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**Blending and flipping learning: A journey in innovative  
curriculum design and delivery**

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A case study exploring teachers' understandings and  
perceptions of blended, flipped learning

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## **Abstract**

Historically, lecturing has been the dominant form of teaching within tertiary institutions, however the past decade has seen a shift of focus away from the lecturer as the source of all knowledge. As learning and teaching approaches change to meet the needs of a changing society, research is needed into how the academic staff involved in these new methods understand these approaches and deal with them. There is a move towards pedagogies that are more authentic, contextual and social in nature, as these are perceived as more appropriate to equip learners with the skills they will need to participate in a constantly changing societal context.

This research study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions and experiences of staff involved in creating and facilitating a curriculum innovation involving new courses that were blended and flipped.

Twenty-five staff members from a tertiary institution in New Zealand took part in the study. Participants held a range of roles and were all actively involved in the curriculum innovation. This thesis adopted a qualitative case study research approach using information gained from a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

While understandings of blended and flipped learning were varied among participants, the perceived benefits of a blended, flipped model included flexibility, increased digital literacy, opportunities for the improvement of self-directed learning skills among students, the freeing up of class time for exploration, the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills and allowing learners to lead and direct their learning. The challenges in design were deciding on the best use of online and face-to-face spaces, designing engaging online activities, having knowledge of appropriate online tools and platforms to use and time. Facilitation challenges included managing and building student's self-directed learning skills, keeping students engaged online, giving timely feedback to students, and managing group work.

By gaining valuable insights into teachers' understandings of the blended and flipped methods that they were working with, these findings may help to inform institutions using a similar context.

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## **Contribution**

I, the researcher, undertook all aspects of this study under the direct guidance of my supervisors. This entailed selecting the appropriate research design, the data collection and analysis, and the publishing of the findings in this thesis.

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