FLIPPING FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS: EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A NOVEL TEACHING APPROACH IN POSTGRADUATE LAW MODULES

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Abstract

Flipped classroom is a novel model that helps students develop their learning skills of deep learning and critical analysis in postgraduate law program. The students benefit from flipped classroom by fully engaging in learning experience through team working and pre-designed class activities. However, teaching practice shows that the flipped model is still underutilized and underexplored in the higher education law teaching. This study aims to fill this gap by developing a model that can provide a foundation for further research and practice for flipped learning in higher education.

The purpose of this study was four-fold and aimed to compare flipped classroom effective rating with:
1) different communicative learning stages.
2) student final grades,
3) student overall module satisfaction, and
4) module flipped classroom effectiveness rating.

The participants in the study consisted of three postgraduate law modules with over 60 postgraduate law students. Data was collected from students who completed module evaluation survey in each term. The flipped classroom was employed for the academic year 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 using both pre-class activities and in-class activities. Result shows that over 90% post graduate law students found the flipped classroom model to be either effective or very effective. Students who perceived effectiveness of the flipped classroom had no significant association to their academic performance in the course as measured by their final grade. However, students who found the flipped classroom to be effective were more likely to be satisfied with their learning experience.

All in all, the flipped classroom provided more opportunities for students to develop their study skills of critical thinking, considerably facilitate their learning experience by more effectively interact with and learn from their peers. Most importantly, the lecturer was given more flexibility to cover a wide range and depth learning materials, provide in-class applied learning opportunities based on problem-solving activities and offer timely feedback and guidance to students. Yet in my study, the flipped learning approach had its fair share of challenges, which were largely dependent on the use of and management of IT technology on Moodle module website. Despite these challenges, the flipped classroom is an effective teaching approach at the postgraduate level setting.

Keywords: Flipped classroom, critical analysis, engage, problem-solving learning approach, effective, learning experience.