

The impact of hybrid learning in educating Tamil educator and learner relationship



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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study are to identify the Tamil educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning in urban and rural areas and to compare the Tamil educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning between urban and rural areas. Technology has become a part of life throughout the world. It has shrunk the world. People become closer and closer due to the invention of technology. It has become a part of all fields including education. Schools started using various methods of teaching and learning with technology. Computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, and applications are some of the gadgets used in education. Online teaching, blended learning, and hybrid learning also came to exist. The findings of studies in hybrid learning explain that the cooperation of all parties including teachers is a factor in Tamil teaching with ICT. The new teaching method has influenced the involvement of students, high attendance rate, assignment delivery, and student behavior; the challenges and strengths of hybrid learning and the flexibility of hybrid learning. The findings of the present study show that there is a relationship between Tamil educators and learners in urban and rural Tamil schools which is the impact of hybrid learning. For the present study, data were collected from urban and rural schools in Perak State, Malaysia in which hybrid learning is implemented. The collected data were analyzed based on the two objectives of the study. The findings of the present study show that there are relationships between Tamil educators and learners in urban and rural Tamil schools which is the impact of hybrid learning.

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1. Introduction

Technology makes work easy. Due to this, more and more educational institutions come forward to invest in technology (Raja and Nagasubramani, 2018). This enhances teaching and learning from different perspectives. A gap in teaching and learning arose during the pandemic situation and it is filled with hybrid technology. The education field didn't hesitate to introduce hybrid teaching and learning. The teaching which takes place for the students who are physically present in the classroom and for the students who join the class through the web

platform, at the same time, can be termed hybrid teaching. There are many education methods including massive open online courses (MOOCs). It has attracted the enrolment of millions of people (Chan et al., 2022). Still, hybrid learning is used worldwide. Klimova and Kacetl (2014) explained hybrid learning has also become one of the successful learning strategies. Almost all the classrooms consist of modern high equipment which is essential for hybrid learning. Hybrid learning is implemented in many Tamil schools in Malaysia. Shanmugam and Balakrishnan (2019) mentioned a strong ICT utilization culture is applied in the teaching and learning in rural Tamil vernacular schools which can be used as a multi-stakeholder practice.

1.1. Hybrid learning and its impact

Hybrid learning is commonly used in many educational institutions. Hence, it is called an

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educational method or model. Through this model, some students attend class physically, and other students join the class virtually from their convenient places simultaneously. It can be also said that hybrid learning is a teaching approach or method where teachers teach in person and students at home attend through video conference platforms at the same time. Even there is another method called the learning study method. This can be utilized in hybrid learning. Wood (2012) illustrated the strengths and challenges of this learning method. The hybrid method is a good method of teaching and learning which provides a facility for students who are unable to attend class in person and who can learn remotely from home. Such environment creates enthusiasm for them to learn.

Many educational institutions came forward to shift to hybrid learning for flexibility. Alnajdi (2014) explained hybrid learning allows a flexible approach to the learning process performed collaboratively by the student, the teacher, and the participating experts or institution. Flexibility in the sense, of a flexible learning schedule, flexibility in teaching modes, flexibility in how learners engage with their learning materials, and flexibility in collaboration and communication between learner and their educators. Another impact is, it influences the involvement of the students in many aspects. Sapian et al. (2021) identified that the new teaching method has influenced the involvement of students, high attendance rate, assignment delivery, and student behavior. Moreover, hybrid learning provides the opportunity to bring the educator and learner closer. The intimacy between them increases through academic discussions. Due to this, the learners will be able to do the assigned presentations, group work, and fieldwork without any issues like shyness, fear, etc. The learners will also be eager in answering the questions asked in the class. Even reader-response theory can be applied through this hybrid learning. Learners can read and provide their responses to the educators. Rahimipour (2021) recommended the incorporation of this theory into the university curriculum for better teaching and learning. All these provide an extra advantage for educators and learners to form a meaningful and academic relationships. Further, learners who learn through video conference platforms (online learning) have a lot of freedom. They have the freedom to learn from their own location of their choice. They also have the freedom to reread the learning materials any number of times at any stage or step. Moreover, the learners will have the freedom to communicate freely with their educators. They can clarify any type of doubt without any hesitations. The learners who are best at self-management and independent learning or self-learning will prosper with these freedoms.

1.2. Tamil educator and learner relationship

Educator and learner relationships are essential in the teaching and learning process. No accepted

definitions can be given to this relationship. In traditional teaching methods, creating and maintaining educator and learner relationships are hard to identify. Only the students who perform well have such relationships in educational institutions.

1.2.1. Traditional teaching and learning

The traditional teaching and learning methods or approaches are mostly teacher-oriented, where students are taught to sit and listen. The theories, philosophies, principles, and so on often continue with the lecture-based model. The traditional method, group work, discussion, question sessions, and group solving problems are a part of it. These don't proceed with the true interaction with the teachers. Moreover, the teacher provides exercises as classwork or homework and corrects them, and explains the mistakes if any. Also, the teacher punishes the students if they misbehave in class. In such activities, the teacher doesn't create relationships. Sitting and listening doesn't make enthusiasm among the students. The relationship between the educator and learner won't be much. Ritter and Hancock (2007) stated in their study that classroom activities cannot provide relations. The educator and learner relationship largely lies in the educational context or situation.

1.2.2. Hybrid learning

When new methods of technology came to exist in classroom teaching and learning, the situation changed. Now, computer-based teaching technology, i.e. hybrid learning is constantly used in the teaching and learning process. Due to hybrid learning methods, the traditional teaching situation has changed. Usually, educators and learners have relationships to excel in their educational institution and some have relationships to excel in their studies only. However, good relationships between the educator and the learner will help to ensure quality education. It also provides a good chance for the learners to achieve quality education. The relationship of educator and learner relationships is distinguished from other relationships in various aspects. Tiberius et al. (2002) said that educator and learner relationships vary from other relationships by various characteristics. The researchers say, 'An imbalance of power between the teacher and the learner, the relative vulnerability and discomfort of the learner compared to the teacher, and the constraints imposed on the relationship by social convention, by policies and norms of the educational institutions and by perspectives of teaching and learning held by educators.' Tamil school educators and learners are not exempted from this relationship. A study among undergraduate teachers by Ismail and Khalib (2020), said that there should be unity. Thannimalai et al. (2022a) said in their study, that the cooperation of all parties is a factor in Tamil teaching with ICT.

1.3. Objectives

This study is based on two objectives such as, to identify the Tamil educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning in urban and rural areas and to compare the Tamil educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning between urban and rural areas.

2. Method

The research is based on Tamil educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning. Hence, the descriptive research method is selected for this study. Siedlecki (2020) illustrated descriptive study looks at the characteristics of a population, identifies problems, that exist within a unit, an organization, or a population, or looks at variations in characteristics or practices between institutions or even countries. With the descriptive method, a structured questionnaire is framed to collect data. This research tool contains a set of elements that are used to collect information from the respondents. The questionnaire is revised with comments and suggestions from experts in this field. Siedlecki (2020) said that a descriptive study can be descriptive comparative and can compare two different groups. This study compares the educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning between rural and urban areas by descriptive comparative.

The data for this study are collected from secondary schools in two regions such as urban areas and rural areas where hybrid teaching is familiarized. The urban and rural areas are selected from Perak State, Malaysia. Secondary schools are selected from both urban and rural areas after a thorough investigation and confirmation that they use a hybrid learning method. 52 educators (teachers) and 140 learners are identified and selected as informants for this study. A random sampling method is used to select the informants. Random sampling is one of the simplest forms of collecting data from the total population (Elfil and Negida, 2017). The 52 educators teach Tamil language and literature including language skills, Tamil grammar, comprehension, Tamil poetics, and many more. Out of the total number of 52

informants, 32 and 20 educators are from urban and rural areas respectively. Similarly, 102 learners are from urban and 38 are from rural areas. The total informants with details are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Informants

No.	Total informants	Urban	Rural
1	52 educators	32	20
2	140 learners	102	38

3. Data analysis and discussion

The collected data through the research tools are analyzed and the percentage is calculated using Microsoft Excel and SPSS software. The schools from urban and rural which teach using hybrid learning are selected. The analysis is based on the educators who have relationships with the learners through their teaching through the hybrid method. The number of educators in urban and rural, percentage, mean value, and T-score are calculated. Moreover, the analysis is done by comparing the educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning between urban and rural areas. Percentage, mean value, and T-score are calculated between urban and rural.

3.1. Identification of relationships

Close relationships are an essential aspect of societies' existence. Creating and maintaining meaningful and long-lasting relationships in the field of education is always challenging (Auger, 2018).

Data to identify the educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning are collected from 52 educators and 140 learners. The educators' relationship with the learner is identified. Out of the 52 educators selected, 32 are from urban schools and 20 are from rural schools. The details of the analysis are provided in Table 2. The analysis of the data shows that 30 and 20 educators from urban and rural schools respectively have relationships with the learners through hybrid learning. The percentages in urban schools are 96% and in rural schools are 100%. The mean value in percentage is 98.0% and the T-score is 49. This shows that most of the educators from urban and rural schools have relationships with learning in hybrid learning.

Table 2: Identification of relationships from educators

No.	Urban educators	percentage	Rural educators	percentage	mean value	T-score of urban and rural (percentage)
1	30	96.0	20	100	98.0	49

To know the levels of relationships among the educators and learners, 30 educators from urban schools and 20 from rural schools who already mentioned that they have a relationship with the learners are given a set of elements through a questionnaire. 3 different levels such as very intimate, less intimate, and very less intimate marked as level 1, level 2, and level 3 are provided in the questionnaire. The details of the levels of relationships are given in Table 3. The analysis of the

data for the urban schools show that 22 educators are at level 1, that is, they have very intimate relation, 6 at level 2 with less intimate, and 2 at level 3 with very less intimate. The percentage for level 1 is 73.3 %, level 2 is 20 % and level 3 is 6.7 % respectively. Similarly, the data analysis for the rural schools show that 17 educators are at level 1, that is, they have very intimate relation, 2 at level 2 with less intimate, and 1 at level 3 with very less intimate. The percentage for level 1 is 85 %, level 2 is 10% and

level 3 is 5%. The mean value for the relationship of educators and learners in percentage at levels 1, 2, and 3 are 79.15 %, 15.0 %, and 5.85 % respectively. Moreover, the T-score of urban and rural are

calculated as 13.52, 3, and 6.88 for level 1, level 2, and level 3 respectively. The analysis shows that educators have a very intimate relationship with the learners through hybrid learning.

Table 3: Educators' levels of relationships

Levels	Number of urban educators	Percentage	Number of rural educators	Percentage	Mean value (%)	T-score for urban and rural (%)
Level1	22	73.3	17	85.0	79.15	13.52
Level2	6	20.0	2	10.0	15.0	3
Level3	2	6.7	1	5.0	5.85	6.88

Identification of the learners' relationship with educators through hybrid learning in rural and urban schools is organized. A total number of 140 learners are selected from both urban and rural schools. Out of the 140 learners, 102 are from urban schools and 38 are from rural schools. The details of the analysis are provided in Table 4. The analysis of the data shows that 99 and 38 learners from urban

and rural schools respectively have relationships with the educators through hybrid learning. The percentages in urban schools are 97.0% and in rural schools are 100%. The mean value in percentage is 98.5 %. The T-score is 65.66. This shows that most of the learners from urban and rural schools have relationships with educators in hybrid learning.

Table 4: Identification of relationships among learners

No.	Urban learners	Percentage	Rural learners	Percentage	Mean value	T-score of urban and rural (%)
1	99	97.0	38	100.0	98.5	65.66

In order to identify the levels of relationships among the learners and educators, the procedure which is followed by the educators is adopted. The details of the levels of relationships are given in Table 5. The analysis of the data for the urban schools shows that 76 learners are at level 1, who have very intimate relations, 26 at level 2 with less intimate, and 0 at level 3 with very less intimate. The percentage for level 1 is 74.51 %, and level 2 is 25.49 % respectively. No learners are identified at level 3. Similarly, the data analysis for the rural schools show that 29 learners are at level 1, that is, they have

very intimate relation, 8 at level 2 with less intimate, and 1 at level 3 with very less intimate. The percentage for level 1 is 76.3 %, level 2 is 21.0 % and level 3 is 2.7% respectively. The mean value for the relationship between the learners and educators in percentage at levels 1, 2, and 3 are 75.4 %, 23.2 %, and 2.7 % respectively. The T-scores are 84.25, 10.35, and for levels 1, 2, and 3 individually. The analysis also shows that learners have very intimate relationships with educators through hybrid learning.

Table 5: Learners' levels of relationships

Level	Urban learners	Percentage	Rural learners	Percentage	Mean value	T-score for urban and rural (%)
Level1	76	74.51	29	76.3	75.4	84.25
Level2	6	25.49	8	21.0	23.2	10.35
Level3	0	0	1	2.7	2.7	1.0

3.2. Comparison of relationships

After the identification of the educator and learner relationships through hybrid learning in rural and urban schools, the study compared the relationships of the educator and learner found between urban and rural schools. The analysis of the comparison is carried out. The data relating to the relationships in urban schools are taken first and then the rural schools. In urban schools, 30 educators and 102 learners have relationships where as in rural schools 20 educators and 38 learners. The details of the analysis are provided in Table 6. The analysis compares the percentages of

the collected data. According to this, 96.0% of educators and 97.0% of learners from urban schools have relationships among themselves in hybrid learning, whereas 100% of rural schools' educators and learners have relationships among themselves in hybrid learning. Rural schools have a slight edge over urban schools' relationships. The mean values are calculated as 96.5% and 100% for urban and rural respectively. This comparison clearly shows that the relationships between educators and learners in rural schools are high than in urban schools.

Table 6: Comparison of relationships

No.	Urban/Rural	Educators (%)	Learners (%)	Mean value
1	Relationships in urban	96.0	97.0	96.5
2	Relationships in rural	100	100	100

The analysis has identified that the relationship between educator and learners are found in schools

with hybrid learning both in urban and rural areas. Thannimalai et al. (2022b) conducted a study on

teaching and learning with ICT and came out with the findings that there is a significant relationship between urban and rural areas. Moreover, the analysis of the data shows that relationships are essential in the teaching and learning process. Such relations will create enthusiasm and provides energy for both educators and learners. Tiberius et al. (2002) said that teacher-learner relationships enhance learning. The students who learn in hybrid should not hesitate to raise questions because there may be situations where doubts occur. To overcome such issues, a relationship between educators and learners is necessary. Various other researchers recommend having a relationship between them. Wannapiroon and Pimdee (2022) mentioned virtual classrooms should facilitate learners gaining methods which they have included educator-learner relationships. This study has identified the educator and learner relationship in hybrid learning. From the data analyzed, some educators and learners don't have a relationship in the classroom. Such educators and learners should change their minds or else it may cause issues among themselves. Even motivation can be given to them. Letchmanan and Saad (2021) recommend increasing the motivation among teachers. Tiberius et al. (2002) identified several aspects to solve the issues in the teacher-learner relationship. Flexibility, support and challenge, expertise and role modeling, communication, and accessibility are some of them. Moreover, the relationships enhance the learners' knowledge and skills. Osman (2015) in his research findings states that students enhance their knowledge and language skills through activities and tasks given by the teachers.

4. Conclusion

Based on the result of the research carried out on the impact of hybrid learning in identifying educator and learner relationships, it is found that most educators and learners have a very close relationship in hybrid learning. 98% of the educators from urban and rural schools have a relationship with their learners. Moreover, 98.5 % of the learners from urban and rural schools have a relationship with their educators. These results show that hybrid learning provides a way to improve and maintain relationships. Further, the comparison between the relationships between urban and rural schools through hybrid learning shows that rural schools (100%) have an edge over urban schools (96.5%). Thus, the study shows that educators and learners have relationships in hybrid learning. The study also recommends the teaching and learning process through the hybrid learning method becomes more ease for educators and learners. Educators should understand their duties and responsibilities as an educator through hybrid learning. The findings of the present study show that there is a relationship between Tamil educators and learners in urban and rural Tamil schools due to the impact of hybrid learning.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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