

Enhancing Student Engagement in Public Administration Courses: Insights from a Flipped Classroom Approach – A Case Study

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Abstract: The flipped classroom is a teaching strategy and a type of blended learning that flips the traditional learning environment by delivering instructional content, often online, outside of the classroom. It moves activities, including those traditionally considered homework, into the classroom. The flipped classroom model has been praised for providing a more personalized and interactive learning experience, promoting student-centred learning and collaboration, and allowing for better use of class time. However, it also requires students to work independently and can lead to problems if students do not complete their preparation before class. In addition, the model depends on the availability of technology and internet access for all students, which can be a limitation in some institutions.

The environments tested in our study included two courses in public administration that were conducted entirely online. The total of 36 students were surveyed before and after the courses, with the survey focusing on perceived and discovered factors and barriers to the flipped classroom. These included individual learning at home based on video lectures at their own pace, which requires self-discipline, motivation and time management. In addition, group activities conducted online with peers participating in various activities and tasks.

The results show that the students were partially familiar with the flipped classroom model and were also familiar with the online learning process as they had previously completed all their courses online or in blended learning. They appreciate the opportunity to learn at their own pace and watch lectures more than once. They find online interaction and activities less suitable. In terms of online delivery of courses, they fear social isolation the least, which contradicts their negative attitude towards online group activities. This could be related to the psychological behavioral orientation of the younger generations. Finally, in relation to their current study activities, they fear a high level of tasks and the associated workload, but on the other hand expect to be able to complete the course with up to 4 hours of work per week.