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**Research Article**

# Learners' Blended Learning Experience at Osias Colleges Incorporated

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**ABSTRACT**

This study utilized a descriptive research design to explore learners' experiences and challenges in blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated. It involved 248 students selected via convenience sampling and uses a researcher-developed questionnaire, validated by experts and pilot-tested with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.90, serves as the primary data collection tool. The study assessed learners' profiles and their blended learning experiences across engagement, flexibility, instruction quality, technical support, and collaboration. It also identified challenges and opportunities for improvement to enhance the program's effectiveness, using frequency, percentages, and mean for data analysis.

Most respondents in the study are first-year college students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Criminology. Overall, learners at Osias Colleges Incorporated report a positive experience with the blended learning modality. However, respondents identified significant challenges, including technical issues like software glitches and connectivity problems, as well as the need for personalized support. Opportunities for improvement are centered around five key components of blended learning: students' engagement, flexibility, quality of instruction, technical support and accessibility, and collaboration, all of which are intertwined with the challenges faced by learners.

To enhance the blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated, several strategies can be implemented. Incorporating interactive multimedia resources like videos, quizzes, and simulations can boost learner engagement. Implementing an accessible technical support system will address software and connectivity issues promptly. Finally, regularly assessing and refining the five key components of blended learning—engagement, flexibility, instruction quality, technical support, and collaboration—will ensure a more effective learning environment by addressing challenges proactively.

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## Background

Blended learning has emerged as a significant educational approach worldwide, combining the benefits of traditional face-to-face instruction with the flexibility of online learning. This study aims to explore learners' blended learning experiences at Osias Colleges Incorporated, focusing on key aspects such as engagement, flexibility, quality of instruction, technical support, accessibility, and collaboration.

Internationally, blended learning has been studied extensively for its impact on educational outcomes. For instance, in California, a study highlighted the potential of blended learning to enhance student engagement through interactive learning environments, although specific details of this study are not available in the provided references. In Canada, researchers emphasized the role of blended learning in improving student motivation, though specific details are not provided here. In Japan, the importance of technical support in blended learning was noted, emphasizing the need for reliable infrastructure to ensure seamless learning experiences. In China, the flexibility of blended learning for students with other commitments was emphasized, allowing them to manage their time more effectively. In Thailand and Singapore, while specific studies are not detailed, generally, blended learning has been recognized for its potential to enhance educational outcomes through personalized learning experiences. Other international studies include "Investigating the Effects of Blended Learning on Students' Learning Outcomes in Higher Education" by Wang et al. (2021), and "The Impact of Blended Learning on Students' Engagement and Motivation in Higher Education" by Al-Shammari et al. (2022).

In the Philippines, blended learning has been adopted as a response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Dela Cruz et al. (2022) noted in their study that while blended learning offers flexibility, it also presents challenges related to internet accessibility and quality of instruction, particularly in rural areas. Bautista et al. (2021) emphasized in their research the importance of effective collaboration between educators and students to ensure successful blended learning experiences. Other studies include Garcia et al. (2021), who explored the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing student engagement and academic performance, Reyes et al. (2022), who highlighted the challenges faced by educators in implementing blended learning during the pandemic, and Santos et al. (2021), who discussed the role of blended learning in improving student outcomes in higher education.

Locally, in Tarlac Province, Osias Colleges Incorporated has been implementing blended learning since 2019. Neighboring institutions like Tarlac State University and Tarlac Agricultural University adopted blended learning during the pandemic, highlighting its potential as a flexible educational approach in times of crisis.

Engagement in blended learning environments is influenced by factors such as interactive content and flexible learning schedules. Internationally, in "The Impact of Blended Learning on Students' Engagement and Motivation in Higher Education," Al-Shammari et al. (2022) found that interactive elements in blended courses can significantly enhance student engagement. Wang et al. (2021) noted in their study that personalized learning experiences can improve engagement in blended settings. Khan et al. (2021) highlighted the role of interactive learning environments in enhancing engagement, though specific details are not provided here. In the Philippines, Bautista et al. (2021) highlighted in their research the role of educator-student interaction in maintaining engagement in blended settings. Dela Cruz et al. (2022) emphasized in their study the importance of engagement strategies in blended learning environments. Garcia et al. (2021) explored how interactive activities enhance engagement in blended learning. Locally, while specific studies are limited, the importance of interactive activities for engagement is likely to apply, and Osias Colleges Incorporated focuses

on creating engaging learning environments through interactive content.

Flexibility is a key benefit of blended learning, allowing students to manage their time more effectively. Internationally, Wang et al. (2021) noted in their study that flexibility in scheduling is crucial for students with other commitments. Al-Shammari et al. (2022) highlighted in their research the flexibility of blended learning in accommodating different learning styles. Zhang et al. (2022) emphasized the flexibility of blended learning for students with work or family responsibilities. In the Philippines, Dela Cruz et al. (2022) emphasized in their study the flexibility of blended learning as a significant advantage during the pandemic. Bautista et al. (2021) noted in their research that flexibility allows students to balance academic and personal responsibilities. Reyes et al. (2022) highlighted the flexibility of blended learning in accommodating different student needs. Locally, Osias Colleges Incorporated's early adoption of blended learning highlights its flexibility, and the institution has implemented flexible scheduling to accommodate students' needs.

The quality of instruction in blended learning is influenced by factors such as teacher training and curriculum design. Internationally, Al-Shammari et al. (2022) highlighted in their research the need for well-designed curricula to support effective blended learning experiences. Wang et al. (2021) emphasized in their study the importance of teacher training in delivering high-quality blended instruction. Khan et al. (2021) noted the role of curriculum design in enhancing the quality of blended learning, though specific details are not provided here. In the Philippines, Dela Cruz et al. (2022) emphasized in their study the importance of teacher preparation in delivering high-quality blended instruction. Bautista et al. (2021) highlighted in their research the need for effective curriculum design in blended learning. Garcia et al. (2021) explored how teacher training impacts the quality of instruction in blended settings. Locally, Osias Colleges Incorporated focuses on ensuring quality instruction through teacher training and curriculum design, investing in professional development for educators to enhance their skills in blended learning.

Technical support and accessibility are critical for the success of blended learning programs. Internationally, Wang et al. (2021) underscored in their study the importance of reliable technical infrastructure to ensure seamless learning experiences. Al-Shammari et al. (2022) noted in their research the challenges related to technical support in blended learning environments. Zhang et al. (2022) emphasized the need for accessible technology to support blended learning. In the Philippines, Dela Cruz et al. (2022) noted in their study challenges related to internet accessibility, particularly in rural areas. Bautista et al. (2021) highlighted in their research the importance of reliable technical support for successful blended learning experiences. Reyes et al. (2022) discussed strategies for improving technical support in blended learning. Locally, Osias Colleges Incorporated has invested in improving technical support to ensure seamless learning experiences and has implemented measures to enhance internet accessibility for students.

Collaboration between educators and students is essential for effective blended learning. Internationally, Al-Shammari et al. (2022) highlighted in their research the importance of interactive and collaborative activities in blended courses. Wang et al. (2021) noted in their study that collaborative learning environments enhance student outcomes in blended settings. Khan et al. (2021) emphasized the role of educator-student interaction in fostering collaboration, though specific details are not provided here. In the Philippines, Bautista et al. (2021) emphasized in their research the role of collaborative learning environments in enhancing student outcomes in blended settings. Dela Cruz et al. (2022) highlighted in their study the importance of collaboration between educators and students for successful blended learning experiences. Garcia et al. (2021) explored how collaborative activities enhance student engagement in blended learning. Locally, Osias Colleges Incorporated fosters collaboration through interactive learning envi-

ronments and encourages educator-student interaction to enhance collaboration and engagement.

Internationally, learners in blended learning environments often face several challenges. One of the primary issues is the lack of technical support and reliable infrastructure, which can hinder access to online resources and disrupt the learning process (Nguyen et al., 2022). Additionally, learners may struggle with self-regulation and time management, as blended learning requires a high degree of autonomy and discipline to balance online and offline components effectively (Liu, 2021). Furthermore, some learners may experience difficulties in navigating digital tools and platforms, which can lead to frustration and decreased engagement (Patel, 2023). Cultural and language barriers can also pose challenges, particularly in multinational educational settings where learners may have varying levels of proficiency in the language of instruction (Kim & Lee, 2022). Lastly, the absence of face-to-face interaction can sometimes lead to feelings of isolation and disconnection from peers and instructors (Taylor & Brown, 2024).

In the Philippines, learners in blended learning environments encounter unique challenges. One significant issue is the inconsistent availability of internet access and reliable technology, particularly in rural areas, which can limit students' ability to participate fully in online components (Dela Cruz & Santos, 2022). Additionally, many Filipino learners may lack the necessary digital literacy skills to effectively utilize online platforms and tools, which can hinder their ability to engage with course materials (Rivera & Garcia, 2023). Financial constraints also play a role, as some students may not have access to personal devices or internet services at home (Reyes & Lopez, 2022). Furthermore, the cultural preference for face-to-face interaction can sometimes make it difficult for students to adjust to online learning environments (Santos & Dela Cruz, 2023). Lastly, the lack of clear communication from educators about expectations and support can exacerbate these challenges, leading to confusion and frustration among learners (Garcia & Reyes, 2024).

At Osias Colleges Incorporated, learners in blended learning programs may face specific challenges related to the institution's context. One common issue is the need for improved technical infrastructure to support seamless online learning experiences. Students may encounter difficulties with accessing digital resources due to bandwidth limitations or outdated technology. Additionally, some learners might struggle with adapting to the blended model if they are accustomed to traditional teaching methods, requiring additional support to navigate online platforms and manage their time effectively. The institution's efforts to enhance digital literacy among students and provide robust technical support are crucial in addressing these challenges.

The study aimed to explore and understand the blended learning experiences of students at Osias Colleges Incorporated. This encompasses key aspects such as their engagement, the flexibility of the learning environment, the quality of instruction they receive, the level of technical support provided, accessibility of resources, and the degree of collaboration fostered within the blended learning setting. The study aims to provide insights into how blended learning impacts students locally, specifically within the context of Osias Colleges Incorporated, which can inform strategies for enhancing the effectiveness and overall quality of the institution's blended learning program.

## Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to describe the learners' blended learning experience and challenges encountered at Osias Colleges Incorporated of first trimester academic year 2024-2025.

Specifically, it sought to provide answers to the following questions :

1. How are the respondents' profile described on terms of :
   1.1. year level; and
   1.2. program enrolled?
2. How is the learners' experience in blended learning modality at Osias Colleges Incorporated described along :
   2.1 students' engagement;
   2.2. flexibility;
   2.3. quality of instruction;

2.4. technical support and accessibility; and
2.5. collaboration?
3. How can the challenges encountered by the learners be described?
4. What opportunity for improvement could be proposed?

## Conceptual Framework

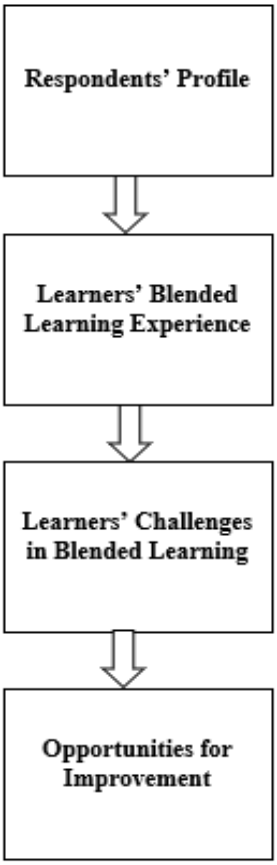


*Figure 1. Paradigm of Learners' Blended Learning Experience*

It began by examining learners' profiles based on year level and program, which served as a foundation to contextualize their experiences and challenges. The framework then delved into dimensions of blended learning experiences, including student engagement, flexibility, quality of instruction, technical support and accessibility, and collaboration. These dimensions were informed by frameworks like the Community of Inquiry (CoI), which emphasized teaching presence, social presence, and cognitive presence as critical for meaningful learning interactions.

It also considered challenges encountered by learners, such as technical difficulties, limited access to resources, and psychological barriers like academic stress. These challenges were influenced by individual psychological factors such as academic buoyancy, which highlighted resilience and motivation as key to overcoming obstacles in blended learning environments. Finally, the study aimed to propose opportunities for improvement based on identified challenges. This involved faculty development, improved technical infrastructure, or strategies to boost student engagement and resilience. By integrating these elements, the conceptual framework provided a structured approach to analyze learners' experiences and inform actionable improvements for blended

learning practices at Osias Colleges Incorporated.

## Methods

This research employed a descriptive survey design at Osias Colleges Incorporated to explore learners' experiences and challenges in blended learning. Data was gathered from 248 undergraduate and graduate students across various programs using a researcher-developed questionnaire through convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire, which demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.90), covered respondents' profiles, blended learning experiences, and challenges faced. Expert validation ensured the instrument's accuracy and relevance.

Data collection was conducted via Google Forms, distributed through department group chats after securing permission from the school president. The data obtained was analyzed using frequency, percentages, and mean to summarize findings regarding respondents' profiles, experiences, and challenges in blended learning. A scoring protocol was used to interpret blended learning experiences and challenges, ranging from "Strongly Disagree/Poor/Not Serious" to "Strongly Agree/Very Good/Very Serious," providing a basis for actionable recommendations.

## Result and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the study's findings, providing insights into students' demographic profiles, their experiences and challenges with blended learning, at Osias Colleges Incorporated. The analysis explores student engagement, highlighting both benefits and obstacles in blended learning environments, with the goal of informing recommendations to enhance educational delivery and improve student outcomes.

### *3.1. Profile*

Data profiling is crucial in this study as it provides accurate and comprehensive insights into the demographic profiles of students at Osias Colleges, Incorporated, thereby informing critical decisions for program improvement and development.

#### *3.1.1. Year Level*

In higher education, year level refers to the specific stage of academic progression a student is in, typically corresponding to their year of study within a degree program. This classification is often based on the number of credits or semester hours completed rather than the actual time spent in college, as seen in systems where students are classified as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors based on their earned credits (Smith, 2020). Year level is crucial for organizing students into cohorts, ensuring they receive appropriate academic support and are eligible for certain courses and assessments tailored to their stage of study. It also helps in administrative tasks such as tracking student progress and planning educational programs (Johnson, 2019).

*Table 1. Year Level*

| Indicator | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Third Year | 71 | 28.60 |
| Second Year | 67 | 27.00 |
| First Year | 110 | 44.40 |
| **Total** | **248** | **100** |

Data reveals a notable distribution of students across different year levels at Osias Colleges Incorporated. The majority of students, comprising 44.40% (110 students), are in their first year, indicating a significant influx of new students. This high percentage suggests that the institution is attracting a substantial number of freshmen, which could be due to effective recruitment strategies or the college's reputation. In contrast, third-year students make up 28.60% (71 students), and second-year students constitute 27.00% (67 students). The relatively lower percentages of second and

third-year students might indicate higher dropout rates or slower progression through the program.

### *3.1.2. Program Enrolled*

Osias Colleges Incorporated offers a diverse range of programs in higher education. At the graduate level, the institution provides two key programs: the Master of Arts in Education with majors in Administration and Supervision, Early Childhood Education, and Guidance and Counseling, and the Master in Business Administration. In the undergraduate programs, students can pursue Bachelor of Secondary Education with majors in English, Mathematics, and Filipino, Bachelor of Elementary Education, Bachelor of Science in Criminology, and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with majors in Financial Management and Marketing Management. Additionally, to support non-education graduates aspiring to become teachers, Osias Colleges offers a Teacher Certification Program.

*Table 2. Program Enrolled*

| Indicator | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Master of Arts in Education | 62 | 25.00 |
| Master in Business Administration | 18 | 7.30 |
| Bachelor of Secondary Education | 37 | 14.90 |
| Bachelor of Elementary Education | 21 | 8.50 |
| Bachelor of Science in Criminology | 76 | 30.60 |
| Bachelor of Science in Financial Management | 14 | 5.60 |
| Bachelor of Science in Marketing Management | 8 | 3.20 |
| Teacher Certification Program | 12 | 4.80 |
| **Total** | **248** | **100** |

The program enrollment data at Osias Colleges Incorporated shows that the Bachelor of Science in Criminology is the most popular program, attracting 30.60% of students. The Master of Arts in Education is the leading graduate program, with 25.00% of enrollments. Business programs, such as the Master in Business Administration and Bachelor of Science in Marketing Management, have lower enrollment rates. The Teacher Certification Program draws a small but notable 4.80% of students. These trends highlight areas where the institution might focus on expanding or adjusting its offerings to better meet student and market needs.

## *3.2. Learners' Experience in Blended Learning Modality at Osias Colleges Incorporated*

Osias Colleges Incorporated implemented blended learning modalities before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019. This strategic shift was part of a broader educational trend that recognized the benefits of combining traditional face-to-face instruction with digital learning tools. Blended learning environments have been shown to enhance student engagement, flexibility, and overall learning outcomes by providing a more personalized and interactive educational experience (Means et al., 2010; Glazer, 2012; Cleveland-Innes et al., 2017). At Osias Colleges, this approach likely allowed students to adapt more effectively to the technological integration and social engagement aspects of blended learning, as observed in similar contexts where students demonstrate increased adaptability and self-regulation in such environments (Hrastinski, 2019; Bernard et al., 2014).

### *3.2.1. Students' Engagement*

In the context of blended learning, students' engagement refers to the observable behaviors and attitudes that indicate active participation and investment in the learning process. Engagement can be measured through metrics such as regular attendance in face-to-face sessions, active participation in online discussions, completion of assignments, and seeking additional learning resources (Tsalitsatun Ni'mah et al., 2024).

*Table 3. Students' Engagement in Blended Learning (N=248)*

| Statement | Mean | Description | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I feel actively engaged during online components of my blended learning courses. | 3.29 | Agree | Good |
| The combination of online and in-person classes keeps me motivated to learn. | 3.29 | Agree | Good |
| I participate more in discussions when they occur in a blended format. | 3.29 | Agree | Good |
| I find the interactive elements of online learning (e.g., quizzes, forums) engaging. | 3.34 | Agree | Good |
| I believe that blended learning enhances my overall interest in the subject matter. | 3.29 | Agree | Good |
| I am encouraged to ask questions during both online and face-to-face sessions. | 3.02 | Agree | Good |
| The variety of learning activities in blended courses keeps me interested. | 3.28 | Agree | Good |
| I often find myself exploring additional resources related to my blended courses. | 3.34 | Agree | Good |
| My attention span is better maintained in a blended learning environment. | 3.28 | Agree | Good |
| I feel that my contributions are valued in both online and in-person settings. | 3.38 | Agree | Good |
| **Grand Mean** | **3.30** | **Agree** | **Good** |

The data from Table 3 indicates a positive engagement of students in blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated, with a grand mean of 3.30, suggesting that students generally agree with the statements regarding their engagement. This aligns with previous research indicating that blended learning can enhance student engagement by providing a combination of online and in-person learning activities, which keeps students motivated and interested in the subject matter (Monteiro & Morrison, 2014; Pérez-Marín & Pascual-Nieto, 2011). For instance, students reported feeling actively engaged during online components, participating more in discussions, and finding interactive elements like quizzes and forums engaging (mean scores ranging from 3.28 to 3.38). These findings are consistent with studies showing that blended learning can improve learning efficiency and effectiveness, particularly through increased interaction and engagement (Yen & Lee, 2011; Monteiro & Morrison, 2014).

The positive engagement observed in Table 3 can be attributed to several factors, including the variety of learning activities and the encouragement to explore additional resources, which are key components of effective blended learning environments (Bouilheres et al., 2020; Islam et al., 2022). Moreover, emotional engagement plays a crucial role in learning outcomes, as it directly affects academic performance by shaping behavioral and cognitive engagement (Raver, 2002; Engels et al., 2021). The fact that students feel their contributions are valued in both online and in-person settings (mean score of 3.38) highlights the importance of fostering a sense of belonging and emotional engagement in blended learning environments (Hasnine et al., 2023; Fu & Qiu, 2023). Overall, these findings support the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing student engagement and motivation, which are critical for academic success.

### *3.2.2. Flexibility*

Flexibility in blended learning refers to the ability of students and instructors to adapt the learning process to suit different needs and schedules. Flexibility is achieved through the combination of face-to-face and online learning components, allowing students to manage their time effectively and access learning materials

at any time (FrontCore, 2024). This flexibility is particularly beneficial as it provides students with more autonomy over their learning pace and environment, potentially increasing the quality and quantity of learning outcomes.

*Table 4. Flexibility in Blended Learning (N = 248)*

| Statement | Mean | Description | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Blended learning allows me to manage my time more effectively. | 3.54 | Strongly Agree | Very Good |
| I appreciate the flexibility of accessing course materials online at my convenience. | 3.49 | Agree | Good |
| The option to attend classes either in-person or online suits my lifestyle. | 3.44 | Agree | Good |
| I find it easier to balance my studies with other commitments due to blended learning. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| The ability to review recorded lectures is beneficial for my learning process. | 3.49 | Agree | Good |
| I can adjust my study schedule based on my personal and academic needs. | 3.48 | Agree | Good |
| Online components reduce the need for commuting, saving me time. | 3.58 | Strongly Agree | Very Good |
| I feel less stressed about deadlines because of the flexibility offered by blended learning. | 3.45 | Agree | Good |
| The structure of blended courses allows me to learn at my own pace. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| I can easily revisit complex topics through online resources provided in blended courses. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| **Grand Mean** | **3.49** | **Agree** | **Good** |

The data from Table 4 highlights the flexibility of blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated, with a grand mean of 3.49, indicating that students generally agree with the statements regarding flexibility, which is interpreted as "Good." This aligns with the broader benefits of blended learning, which include allowing students to manage their time more effectively and access course materials online at their convenience, both of which are rated as "Good" (mean scores of 3.54 and 3.49, respectively). The flexibility in blended learning enables students to balance their studies with other commitments more easily, as they can adjust their study schedule based on personal and academic needs, also rated as "Good" (mean scores of 3.47 and 3.48). This flexibility is a key advantage of blended learning, as it provides students with the autonomy to learn at their own pace and revisit complex topics through online resources, which is also interpreted as "Good" (Tomar, 2024; Learning A-Z, 2022).

The positive perception of flexibility in blended learning is corroborated by research indicating that this approach allows students to access a variety of media for multimodal learning, reducing the need for commuting and saving time, which is rated as "Very Good" (mean score of 3.58) (NIU, n.d.; Whatfix, 2022). Moreover, blended learning reduces stress about deadlines by offering a flexible structure that accommodates different learning styles and needs, which is interpreted as "Good" (mean score of 3.45). This flexibility is crucial in enhancing student engagement and motivation, as it allows learners to take ownership of their learning process and manage their time effectively, contributing to improved learning outcomes and student satisfaction, which is generally rated as "Good" (Simplilearn, 2024; LearnDash, 2024). Overall, the flexibility offered by

blended learning is a significant factor in its effectiveness, contributing to improved learning outcomes and student satisfaction.

### *3.2.3. Quality of Instruction*

Quality of instruction in blended learning involves the effective integration of traditional teaching methods with digital tools to enhance learning outcomes. It encompasses factors such as curriculum design, teacher expertise, and the use of technology to deliver high-quality educational content (Mintii, 2023). Effective curriculum design is essential for increasing engagement and improving learning outcomes in blended environments by ensuring that both face-to-face and online components are pedagogically balanced and adaptive.

*Table 5. Quality of Instruction in Blended Learning (N = 248)*

| Statement | Mean | Description | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| The quality of instruction in blended courses meets my expectations. | 3.49 | Agree | Good |
| My instructors effectively utilize both online and face-to-face teaching methods. | 3.48 | Agree | Good |
| I receive adequate support from my instructors during both online and in-person sessions. | 3.58 | Strongly Agree | Very Good |
| The resources provided for online learning are of high quality. | 3.45 | Agree | Good |
| I feel that instructors are well-prepared for both online and face-to-face classes. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| Feedback from instructors is timely and constructive in blended courses. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| Instructors encourage active participation during both online and in-person sessions. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| The integration of technology enhances the quality of instruction I receive. | 3.44 | Agree | Good |
| Course materials are relevant and up-to-date with current trends and practices. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| I believe that my instructors are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. | 3.49 | Agree | Good |
| **Grand Mean** | **3.48** | **Agree** | **Good** |

Data from Table 5 indicates that students at Osias Colleges Incorporated generally perceive the quality of instruction in blended learning as "Good," with a grand mean of 3.48. This is reflected in various aspects, such as the effective utilization of both online and face-to-face teaching methods, the provision of high-quality resources, and timely feedback from instructors, all of which are rated as "Good" (mean scores ranging from 3.44 to 3.49) (Table 5). The integration of technology is also seen as enhancing the quality of instruction, which aligns with research highlighting the importance of technological integration in blended learning environments (Panigrahi et al., 2024). Moreover, the fact that instructors are perceived as well-prepared and knowledgeable about the subjects they teach further supports the "Good" quality of instruction experienced by students.

The positive assessment of instructional quality in blended learning is corroborated by studies emphasizing the importance of instructional design, technological integration, and learner engagement in enhancing the effectiveness of blended learning (Panigrahi et al., 2024; Müller et al., 2023). The provision of adequate support from instructors and the encouragement of active participation during both online

and in-person sessions are critical factors contributing to the "Good" quality of instruction. It has been shown that effective blended learning environments require careful consideration of these elements to ensure that students receive high-quality educational experiences (Almahasees & Qassem, 2022; Nikou & Maslov, 2023).

### *3.2.4. Technical Support and Accessibility*

Technical support and accessibility in blended learning refer to the availability and usability of digital tools and platforms that facilitate seamless interaction between students, instructors, and learning materials. This includes ensuring that students have access to reliable internet connections, user-friendly learning management systems, and technical assistance when needed (Tsalitsatun Ni'mah et al., 2024). Technical support is critical for minimizing barriers to engagement and ensuring that all students can fully participate in blended learning activities.

*Table 6. Technical Support and Accessibility in Blended Learning (N=248)*

| Statement | Mean | Description | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I have access to the necessary technology to participate in blended learning effectively. | 3.50 | Strongly Agree | Very Good |
| Technical issues are resolved quickly when they arise during online classes. | 3.50 | Strongly Agree | Very Good |
| The online platforms used for blended learning are user-friendly and accessible. | 3.43 | Agree | Good |
| I receive sufficient training on how to use the technology required for blended courses. | 3.35 | Agree | Good |
| I feel confident using digital tools for my blended learning activities. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| Support services (e.g., IT helpdesk) are readily available when needed. | 3.49 | Agree | Good |
| Online resources are accessible across different devices (e.g., laptop, tablet, smartphone). | 3.48 | Agree | Good |
| I have reliable internet access that supports my participation in online classes. | 3.58 | Strongly Agree | Very Good |
| Tutorials or guides on using course platforms are easily accessible and helpful. | 3.45 | Agree | Good |
| The technical requirements for participating in blended courses are clearly communicated. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| **Grand Mean** | **3.46** | **Agree** | **Good** |

Table 6 highlights the technical support and accessibility in blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated, with a grand mean of 3.46, indicating that students generally agree with the statements regarding these aspects, which is interpreted as "Good." Students reported having access to necessary technology, reliable internet access, and user-friendly online platforms, all of which are rated as "Good" or "Very Good" (mean scores ranging from 3.43 to 3.58) . This aligns with research emphasizing the importance of technological infrastructure and accessibility in blended learning environments. For instance, studies have shown that the use of inclusive design principles in learning management systems (LMS) can enhance accessibility by providing features such as automatic closed captioning and built-in accessibility checkers (D2L, 2022). In this case, OCI adopted the Moodle as its Learning Management System since 2020. Moreover, ensuring that online resources are accessible across different devices is crucial for maintaining flexibility and equity

in blended learning (The Learning Accelerator, 2024).

This good experience by learners as to technical support and accessibility is supported by LinkedIn (2023) as the role of technology in making blended learning more accessible. For example, strategies such as providing offline resources and ensuring reliable internet access can help address barriers faced by students with limited internet access. Additionally, the availability of support services like IT helpdesks and accessible tutorials or guides on using course platforms are essential for maintaining a seamless learning experience, which is rated as "Good". The integration of assistive technologies and the use of cloud-based platforms can further enhance accessibility for students with special needs (Hyperspace, n.d.).

### *3.2.5. Collaboration*

Collaboration in blended learning involves the interaction and cooperation among students, teachers, and peers to achieve shared learning goals. This can be facilitated through online discussions, group projects, and face-to-face interactions, enhancing the learning experience by promoting shared knowledge and mutual support (Mintii, 2023). Collaborative activities are essential for fostering a supportive learning environment that encourages active participation and engagement in blended learning settings.

*Table 7. Collaboration in Blended Learning (N=248)*

| Statement | Mean | Description | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I have ample opportunities to collaborate with peers in both online and face-to-face settings. | 3.40 | Agree | Good |
| Group projects in blended courses enhance my learning experience. | 3.49 | Agree | Good |
| I feel comfortable reaching out to classmates for help or collaboration in a blended format. | 3.48 | Agree | Good |
| Online discussion forums facilitate meaningful interactions with my peers. | 3.58 | Strongly Agree | Very Good |
| The blend of online and in-person interactions fosters a sense of community among students. | 3.40 | Agree | Good |
| Collaborative tools (e.g., shared documents, video calls) enhance group work effectiveness. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| Peer feedback is encouraged and valued in both formats of the course. | 3.47 | Agree | Good |
| I enjoy working with diverse groups of students through blended learning activities. | 3.33 | Agree | Good |
| Social interactions during face-to-face sessions complement my online experiences well. | 3.33 | Agree | Good |
| Networking opportunities with peers are enhanced through the blended format. | 3.31 | Agree | Good |
| **Grand Mean** | **3.43** | **Agree** | **Good** |

Table 7 reveals the collaboration of students in blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated, with a grand mean of 3.43, indicating that students generally agree with the statements regarding collaboration, which is interpreted as "Good." This is reflected in various aspects, such as having ample opportunities to collaborate with peers in both online and face-to-face settings, which is rated as "Good" (mean score of 3.40) (Table 7). Group projects in blended courses are also seen as enhancing the learning experience, which aligns with research highlighting the importance of collaborative activities in blended learning environments (Alsalhi et al., 2021; Brenya, 2022). Moreover, online discussion forums facilitate

meaningful interactions with peers, which is rated as "Very Good" (mean score of 3.58). This finding is consistent with studies showing that blended learning fosters a sense of community among students by combining online and in-person interactions (Burna & Surabhi, 2020; Dubey et al., 2023).

The learners' collaboration in blended learning is confirmed by Brenya (2022) & Dubey, et.al (2023) as they emphasized the role of collaborative tools and peer feedback in enhancing group work effectiveness, both of which are rated as "Good" (mean scores of 3.47) (Table 7). Blended learning encourages students to engage in collaborative activities, share insights, and construct their own knowledge, leading to enhanced learning outcomes. The blend of online and in-person interactions not only fosters a sense of community but also provides diverse networking opportunities, which are essential for academic and professional development (Aisha & Ratra, 2022; Bokolo et al., 2022).

### *3.3. Challenges Encountered by Learners in Blended Learning Modality at Osias Colleges Incorporated*

Learners in blended learning modalities often encounter several challenges that impact their educational experience. One of the primary issues is the lack of technological proficiency and access to reliable internet connections, which can hinder effective engagement with online components (Nobis et al., 2024; Angwaoma et al., 2024). Additionally, students face difficulties with self-directed learning, time management, and maintaining focus due to distractions from social media and other digital platforms (Aristovnik et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021). Financial constraints and limited access to digital resources also pose significant barriers, affecting students' ability to fully participate in blended learning environments (Nobis et al., 2024; Medrano, 2024). Furthermore, the shift to blended learning has highlighted the need for improved teacher training and support to ensure successful implementation (Angwaoma et al., 2024; Medrano, 2024).

*Table 8. Challenges Experienced by Learners in Blended Learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated*

| Statements | Mean | Description | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| I struggle with accessing reliable technology and internet, which makes it difficult for me to participate in online classes. | **3.45** | **Agree** | **A Challenge** |
| I find it hard to stay motivated and self-disciplined without the structure that traditional classroom settings provide. | **3.47** | **Agree** | **A Challenge** |
| I encounter technical issues, such as software glitches and connectivity problems, which disrupt my learning process. | **3.50** | **Strongly Agree** | **A Serious Challenge** |
| I feel isolated due to the lack of social interaction that typically occurs in face-to-face classes. | **3.28** | **Agree** | **A Challenge** |
| I am having a hard time adapting to the mixed mode of online and in-person learning. | **2.22** | **Disagree** | **Slightly a Challenge** |
| My home environment is filled with distractions that hinder my ability to concentrate on my studies. | **2.27** | **Disagree** | **Slightly a Challenge** |
| I do not feel equally engaged in online discussions, leading to uneven participation and a less effective learning experience for me. | **3.32** | **Agree** | **A Challenge** |
| I have experienced delays in receiving feedback from instructors, which can slow down my academic progress and leave me feeling unsupported. | **3.40** | **Agree** | **A Challenge** |

| Statements | Mean | Description | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Blended learning insufficiently addresses my needs for personalized support, leaving me and others behind. | **3.58** | **Strongly Agree** | **A Serious Challenge** |
| Accessing essential support services, such as tutoring or technical assistance, is often more challenging for me in a blended format compared to traditional learning environments. | **3.45** | **Agree** | **A Challenge** |
| **Grand Mean** | **3.09** | **Agree** | **A Challenge** |

Data from Table 8 highlights the challenges experienced by learners in blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated, with a grand mean of 3.09, indicating that students generally agree with the statements regarding challenges, which are interpreted as "A Challenge." Key challenges include difficulties in accessing reliable technology and internet, staying motivated and self-disciplined, and encountering technical issues such as software glitches and connectivity problems (mean scores ranging from 3.28 to 3.50). These are confirmed by Muhria et.al. (2023) in their study titled "Students' Challenges of Blended Learning Model in Higher Education" & Tshabalala, et.al. (2014) in their study titled "Challenges of blended learning in higher education" that technological issues and self-regulatory challenges are significant barriers in blended learning environments. For instance, studies have shown that students often face difficulties with technology, including navigating multiple interfaces and dealing with connectivity problems, which can hinder their learning experience.

The challenges identified are parallel to the findings Akbulut (2009) & Smith & Hill (2019) that the lack of personalized support and delays in receiving feedback from instructors are common issues that can leave students feeling unsupported and hinder their academic progress (mean scores of 3.58 and 3.40, respectively). These findings are consistent with studies highlighting the importance of adequate instructional support and faculty motivation in blended learning environments. Moreover, the digital divide and unequal access to technology can exacerbate challenges, as some students may have less exposure to current technology, leading to uneven participation in online discussions (BenQ Education Asia Pacific, 2021).

### *3.4. Opportunities for Improvement*

The effectiveness of blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated is grounded in five key components: students' engagement, flexibility, quality of instruction, technical support and accessibility, and collaboration. Additionally, understanding the challenges learners face in this modality, such as technical issues and motivation, is crucial for its successful implementation and for enhancing overall learning outcomes.

***Opportunities for Improvement***

*Table 5B. Results of the Language Evaluation Tool*

| Areas of Concern | Opportunities for Improvement |
|---|---|
| Students' Engagement in Blended Learning | • Conduct research in developing or finding out Innovative Teaching Strategies/Approaches that suits in Blended Learning Modality. |
| Flexibility in Blended Learning | • Institutionalized through a policy the flexible scheduling options for face-to-face instruction and online sessions. |
| Quality of Instruction in Blended Learning | • Develop faculty training programs focused on effective blended learning pedagogies. Regularly review and update course materials (Syllabus and Course Outline) to ensure relevance and alignment with current trends. |

| Areas of Concern | Opportunities for Improvement |
|---|---|
| Technical Support and Accessibility in Blended Learning | • Hire additional IT support system with quick response times for resolving software glitches and connectivity problems.<br>• Offer an academic support services through the Office of the Student Affairs, such as tutoring.<br>• Subscribed to collaborative tools like GoogleMeet, Microsoft Office, etc and provide free and individual access among students and faculty to encourage peer feedback and peer-led team learning activities to enhance collaboration. |

## Conclusion

The study concludes that most respondents are first-year Bachelor of Science in Criminology students, and their experience with blended learning at Osias Colleges Incorporated is generally positive. However, technical and personalized support in blended learning pose significant challenges. Opportunities for improvement lie in enhancing student engagement, flexibility, instruction quality, technical support and accessibility, and collaboration, while addressing the challenges encountered in these key areas.

## Recommendation

To build upon the successful blended learning model at Osias Colleges Incorporated, it is recommended to integrate more interactive multimedia resources to boost learner engagement and to establish a readily available technical support system that offers personalized assistance, effectively addressing software and connectivity issues for a seamless experience. Furthermore, a proactive and regular assessment and refinement of the five key components—student engagement, flexibility, instruction quality, technical support, and collaboration—is essential to anticipate and mitigate challenges, ensuring continuous improvement of the blended learning environment.

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