Reform Practice and Effect Analysis of Blended Teaching in the Public Psychology Course for Normal Students

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Abstract

Aligned with Outcome-Based Education (OBE) reforms in teacher-education institutions, this study implemented an online–offline blended model in a General Psychology course and empirically examined student satisfaction. Two intact classes of 2024-cohort normal teachers served as an experimental group (blended instruction) and a control group (conventional in-person lectures). Post-instruction comparisons were conducted on course satisfaction, self-reported learning outcomes, and the final theoretical exam. Results indicated high overall satisfaction; relative to the control group, blended instruction yielded significantly higher learning-outcome ratings and exam scores. These findings support blended delivery as a viable approach to advancing OBE-aligned competencies in teacher education.

Keywords: blended teaching, psychology course, practice and effect

1. Introduction

Amid nationwide accreditation of teacher-education programs and the growing adoption of Outcome-Based Education (OBE), curricula are shifting from knowledge transmission to competency development. As a compulsory foundation course, Public Psychology must satisfy dual aims—general education and professional formation—while contending with reduced contact hours, heterogeneous student backgrounds, and fragmented learning data (Qu Dongxu, 2016; CAI Wenbo & Liu Junli, 2022). Building on OBE, this study integrates online and offline modalities to design, implement, and evaluate a course that is backward-designed from clearly specified outcomes.

2. Current Challenges in Teaching Public Psychology

2.1 The Current Situation Problems of Students in Class

The teaching content is complex. The public psychology course is highly theoretical, with abstract terms, numerous and scattered knowledge points, and great learning difficulties. Students often resist because they can't understand or apply it. Teachers mainly focus on lectures, emphasizing theory over practice, and the course falls into the

embarrassing situation of being unpopular (Liu Jing, 2016; Xie Teng & Yang Yun, 2021).

The learning purpose of students is not clear. Normal university students need to master psychological theories and apply them to practice. However, there are students from liberal arts, science, and vocational courses. Some science and vocational course students find the theory boring and difficult to remember, resulting in a fear of difficulties (Peng Mingfang, 2009). Therefore, it is necessary to help students clarify their learning purposes and enhance their learning initiative.

The assessment system is imperfect. The traditional closed-book examination leads teachers to focus on theoretical explanations and students to focus on last-minute cramming for the final exam, which is not conducive to the mastery of basic knowledge, the improvement of practical abilities, and the development of innovative thinking.

2.2 Problems Existing in Current Offline and Online Teaching

The teaching mode is single and outdated, emphasizing theory over practice. Classroom teaching mainly focuses on teachers' lectures, with a straightforward form and a lack of diversified methods such as experiments and discussions, resulting in the disconnection between theory and practice. Students often feel that "learning is difficult to be applied" (Zhang Xue & Yin Zhixiao, 2019). At the same time, the practice of simply reducing theoretical class hours to increase practice in teaching reform has not effectively improved students' abilities, but instead weakened the theoretical depth (Yang Shuo, 2016). This situation ultimately dampens students' learning initiative and enthusiasm.

Modern teaching methods and traditional teaching methods have not been effectively combined. The application of multimedia has brought a series of teaching reforms to this public course, which is obvious to all. However, to a certain extent, it has led to the ineffective combination of modern teaching methods and traditional teaching methods. Some students take notes in class by copying the courseware or taking pictures with their mobile phones, which easily results in little effect on students' mastery and internalization of knowledge, and the phenomenon that their learning and thinking about theory remain on the surface.

The effect of pure online teaching is not ideal, and the recognition from teachers and students is not high. Due to problems such as the inability to replicate the real class situation due to network transmission issues, imperfect interactive functions, and low self-awareness of students in online teaching, research shows that nearly 50% of teachers and students still believe that offline teaching has a better learning effect, and no more than 10% think that online learning has a good effect (Shen Zigang, 2022).

3. Method

3.1 Participants and Design

Participants were four intact classes of normal education students taught by the same instructor at a university. Two classes formed the experimental group (n = 126) receiving OBE-aligned blended instruction; two classes formed the control group (n = 139) receiving conventional in-person instruction. Online tools in the control condition were limited to materials distribution and assignment submission.

3.2 Instructional Procedures

3.2.1 Blended (Experimental) Condition

3.2.1.1 Select the Appropriate Teaching Platform

Based on the actual situation of the open course and the actual situation of school resources, this teaching activity will be implemented through the combination of Chaoxing Learning Platform and Tencent Meeting live streaming. Chaoxing Learning Online provides students with a wealth of teaching resources, including teaching syllabuses, teaching calendars, teaching courseware, teaching videos and other teaching documents; Modules that guide students to learn independently, such as learning introduction, self-test, and knowledge expansion; Interactive areas such as topic discussions and in-class exercises. In addition, technologies such as Chaoxing Learning Platform and Tencent Meeting can also record complete teaching activities (Luo Xian, 2019; Zhang Haixia, 2021).

3.2.1.2 Design Teaching Content

Unitize the teaching content. In strict accordance with the curriculum standards, analyze the psychology teaching content and the background of online teaching and students' online learning, and determine the teaching content for each class based on students' acceptance ability as a teaching unit. Clarify the teaching objectives of each unit, and then

determine the teaching approach and key and difficult points. Use this as chapter points to build a course knowledge graph system on the Chaoxing Learning Platform.

The teaching of knowledge points is refined. Based on the analysis of the previous questions, in order to solve the problem of fragmented knowledge points that students have responded to frequently, and in combination with the actual needs of the teacher qualification examination and professional certification, the psychology knowledge points are refined into specific task points in the teaching design, and tasks are distributed to students on the Chaoxing Learning Platform at different time points according to the course progress.

Modularize the learning path teaching. On the Learning Platform, modules such as learning introduction, learning objectives, learning content (with teaching materials, electronic lesson plans, videos, courseware), in-class practice tests, and knowledge expansion (after class) are provided.

3.2.1.3 Offline Teaching Tasks and Enriched Teaching Methods

Offline teaching task-driven. Before the project began, the research team designed eight practical investigation tasks in advance based on the requirements of practical ability, covering common hot issues in students' psychological development. With the help of Learning Pass, students were randomly divided into 8 groups, each choosing one survey task, and after completing the corresponding learning content, they conducted the survey and formed a report. Teachers ask questions and provide feedback on the spot, promptly correcting the problems and the psychological knowledge behind them.

Offline classes enrich teaching methods: In addition to using traditional multimedia technology, they also combine the Learning Pass platform to conduct real-time topic discussions and viewpoint sharing. Moreover, they leverage the online platform's technology to share classroom game activities, making learning enjoyable. They guide the teaching with intuitive and vivid methods, making it easier for students to understand and stimulating their thirst for knowledge and innovative thinking.

3.2.1.4 Diversified Assessment Methods

Homework and tests are not the purpose of teaching in themselves, but a means to achieve teaching (Xu Yun et al., 2016). Blended teaching courses focus on learning outcomes as well as formative assessment. Both classroom participation assessment and group cooperative learning assessment, along with a weighted combination of online tests, can serve as evidence of students' participation in learning and also reflect their academic progress (Han et al., 2020). At the same time, timely feedback on the evaluation results can also give students a clearer understanding of their own learning outcomes.

3.2.2 Control Group Teaching Method

The control classes received face-to-face lectures and standard practice assignments without structured online self-study. Before the course begins, teachers systematically teach theoretical and practical content in the traditional way, without arranging online self-study sessions. The instructors, class hours, teaching content and focus of the theoretical and practical classes were consistent with those of the experimental group. After the relevant teaching was completed, practical homework was assigned after class. Students are required to complete the homework in the traditional presentation form. After the teacher grades the homework, it records common and individual problems, explains the problems in the homework, responds to students' questions on the spot, and asks questions and interacts appropriately. Instructor, contact hours, and content coverage matched the experimental group.

3.3 Measures

Course satisfaction. A researcher-developed scale assessed four dimensions—teaching resources (4 items), course planning (3), content (4), and methods (3)—on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree); higher scores indicate higher satisfaction.

Learning outcomes. A researcher-developed scale measured knowledge acquisition (4 items), skills/ability gains (4), and professional identity (3) on the same Likert format.

Theoretical exam. Measured by the unified closed-book "theory score" (out of 100) at the end of the course.

3.4 Statistical Analysis

Analyses were performed in SPSS 27.0. Descriptive statistics summarized outcomes. Between-group differences were examined with independent-samples t-tests (α = .05). Where

appropriate, we report t(df), p.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

A total of 265 valid cases were retained (experimental n = 126; control n = 139; 96 male, 169 female). Means suggested advantages for the experimental group on learning outcomes, satisfaction, and exam scores (see Table 1).

Table 1. Group Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD)

Group	Experimental		Control	
	M	SD	M	SD
Learning outcomes	34.81	4.576	30.15	6.281
Satisfaction	71.29	9.324	67.32	11.836
Grades	82.78	7.519	78.00	9.249

4.2 Group Comparisons

Independent-samples t-tests indicated significant between-group differences favoring blended instruction for learning outcomes and exam performance, the results showed (see Table 2) that there were significant differences in self-assessment scores of learning outcomes and theoretical grades between the experimental group and the control group. This indicates that the blended teaching model, while ensuring that students' mastery of theoretical knowledge is equivalent to traditional teaching, also enhances students' self-perceived learning gains and value perception.

In terms of teaching satisfaction, the overall satisfaction score of the experimental group was significantly higher than that of the control group, as shown in Table 2, which indicates that the blended teaching reform has a promoting effect on improving students' course satisfaction and online learning experience.

Table 2. Comparison of each indicator between the two groups

	t	df	p
Learning outcomes	7.158	265	<0.001
Satisfaction	4.830	265	<0.001
Grades	3.167	265	<0.005

5. Discussion

Blended instruction aligned with OBE likely improved outcomes via several mechanisms. First, backward-designed objectives clarified performance expectations and decomposed complex concepts into actionable tasks, which can scaffold self-regulation and generate mastery experiences. Second, diversified learning activities increased time-on-task and supported multiple pathways to understanding. Third, formative assessment with timely feedback may have strengthened motivation and engagement (Xu Yingli, & Fang Hua, 2022; Wang Chuang & Chen Chen, 2025); Finally, collaborative inquiry fostered both cognitive elaboration and social integration, which are positively associated with learning in higher education.

Limitations include the need for further construct validation of satisfaction and outcome scales, lack of process data analytics, and single-institution sampling.

6. Conclusion

An OBE-aligned blended model in Public Psychology for normal students yielded higher satisfaction and improved self-reported learning outcomes and exam performance compared with conventional lectures. Future work should integrate learning analytics and multi-institution samples to optimize design features and validate effects at scale.

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