

# *Research on Blended Teaching Effect of Western Economics Based on SPOC*

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**Abstract:** Blended teaching mode is regarded as the general trend of higher education teaching in the future, which arouses students' interest in learning and improves their learning efficiency. Based on SPOC, this paper takes Western Economics as an example to analyze the design and organization effect of online and offline blended teaching mode. Research shows that the blended teaching mode based on SPOC are improved in the expansion and communication of knowledge, team collaboration. The implementation of blended teaching mode improves students' learning enthusiasm, but there are still difficulties as follows: Online autonomous learning in blended teaching mode is not friendly for the students with poor self-control, and the interaction between teachers and students online is poor, the feedback is delayed, and the learning climate of offline is not strong. Thus, it puts forward suggestions to strengthen supervision function, improve the incentive system of platform interaction and strengthen the construction of teaching team.

## 1. Introduction

The State Council issued the 13th five-year plan for the development of national education, which proposed to make every effort to promote the in-depth integration of information technology on education and teaching, innovate teaching modes, and form a new networked ubiquitous learning mode with organic combination of online and offline by using a variety of methods, such as blended teaching in January 2017. The Ministry of Education issued the opinions on accelerating the construction of high-level undergraduate education and comprehensively improving talent training ability, which proposed to promote the revolution of classroom teaching, take students as the center, actively promote educational reforms, such as blended teaching, and build a teaching mode combining online and offline in October 2018. As the general trend of development in the field of education, blended teaching mode has been widely valued.

It usually has MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) or SPOC (Small Private Online Course) resources for the online part of blended teaching mode [1]. As an online teaching resource, SPOC is more targeted than MOOC, and takes fully into account the professional training goals of students using the course from the perspective of adaptability between the teaching objectives and the learning goal. The teaching practice effect of blended teaching with SPOC depends on the

participation and evaluation of the students in the blended teaching mode. This paper adopts the method of questionnaire survey to investigate the learning behaviour and learning effect of students after the implementation of blended teaching, analyses the difficulties faced by the current blended teaching through the results of the survey, and puts forward the corresponding solutions, in order to improve the quality of blended teaching and enhance students' learning enthusiasm and learning effect, It also provides a reference for the improvement of the blended teaching mode of other disciplines.

## **2. Research Design**

### **2.1. Research Object**

The survey results of this paper come from the Superstar platform, investigating students' behaviours in the implementation of blended teaching, their gains in the course, problems in the implementation of the blended learning and suggestions for the course construction, etc.

The research data were collected from students of Economics from 2018-2020 in the School of Economics and Management, Heilongjiang Bayi Agricultural University, including 59 male students and 131 female students.

### **2.2. Design of Blended Teaching Mode in Economics**

SPOC courses used in blended teaching are a teaching resource database co-produced by the Economics teaching and research group of the author. It includes recorded lectures, PPT courseware, problem banks, case studies, and other relevant and extension materials. The blended teaching is divided into three modules [2].

Preparation before class: Teachers push the task points designed, and students learn video and do exercises in this stage.

Offline courses: The teacher will explain the key and difficult points, the knowledge structure in this section, and the mistakes in exercises after class.

Review consolidation stage after class: In order to master students' classroom learning and improve their mastery for knowledge points, teachers design corresponding assignments for each offline course knowledge point and set up online discussion area for students to discuss.

Curriculum assessment: Assessment includes usual grades and final grades. The final score accounts for 70%, and the usual score accounts for 30%. The usual grades include video learning, homework and testing, and classroom interaction, and each section counts for one third of your usual grade.

### **2.3. Survey Results of Blended Teaching**

The survey shows that online and offline blended teaching methods have improved students' interest in learning, which is reflected in the following aspects.

First of all, the online autonomous learning enhances students' learning autonomy [3]. They can make use of fragmented time without being restricted by time and space [4]. At the same time, due to the abundant online resources, the learning resources carefully selected by teachers have widely expanded students' knowledge, which is very beneficial for students to better grasp and digest knowledge.

Secondly, it is most attractive that blended teaching can help students to consolidate knowledge points in time. It helps students consolidate the knowledge points in class by feedback training on the homework of offline courses. Even if there is a problem that you don't understand, you can

review the online video in time, which can not only consolidate the knowledge points, but also check and make up the deficiencies in time. According to the survey results taken back by the platform, students' learning enthusiasm has been significantly improved by the blended teaching mode. Sixty-five percent of the respondents thought that blended learning was helpful to their learning, conducive to the mastery of curriculum knowledge and mobilize their learning enthusiasm.

Thirdly, there is a discussion area on the SPOC platform. When students don't understand the problems, they can ask questions on the platform at any time, and they can also answer other people's questions, which provides a communication channel for students to master knowledge correctly.

Finally, part of the problems is that students need to study, analyse and discuss in groups in an offline course, which gives the course a collaborative atmosphere and makes the class more active.

### **3. Difficulties of Blended Teaching Mode**

Although the blended teaching mode has demonstrated its advantages in the expansion of knowledge, mobilization of learning enthusiasm [3], communication methods [5], teamwork and other aspects [5-6], there are still some dilemmas in the experiment of blended teaching mode.

#### **3.1. A Challenge for Learners with Poor Self-control**

Online learning is popular among college students in blended teaching courses because of its flexibility in time and space. However, compared with face-to-face communication, online teaching has reduced students' learning enthusiasm due to the lack of emotional interaction. Due to the inconsistency between teachers and students in time and space, it is difficult to control the quality of students' online learning after teachers push teaching tasks online. Because teachers can't supervise the learning of online courses as offline courses, online activities are completed by students' own self-control. Successful participation in blended learning courses requires several self-regulation skills: organization, discipline, time management, skills to use technology to support learning, and a sense of self efficacy to control your learning process [7]. Therefore, self-control is extremely important for the online part of blended learning. However, with the increasing online resources, there are many interference factors on the network, which is a challenge for students with poor self-control to complete offline learning consciously and with high quality.

However, with the increase of online resources, there are more interference factors on the Internet. It is a challenge for students with poor self-control to complete offline learning consciously and efficiently. According to the survey, fifty one percent of students think that there are so many interference factors on the internet that they could affect blended teaching effect. In addition, because it is difficult for teachers to supervise the learning process of students, there may also be the phenomenon of brushing classes and questions.

#### **3.2. Lacking of Online Interaction and Less Feedback Timely**

There are special discussion boards on the SPOC platform, which provide opportunities for teachers and students to discuss online. The purpose of setting up the discussion area is to facilitate students to publish their questions in real time. When the students encounter problems in learning, they can get answers from teachers and other students in time.

According to the survey data shows, students usually choose search engine as the first way to answer the questions, when students encounter problems. Followed by discussion between students. And there are more than sixty-two percent of the students choose discuss problems sometimes. The

survey indicates that the rate of students asking and answering questions online is low in the discussion area of the SPOC courses. There are two reasons for this. On the one hand, efficiency is the main reason. Compared with asking questions directly on SPOC platform, search engines get answers more quickly. On the other hand, as students live together every day, it is easier to face-to-face discussion. It also reflects the lack of interaction in the online learning process and the lack of timely feedback on questions.

When students ask questions in the discussion boards of the SPOC course platform, other students rarely answer the questions. On the one hand, instead of discussing problems in the discussion area, some students directly send private messages to teachers to answer questions; On the other hand, due to the lack of incentives for online interaction, students are not willing to actively discuss or answer questions, and rely more on teachers to answer questions. Which has a low utilization rate for the discussion area itself. Due to the difference in time and space between teachers and students, there isn't timely response on online problems. In the long run, fewer and fewer students ask questions on the online platform.

### **3.3. Poor Seminar Atmosphere**

In the offline seminar, the seminar atmosphere directly affects the teaching effect of the course. This influence is a matter of both teachers and students [8]. From the perspective of students, students don't have a good learning effect, and don't fully understand in online learning before class, so that they find it difficult to find a grasp for solving the problem, which leads to the following two consequences. Firstly, when a teacher presents a practical problem to be solved, it is difficult for students to accurately analyse, to give a reasonable explanation, especially to find the mechanism of economic problems, and to put forward countermeasures to solve the problem. Secondly, students are incapable of questioning other people's proposals. From the perspective of teachers, lacking of experience and ability in guiding students to analyse and solve problems, some teachers lack of sufficient guidance or lack of guidance skills. When students are unable to give answers, they will give answers directly. The two aspects lead to the poor atmosphere and effect of offline discussion.

## **4. Suggestions to Improve the Effect of Blended Teaching**

### **4.1. Strengthen Supervision**

For students with poor self-control, external intervention is needed to encourage them to complete online tasks on time. Firstly, teachers can view students' learning logs before completion of the task, and use the platform's reminder function to remind students who have not completed the task [9]. Secondly, the students who finish the task in time will be given bonus points. Finally, after the end of each chapter, the test should be timely. Chapter tests help students to understand their knowledge holes again and further consolidate knowledge points. These results will be counted into the usual score, so as to urge students to complete the learning task on time and efficiently.

### **4.2. Improving the Incentive Function of Online Interaction**

In order to encourage students to actively answer questions on the platform, teachers give thumbs up to students who answer correctly, and make it part of their regular performance assessment. More students will ask questions online when the questions can be answered quickly and correctly in the forum, but this requires a large platform, not just a small group of classes or administrative classes. Teachers should often check the discussion area, so as to achieve better

interaction between students and teachers [10].

### 4.3. Strengthen the Construction of Teaching Team

Teachers' knowledge reserve level and ability play an important role to lead the classroom in the implementation of blended teaching. This requires teachers to not only have enough skills to guide students to constantly think, in-depth discussion ability in an active atmosphere [8], but also have enough knowledge to respond to practical questions asked by students. Therefore, it is necessary for schools to make a certain plan for teachers' professional training in order to increase the ability of teachers in the use of advanced equipment, classroom organization methods and skills, and to build an excellent team of teachers.

## 5. Conclusions

The purpose of this paper is based on the teaching effect of SPOC's blended teaching practice of Western Economics, and put forward corresponding solutions to the dilemmas in practice. The following conclusions:

According to the survey, SPOC teaching method is recognized by most students due to its characteristics of strong pertinence, fragmented knowledge points and flexible learning time. However, there is little interaction, and the feedback of questions is not timely in the discussion area of SPOC; There isn't a high degree of self-discipline for some learns to learn. There is the ability and skills of both teachers and students, the learning and discussion atmosphere of the offline part of the course is not strong. Above of all affect the effect of blended teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the supervision and incentive function of teachers in course design, and strengthen the construction of teaching team.

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