

Convergence of Online and Face-to-Face Education for Economics: Adopting Past Experience in the New Normal

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Economics is a discipline that takes a different approach from other social sciences. In general, students enrolled to the Faculty of Arts tend to have a natural distress for computer literacy and quantitative spheres of study. The motives for the experiment emerged to address two fundamental constraints faced by students specializing in Economics: poor understanding of basic mathematical derivations and the lack of basic computer literacy for data analysis. These shortcomings are critical as they directly influence the education attainment and career development. Therefore, Blended Learning (BL) tools were adopted in Econometrics Modules with the objective of achieving solutions to the above research problem. Hence, this study is based on an experimental research. The Rotation Model was used when introducing BL to the modules. This facilitated the requirements of the module to embed both classroom learning and computer lab sessions when designing the lesson plan. Further, it utilized both the Station Rotation and Flipped Classroom technique when lessons were conducted. Initially, the module content which was completely based on classroom teaching was transformed to incorporate BL tools. Students were provided insights in adopting online learning by introducing them to handle the Learning Management System (LMS) more frequently. In executing the course plan, videos were uploaded capturing practical exercises, which encouraged students to follow instructions and to do activities in their own pace. Both in-class and offline teaching techniques enabled students to complete assessments and engage in a continuous learning process in a smooth and student-centered pace in contrast to the past practices. Announcements were made on LMS on a regular basis. However, there were a few inevitable limitations as students were getting used to online methods; therefore, instructions had to be clear and precise. Learner satisfaction was evaluated through the feedback received from students during and after sessions through which students requested more lessons to be conducted in an active and practical manner as planned and discussed.

Keywords: Blended Learning (BL), Economics, Flipped classroom, Learning Management System (LMS), Rotation model