America, England, and Australia. Utilizing learning technologies such as computer media, iPhones, televisions, video conferencing, audio and visual aids, multimedia presentations, weblogs, and social media are all advantages of this model (Thorne, Kaye, 2003:1).

As stated by Jamison et al. (2014: 253-273), hybrid learning is a learner-centered approach to acquiring knowledge and skills that incorporates recorded, planned, and digital (including mobile and internet-based), printed, and traditional in-person class activities into an instructional design. Additionally, hybrid learning enables students to direct their learning processes by selecting methods from the available learning materials that are tailored to their specific requirements and are most effective in attaining the learning objectives of the curriculum. Hybrid learning, according to Bahri, A. (2018), is an instructional approach that combines technological advancements and innovation via an online learning platform with the engagement and participation typically associated with traditional learning models.

Research questions

How do the executives, teachers, parents, and students perceive/experience Hybrid Learning in Banwangthong Wattana Primary School?

Research Objective

This study aims to examine the viewpoints of executives, parents, instructors, and students regarding hybrid learning at Banwangthong Wattana Primary School in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. This study employs a case study methodology to gain insights into the contextual factors surrounding the emergence of hybrid learning, a novel educational approach that integrates both face-to-face and online learning modalities. Banwangthong Wattana Primary School has experienced intermittent closures due to government rules in response to the COVID-19 pandemic during the academic year of 2020. The educational institution modified its schedule to accommodate online study. The academic year of 2020 potentially represents the inaugural implementation of online learning. During the transfer phase, various stakeholders like the school's executives, teachers, parents, and students were involved. The perspectives held by individuals may not necessarily align with the inquiries around the prospective implementation of hybrid learning. This study seeks to investigate individuals' viewpoints regarding hybrid learning during the 2021 academic year.

The Specific Objective is to study the perspective from different aspects of stakeholders in Banwangthong Wattana Primary School.

Research Methodology

This investigation employs a qualitative methodology for case study research. The study investigates the various viewpoints regarding hybrid learning, which is a constrained system. Hybrid learning has been implemented in primary school education ever since the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary institution under investigation is Banwangthong Wattana Primary School. The researcher is conducting an intrinsic case study to gain a deeper comprehension of the situation.

Method

The researcher uses interview methods to study the different perspectives of the school's stakeholders, using a general interview guide approach and semi-structured interviews as well as observation.

Research Scope

Informants

- Using purposive sampling by specific school academic assistant principles
- Using purposive sampling by focusing on two science teachers with the criteria of maximum and minimum work experience, Science class provides both experiments and academic
- Using convenience sampling on 2 students who attend the science class
- Using convenience sampling on 1 parent whose child attends the science class

No.	Position	Sampling Methods	Demographic Information	
1	Academic Assistant Principle	Purposive sampling	42 years old	21 Years of work experience
2	Parent	Convenience sampling	40> years old	Business owner
3	Science Teacher 1	Purposive sampling	32 years old	10 Years of work experience
4	Science Teacher 2	Purposive sampling	24years old	2 Years of work experience
5	Student 1	Convenience sampling	Grade 5	
6	Student 2	Convenience sampling	Grade 5	

Participants Information

As participants, samples were selected from the stakeholders of Banwangthong Wattana Primary School using purposive sampling. The interviewees were chosen based on their affiliation with a specific function of the school, which included the Academic Assistant Principal in the management function, students as learners, instructors as instructors, and parents as supporters. Academic Assistant Principle, he had been an academic assistant

principal at this institution for twenty-one years. The first of the two science teachers was thirty-two years old. She possesses the most science division experience and has been a science instructor at this institution for a decade.

The rationale behind selecting a science instructor with the most experience was that the researcher wished to compare and contrast the viewpoints of an educator with minimal experience and one with maximum experience. Thus, at the age of 24, the second teacher was a recent graduate who had been in the profession for two years. Each of the two students was in the fifth grade. The parent in question was the maternal figure of a third-grade student. She operated the enterprise from her residence. Every single participant expressed their willingness to partake in an interview session that lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. A collective of one parent, two teachers, two students, and one executive member offered their viewpoints regarding this case study.

The identities of the Academic Assistant Principal and Teachers cannot be disclosed due to the purposive sampling process. Therefore, the researchers requested authorization to disclose certain quotations and analyses. In the context of convenience sampling, parental and student information will be withheld or anonymized (Glesne, 2016:1)

About School

Banwangthong Wattana is a private primary school. It provides education from kindergarten up to grade 6. The school (year 2022) has about 400 students and 38 teachers. Since the spread of COVID-19 in Thailand, the school has been closed many times due to orders from the Education Ministry and safety measures. During the closure, the school provided online learning classes for students. When the school can open, besides providing only onsite classes with safety measures, the school has the option of deciding whether the students can choose online or onsite classes. The students can alternately choose between online and onsite classes. So, this is a hybrid learning style at Banwangthong Wattana School. According to the observation, the researcher found that most of the students are from middle-income families. The students did not have any problems using their devices to access online learning. So, the inequality in accessing the internet did not happen in this school.

Data Collection, Coding, and Analysis

The research question provided an important analytical framework for studying the data collected. This research was exploratory and committed to a case-study approach. Rather than using a 'theory-testing' strategy, the data analysis was organized to find an overview of perspectives from interviewees by summarizing the overview and analyzing the explanation of the cause.

According to the research objective "to study the perspective of different aspects of stakeholders in Banwangthong Wattana Primary School" with the case study research approach, this research used two data collection techniques, which were interview and observation.

Interview technique

The researcher used a semi-structured interview with informants by asking key questions and probing questions (Leech, B. L., 2002: 665-668). The researcher's key questions align with the research question, "How do the executives, teachers, parents, and students perceive and experience hybrid learning at Banwangthong Wattana Primary School?" Aside from the key questions, researchers frequently asked probing questions while talking with informants. Moreover, after finishing all key questions, the researcher used the unstructured

interview technique by talking naturally without setting questions. An unstructured interview (Dana, J., Dawes, R., and Peterson, N., 2013: 512-520) could lead to unexpected information. For the coding process, we used open coding. Corbin, J. M., and Strauss, A. (1990: 3-21) defined open coding as an “interpretive process by which data are broken down analytically. Its purpose was to give the analyst new insights by breaking through standard ways of thinking or interpreting phenomena reflected in the data.” The researcher openly coded the interview data until themes and subthemes emerged. The theme and subthemes addressed described the perspectives of the participants on Hybrid learning in primary school. Then, researchers used thematic analysis to analyze data from interviews.

Observation technique

The researcher used the observation technique to observe Banwangthong Wattana Primary School. The researcher especially observed in class while the teachers taught in class. In some classes, teachers set the room for online teaching only. In some classes, teachers taught students both on-site and online in the same class. The school used “Google Meet” as a main platform for learning online. The researcher observed the online class by using the school observation account without teachers and students knowing. The observation allowed the researcher to understand more about the circumstances of hybrid learning. Moreover, a researcher observed the environment and atmosphere. The information from observation was interpreted and analyzed along with interview data.

Trustworthiness

To establish trustworthiness, the researcher provided a worthy topic, confirmability, credibility, and transformability. This worthy topic (Tracy, S. J., 2010: 837–851) was relevant to education, which was a common concern in the time of COVID-19. The study provided recommendations for the research and development program. The researcher tries to use reflexivity (Glesne, 2016:1) as much as possible to make this research sincere. This research has made a significant contribution to primary schools, especially Banwangthong Wattana Primary School. The researcher also provided a thick description of the context of the study to apply the result to other private primary schools or schools that had similar contexts for transformability (Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G., 1985:1). Finally, for credibility, this research used peer debriefing (Spall, S., 1998: 280-292) with other students in the HODI Ph.D. class. For member checking, the researcher also sent back the interpretation and analysis of transcripts to participants to read and confirm. For the students, the researcher asked for help from teachers to read together with them in case the students could not understand. Lastly, it was audited by the auditor, who was an education specialist.

Research Findings

The research question that guided this study was “How do the executives, teachers, parents, and students perceive or experience hybrid learning in Banwangthong Wattana Primary School?” In answering this question and understanding how all stakeholders perceived and experienced hybrid learning in primary school, which was the combination of learning onsite and online. Based on the collected data, the first emergent theme was the concern for the class attention of the students, with a subtheme of the Attention Grabber technique and students’ concentration. The second theme that emerged was individual and team development. The last emergent theme was the concern for learning outcomes.

Theme 1: The Significance of Student Engagement in the Classroom

All parties agreed that onsite instruction was more effective than online instruction in capturing students' attention. They desired to maintain students' interest in the session. Students might pay more attention to students who were studying on-site, as instructors and pupils could readily pose and respond to questions, as well as conduct independent experiments. By utilizing an online game and the functionality of the meeting platform utilized by this institution, "Google Meet," for instance, the instructors attempted to devise and discover a novel method of engaging the students. For instance, they posed frequent questions and allowed the students to respond in the chat box. Concern was shared by all participants regarding student attention.

“Teaching on site, we had to prepare in terms of equipment for children to experiment with. But if it's online, we had to prepare a video clip on that experiment along with a teacher explanation, and the video clip should be exciting to make the students enjoy it.”

Teachers always came up with new techniques to draw student attention.

“Some teachers had to dress weirdly to make the students enjoy before going into subject.”

Teaching online was new for many teachers. They didn't have the absolute right technique or method for catching attention. They always created a new technique. Using technology was one of the most difficult endeavors. Teachers shared positive perceptions and experiences, showing excitement for creating new techniques.

“Once I dressed like a cartoon, and the student liked it. The students were very enjoined and laughed a lot. But They had too much fun. I took almost 10 minutes to bring their attention to the subject. So, this technique might not work. I had to find other techniques.”

Theme 2: Students' concentration.

The student's concentration emerged as a significant concern during conversations with parents. Long into the online course, the student was unable to keep up. Parent stated that

“My daughter could not sit long, she always walked to the refrigerator to find some snack or go to the washroom, never sit still. I believe that she would never done this if it was an on-site class. She might be afraid of the teacher”

Teachers were also concerned about this, and they found it difficult to make the students concentrate for the whole online class. She stated that

“I saw that online learning was not suitable for children. The disadvantage was a matter of the concentration in class. Assumed that 50 minutes class, we got only first fifteen minutes to keep them learn.”

Most participants shared negative perceptions and experiences towards online learning in terms of concentration in the online class.

Theme 3: Advancement of Pedagogical and Technological Proficiencies

Due to the advent of hybrid learning in primary schools in Thailand because of COVID-19, adjustments had to be made by school administrators, instructors, pupils, and guardians. Analysis of interviews with informants unveiled that the development of technological and instructional competencies to facilitate online learning was a central theme. The principal's academic assistant endeavored to establish online course instruction. The teachers focused on technology development skills as well as instruction design to serve online learning. School and home sought more collaboration to develop online experiment classes. An Academic Assistant Principal organized computer training classes for teachers by the computer teacher as he stated that

“After the meeting, we agreed the use GOOGLE MEET as a program for teaching online, I talked with the computer teacher to train and assist other teachers in using this program”.

They also shared knowledge of other computer programs and applications that can help in teaching online. Besides sharing knowledge and self-development, the teacher stated that

“I also learned from the students. They were very good at technology. They taught me about changing background.”

Both teachers shared positive perceptions and experiences towards technology being a part of their learning experiences. Teachers believed that experience with emerging technology was needed to improve their teaching in online classes now and in the future. Students shared the perception that the technology could help them enjoy learning online.

“I liked the application Wonder Subtraction Grade that the teachers used for students to solve mathematical problems. I enjoy playing it.”

One educator said that online learning revitalizes my engagement and excitement.

“I had been teaching for 8 years for on-site class only sometimes it's quite repeated. but for the last 2 years of a hybrid class, it was particularly challenging for me I had to develop technology skills and class instruction online. It's very challenging for me”

The parent shared an understanding of the COVID-19 situation causing online learning. The parent was willing to collaborate with teachers to design the instruction of laboratory class for her child's learning as she stated that

“I prepared experiment materials for children to learn science at home. Sometimes, we enjoy doing it together following the teacher from an online class.”

The informants shared their perceptions and experiences in the Development of instruction and technology skills in different ways with the same goal of supporting students' online learning.

Observation

The purpose of the observation was to provide support for themes 1 and 2, which were student engagement in the classroom and concentration. Upon observing third-grade students' online science courses, the researcher discovered that a significant number of students were unable to maintain focus for more than ten to fifteen minutes before shifting their attention or frequently averting their gaze from the screen. This observational data may also provide support for the parent's remark.

Conclusion

The study presents the perspectives of executives, teachers, parents, and students on the incorporation of technology in a hybrid learning environment within a primary school setting. The educators and parents expressed significant worry about the level of student engagement and concentration during online instructional sessions.

Teachers employed several strategies to captivate their students' attention. Numerous scholarly articles and academic publications about pedagogy consistently assert that students' level of attentiveness tends to diminish within the initial 10 to 15 minutes of a presentation. As exemplified by Benjamin, L. S. (2002:1) assertion, during the commencement of a lecture, the majority of students exhibit a high level of attentiveness, which typically endures for approximately 10 minutes. According to Davis, F. D. (1993: 475-487), there is a tendency for student attention to diminish after a duration of 10 to 15 minutes during lectures. The teachers endeavored to find a method to capture the students' interest.

Hence, the study revealed that the Academic Assistant Principal and teachers who exerted significant effort in engaging students in online classes and maintaining their focus were highlighted as key factors. One of the biggest challenges encountered in online education for elementary school children was the issue at hand. However, the perspectives of the interviewees provided indications that technology may offer a potential solution to this issue through the utilization of online games and applications. Education programmers can design and create various software applications aimed at enhancing student engagement and focus during online educational sessions.

Another notable discovery was the observation of collaborative efforts among all stakeholders in the development of online training. The mom has shown a willingness to support her child's participation in an online laboratory lesson. The individuals comprehended the need to assist one another. Teachers have also enhanced their technological competencies. The objective of the teachers was to enhance their pedagogical abilities to effectively incorporate technology into instructional practices and gain an understanding of the student's perspective on this integration.

There was a significant imperative to provide continual training to educators to ensure the efficacy of technology integration inside the hybrid classroom. According to Washington et al. (2020:3), the provision of training has the potential to enhance responsibility and foster sustained growth in the utilization of learning management systems by literacy teachers. Additionally, it can facilitate the adoption of effective pedagogical strategies.

Discussion

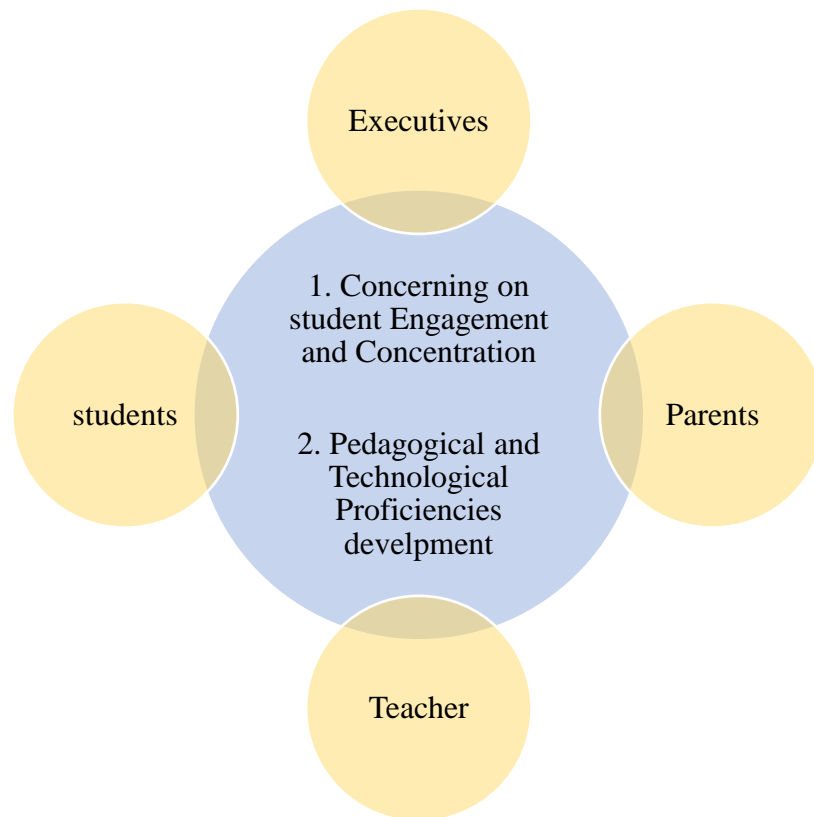
One of the benefits associated with online learning is its ability to provide students with the flexibility to learn at any given time and location, while also allowing them to review and revisit course materials as needed. Nevertheless, the lack of direct supervision from teachers in online learning environments may lead to increased susceptibility to distractions among students.

The focus on students is of utmost importance as it has a considerable impact on their learning outcomes. Sustaining a high level of attention among students during e-learning activities over a prolonged duration poses a formidable challenge (Chen, C. M. and Huang, S. H., 2014: 959–980).

The discoveries made in Theme 1 and 2 which are, "The Significance of Student Engagement in the Classroom", and "Students' Concentration" respectively emerged as a significant issue in the context of hybrid learning at Banwangthong Wattana Primary School. Extensive research and development efforts have been dedicated to the exploration and advancement of attention-aware technology. Two regularly utilized attention measures were employed to evaluate the level of attentiveness exhibited by a student. One measure utilized in the study was an attention scale, which consisted of a series of questions that were administered to the learner.

Another approach is the development of an attention-aware system that aims to determine a learner's degree of attention by analyzing human actions (Ba, S. O. & Odobez, J. M., 2018:16-33) or measuring physiological signals (Belle et al., 2012:1). The educational institution has the potential to implement and utilize attention-aware technology within the context of online learning.

The synthesized themes can be represented in a diagram, as shown in Figure 1, to illustrate the findings for all relevant stakeholders.



Figure, 1: Perspective on Hybrid Learning at Banwangthong Wattana Primary School

Recommendation

The results align with the researcher's conviction that hybrid learning is conducive to educational progress. Hybrid learning encompasses both advantages and limitations within its learning format. This presents a valuable opportunity to leverage technology to enhance the quality of education. In addition to enhancing the digital pedagogy of the institution (Milton, M., 2013:72-97), the significance of human resource development (HRD) and organization development (OD) cannot be understated. Human Resource Development (HRD) encompasses the process of enhancing the skills and knowledge of instructors through up-skilling and re-skilling, as well as facilitating a transition in leadership. In the interim, organizational development (OD) will undertake the task of diagnosing and subsequently redesigning the institution to effectively facilitate the implementation of digital pedagogy inside the educational setting.

Nevertheless, the forthcoming suggestion related to further study is to the assessment of the educational outcome. The utilization of the grounded theory approach is applicable in conducting the investigation.

Secondly, when considering the matter, the educator expressed their disapproval of online education due to their appreciation for children. "I greatly enjoy engaging in interactions with children". This statement suggests the potential for conducting more research at Banwangthong Wattana Primary School to investigate the optimal point of benefit between online and onsite classes, as well as to determine the appropriate balance between the benefits

of human interaction and technological approaches. This research might be conducted using action research

Finally, further research can be conducted at other schools that share a comparable setting to Banwangthong Wattana Primary School. This would enable the exploration of different discoveries and similarities, which can then be utilized to construct a model.

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