

# Original Research

## The effectiveness of flipped classroom in the hospitality education

by Polina Ermolaeva and Paul Barron

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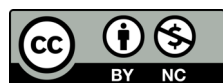
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*Focussing on a particular Swiss Hotel School, this research evaluates the student acceptance and overall effectiveness of the flipped classroom approach. The paper aims to evaluate the preference of adopting such an approach as the main teaching method for a range of undergraduate and postgraduate hospitality focused programmes and develop an understanding of students' awareness of the flipped method. Adopting a quantitative approach, 167 students took part in this study and specifically provided their perspectives of the flipped classroom approach, compared it with a more traditional teaching method and identified the benefits and drawbacks of flipped learning. The findings of the study suggest that students appreciate the reversed classroom as it appears that learners felt safe, engage, and motivated in a student-oriented environment under the guidance of a teacher. However, respondents also highlighted the importance of appropriate guidance and facilitation of the flipped classroom as well as recognising the additional engagement in material prior to attending class.*

**KEYWORDS:** *flipped classroom, flipped learning, hospitality student, zone of proximal development and scaffolding, student-oriented teaching, hospitality and tourism*



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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality (and wider – tourism) industry is a major contributor to most economies and has shown sustained and consistent growth in recent years. However, the global pandemic and associated lockdown and travel restrictions demonstrated the industry's vulnerability to external events. Most industry sectors are now showing signs of recovery and the demand for employees at all levels is growing rapidly. From a higher education perspective, impression of the industry as one that offers meaningful careers is slowly returning

and the demand for education programmes in this area is rebounding. The role of hospitality and tourism educators remains to fully prepare industry-ready graduates who possess the appropriate skills, knowledge, and attitude. The reality of continuing to provide higher education during the global pandemic, coupled with issues such as globalisation, technological advancement and generational shifts, have caused educators to reflect on how they develop graduates and caused a re-evaluation of teaching practices (Perman & Mikinac, 2014; Kim & Jeong, 2018). This has resulted in hospitality education

institutions considering moving away from traditional pedagogic practices and adopting alternative approaches (Deale et al., 2013; Rodriguez et al., 2019).

The Flipped Classroom approach was originally proposed by the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences in 1984 and practically applied in 2007 by Bergmann and Sams (2012). However, the pandemic acted as a catalyst to alternative methods and so a Flipped approach to delivering learning and teaching has increased in its popularity across various academic disciplines. A number of studies have been undertaken regarding the effectiveness of the Flipped approach and a number of positive impacts of flipped methods for students and teachers in specific educational areas have been identified (Murillo-Zamorano et al., 2019; Valero et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, given the resurgence of this approach, there has been a call for additional research into its effect and impact (Comber & Bos, 2017; Lo & Hew, 2017) and that this research should focus on particular fields or disciplines (Ozdamli & Asiksoy, 2016; Nouri, 2016; Tan et al., 2017; Awidi & Paynter, 2019). Therefore, the aim of this paper is to evaluate the impact of adopting a Flipped learning approach amongst a cohort of students undertaking undergraduate and post-graduate programmes in a hotel school in Switzerland. The paper will initially discuss the theoretical concept of flipped learning and then apply this in the context of this particular group of students.

## 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 1.1. Theories of learning acquisition

Teaching styles and methodologies have been derived from the philosophical judgements of a learning function. It is generally considered that Watson (1913) introduced the concept of behaviourism in learning and concluded that simplistic learning through observation resulted in thoughtless repetition. Whilst it could be contended that this approach is still relevant, some authors opine that knowledge is obtained not merely by observation but by the deliberate usage of learning strategies and processes where individuals utilise their brain, focus on meaning and make connections on given information (Sincero, 2011; Ertmer & Newby, 1993, Fryling et al., 2011; Nabavi, 2012).

In addition to this perspective, Bandura (1971) manifested that learning is a process of social interaction rather than an individual effort and along with other researchers (see Vygotsky, 1962; Bandura & Walters, 1963; Bandura, 1971; Nabavi, 2012) asserted that

group discussions, negotiations and problem-solving activities serve the purpose of most thorough learning (Bandura, 1971).

Vygotsky (1978) further introduced a perspective of learning and teaching through the development of the Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding theory highlighting the importance of a guidance in learning on top of the personal abilities and social presence (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Essentially, this approach states that challenging interactive tasks along with the competent coaching enhances students' ability to comprehend faster and more efficiently (Duane & Satre, 2013; Olusegun, 2015; Mo & Man, 2017; Xu & Shi, 2018). This concept has been further elaborated by Downes (2020) claiming that the process of learning should be networked and digitalised to establish better and quicker connections amongst learners by means of sharing structured diverse opinions and facts in a variety of information sources for easier access (Herlo, 2017; Utecht & Keller, 2019; Corbett & Spinelo, 2020).

### 1.2. Traditional learning through the prism of Bloom's taxonomy

In 1950s, the psychologist and theorist Bloom (1956) established the structure of learning which is often associated with and applied in traditional schooling (Guy & Marquis, 2016; Chandio et al., 2017; Mohan, 2018). The idea behind the theory is that the deepest levels of learning one can achieve are analysis, synthesis and evaluation, prior to which general knowledge of the subject, understanding of the notions and applicability to the cases should be solidly established. However, Anderson et al. (2001) extended the view on learning construction and proposed that creation is the higher level of learning which originally is the outcome of in class explanation, understanding followed by the analysis and evaluation at home (Soozandehfar & Adeli, 2016; Wang et al., 2017; Mohan, 2018).

This traditional approach has received a level of criticism and subsequent development. For example, Paristiowati and Fitriani (2017) broke the learning experience into pre-, during and post-class periods reversing the vision of Blooms Taxonomy. The scholars underlined that pre-class activities can be given to students as a means of encouraging remembering and understanding the content. This, then, leaves in-class activity able to be focused on application, analysis, and evaluation of the content. They further argue that the post-class period is when learners create new meanings and synthesise concepts on their own. However, Guy and Marquis

(2016) present a different perspective and indicates that students begin to establish their understanding by creating an uninformed idea in a form of pre-reading, given lectures or case studies and that, only after these occur can they begin to compare, analyse and evaluate their assumptions based on professional instances. Lastly, the experience happening in class with other group members, through discussions and observations, creates knowledge formation, the remembering and under-

standing of a subject. This perspective has given rise to the idea of a different ‘flipped’ approach to learning that adopts the key aspects of Blooms Taxonomy whilst recognising that learning may occur at different times and circumstances that place emphasis on the responsibility of the learner to understand and contextualise, thus leaving space for high level conceptualisation in the classroom. See Figure 1 below for a comparison of traditional versus flipped approaches.

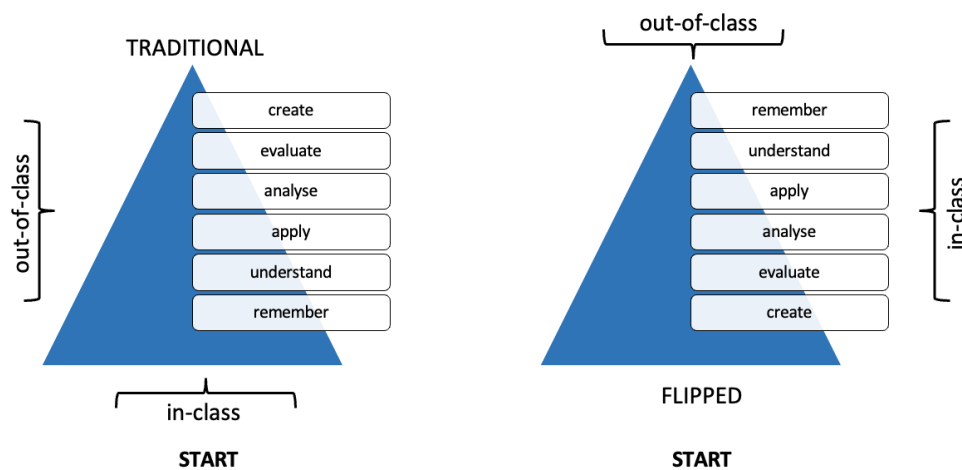


Figure 1. A comparison of traditional vs flipped approaches

### 1.3. The flipped classroom approach

It might be suggested that the Flipped Classroom (FC) is an innovative opposite to the traditional learning paradigm of conveying instructions which moves conventional classroom to home activity and homework to in-class exercise. This model provides innovative methodology and changes traditional classroom environment and dynamic (Tan et al., 2017; Awidi & Paynter, 2019; Goh & Ong, 2019). The method is founded on fewer formal lectures, sometimes minimised to zero, and on provision of many active learning opportunities during the class, including videos, lecture slides or case studies (Lombardini et al., 2018; Sojayapan & Khlai-sang, 2018). Flipped classrooms can be categorised in a variety of types and styles based on the subject, student cultural expectations and norms, increased group-based activity, the use of demonstration rooms, a focus on discussion-oriented activity and, increasingly, the use of virtual environments (Mohan, 2018).

It has been suggested that this approach is beneficial for teachers in terms of improved communication and the development of a greater understanding of learning experience and progress of every individual in class. Thus, Papadakis et al. (2017) found that students

are fond of pre-organised materials due to flexibility in learning duration since every individual requires different timing to prepare for class and understand the topic. In addition, this approach required students to come to class well-prepared which encouraged meaningful questions and requests for clarification if an element of learning was unclear (Papadakis et al., 2017). Furthermore, the flipped classroom has been found to support teachers in being more creative, spontaneous, and diverse by leaving more time in class for activities and discussion and encourage students' empowerment of self-learning and enhancing in class (Gilboy et al., 2015; Betihavas et al., 2016; Nouri, 2016).

Nevertheless, Lo and Hew (2017), have identified several obstacles that such an approach can cause. Firstly, to fully engage students in this approach it has been found that the pre-class preparation that teachers often have to undertake may be more significant. Secondly, and crucially, this approach is reliant on the students' involvement, and it has been suggested that students may completely disregard the pre-class activity (the core of flipped concept) due to its amount and complexity which may result in learning failure (Lo & Hew, 2017). In addition, Comber and Bos (2017) raised

the issue of digital poverty and suggested that whilst access to technology is essential for this to be successful not every learner can afford devices and internet access, thus leading to issues regarding equality and inclusiveness. Lastly, Lieberman (2018) stated that even though the flipped classroom approach is no longer a new concept, many learners remain oblivious to the fact that they are being taught by it.

In recent years, the flipped classroom has become increasingly popular because of the pandemic and the requirement for teachers and students to approach learning in a different way. The flipped approach allowed learners to become more involved in their education through and opportunity to engage with pre-developed material online. This then was able to be applied and discussed online sessions and small group discussions (Campillo-Ferrer & Miralles-Martinez, 2021). Moreover, in recent studies, flipped classrooms were viewed as the most possible and suitable teaching method during the Covid-19 which providing a comprehensive digital education (Lundin et al., 2018; Campillo-Ferrer & Miralles-Martinez, 2021). Nevertheless, the question of its effectiveness still stands (Weiß & Friege, 2021).

#### 1.4. The four pillars of flipped learning: F- L- I- P

The term 'Flipped Classroom' has been developed to describe the process of the organisation learning and is considered to be a pedagogical tool that assists the learner in creating new knowledge (Nwosisi et al., 2016). The main purpose of flipped learning is to engage students more fully in class activities and transform didactic teaching into a more dynamic learning environment. Indeed, the idea of inverted learning is closely connected to social constructivism and connectivism theories whereby communication and application of concepts, learning becomes more understandable, involving and engaging (Bandura, 1971; Harinie et al., 2017). To achieve the primary goal for flipped learning, Flipped Learning Network (2014) introduced four main pillars (F-L-I-P) to be incorporated in any learning environment.

Flexible environment is the first aspect of a successful flipped learning organisation. The essence of this pillar is to offer students a great opportunity to flexibly rearrange the learning space according to individuals' preferences (Zainuudin & Halii, 2016; Nwosisi et al., 2016; Petrosyan & Grishechko, 2021). Demirel (2016) found that this flexibility creates a stress-free environment for both students and teachers and conclude

that learners are not placed in traditional learning environments (such as lecture theatres), but rather they are allowed to individually adjust the environment according to the task in hand. Instructors are also free from a standardised method of teaching, they can reveal creativity and more effectively utilise the available time (Demirel, 2016).

Learning culture is the second pillar of inverted learning. The main principle is to establish a student-based platform with minimal involvement from the tutor and maximum participation of learners. In fact, during the in-class time, students are encouraged to avoid passive behaviour and create an opportunity for themselves to explore the subject deeply and from their individual perspective (Demirel, 2016). Instructors provide their learners with freedom, support, and appropriate quick feedback (Nwosisi et al., 2016).

The third pillar of the effective flipped learning is intentional content. According to Walsch & Rísquez (2020), while reversing the traditional idea of classroom and home assignments, the content provided by instructors appears to become more meaningful and central. Instructors are encouraged to focus on creating pre-recorded lectures, case studies and videos and students, in turn, are expected to engage with this material prior to the scheduled class. Lawton (2019) added that intentional content enables instructors to provide structured information through the creation of materials that learners can consume at their convenience thus maximising face-to-face interactions in class. This approach has the added benefits of being attractive to both visual learners and learners who need extra support. Furthermore, the content guides students through the learning process, however, does not determine the learning methods (Lawton, 2019).

Lynch (2015) claimed that flipped learning requires more presence, awareness, sophistication, and analysis on the part of the educator comparison to a more traditional approach. In fact, the instructor is a core multi-tasking facilitator that observes, assists, and provides feedback to every individual (Lynch, 2015; Lawton, 2019). Moreover, flipped learning cannot occur without the presence and functions of educators even if their role is not visible.

In the assessment of flipped classrooms in higher education, many scholars have found that FL receives a favourable effect on student knowledge, satisfaction, and engagement (Murillo-Zamorano et al., 2019). Indeed, González-Gómez et al. (2016) found a significantly positive change in students' performance and

identified that the opportunity to pause, review and rewind lectures increased individual's learning, and the increased opportunity to ask questions in class gave students more chance to comprehend the content. Tan et al. (2017) assessed the effectiveness of this approach in nursing studies in China and highlighted that FL strengthened students' self-learning skills as well as improving both teacher and student satisfaction which had a positive impact on attitude towards subjects. Steen-Utheim and Foldnes (2017) revealed from their studies the effectiveness of flipped classrooms amongst mathematics students that demonstrated significant improvement in performance between a flipped classroom approach and traditional teaching. They found that there was a much-improved learning experience, higher engagement, increased commitment to peers, better relationships with their instructors and an increase in feelings of safety during a flipped learning experience. Additionally, Hartianyi et al. (2018) discovered a variety of cases with positive outcome from flipped education such as in the school of Architecture Engineering and Design, in Spain, and a history class in Hungary where a very high rate of satisfaction and improved grades was achieved.

Valero et al. (2019) also identified positive learning outcomes as a consequence of providing pre-recorded sessions and then implementing participative discussions and problem-solving activities in class. It was found that this resulted in increased motivation and easier comprehension of theories and practices (Valero et al., 2019). From an educator's perspective, Väisänen and Hirsto (2020) found that students were more likely to participate and collaborate, thus making the educators job more rewarding and fruitful.

However, FL does have downsides and there have been examples of students expressing low satisfaction due to the enhanced workload even through the result showed a decrease in student withdrawal and poor grades (Lombardini et al., 2018). Awidi and Paynter (2019) also emphasised a drawback in the approach and claimed that some tasks were less regarded and understood by students due to their lack of preparation, comprehension of pre-recorded lectures and self-discipline. Raba and Dweikat (2019) assessed teachers' perception on flipped education and found that on the one hand instructors were in support of the approach but only with adults and university level students, but also felt that the increased workload, higher level of responsibility and less control over learning added to anxiety and stress. Earlier, Kirschner et al. (2006) completely

opposed this approach to learning suggesting that minimal guidance establishes chaotic knowledge and misinterpretation of the subjects. Additionally, some researchers opine that the average capability of an intermediate student is not well enough formed for self-regulation and self-study which is necessary for FL. Lastly, there is a large amount of evidence of successful controlled teaching with positive outcomes whereas the unguided learning is still unknown and questionable (Kirschner et al., 2006).

Whilst there are a number of perspectives regarding this approach to learning and teaching, it could be argued that FL is considered to be the most contemporary and prominent student-centred learning method which can be effectively combined with active learning and can establish a stronger connection students of all ages and also assist an education system survive crises such as the pandemic (Murillo-Zamorano et al., 2019; Collado-Vallero et al., 2021; Liu & Qi, 2021). Indeed, the advent of Covid-19 has resulted in this approach being brought into sharp relief become a focal point for research. Birgili et al. (2021) identify Flipped Classrooms as a global teaching trend and claimed that it has enhanced students' cognition, self-discipline, and improved technological skills of learners, while Collado-Vallero et al. (2021) identify this approach as becoming more and more common. The pandemic has caused reflection on earlier studies that identified motivation, the use of technology and the development of cognition factors as being the future of education – all vital elements of adoption in more recent years (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015). Nevertheless, the challenge in supervision, tech skills, learning autonomy and emotional resistance is still present as a disadvantage of the approach.

### 1.5. Students' preferences in teaching and learning methods

Students appear to enjoy this approach to learning. Mehta et al. (2016) found that most students they studied felt very positive with interactive lecture sessions and considered the opportunity to discuss and debate and resulted in higher level knowledge acquisition. Pechenkina and Aeschliman (2017) also investigated students' opinions on teaching approaches and found that learning could be enhanced by using up-to-date external technological tools (educational and practical technologies) rather than focussing on purely theoretical components. Much attention has recently been focused on online learning (Humphries & Clark, 2021;



Muthuprasad et al., 2021; Ong et al., 2021; Al-Salman & Haider, 2021). Ong et al. (2021) found that students were keen to take control of their learning and proceed at their own pace with some centrally provided support. It has also been found that some students found pre-recorded classes very effective which as a result boosted their results. Muthuprasad et al. (2021) and Humphries and Clark (2021) identified that students they surveyed preferred shorter lectures delivered in a pre-recorded format.

### 1.6. Application of teaching styles in hospitality education

Fox (1998) stated that hospitality education consists of a variety of approaches, Colluci and Flannery (1965) highlighted, that hospitality students learn effectively through a shared experience between a teacher and a learner and that this shared experience may occur verbally and by means of practice. Moreover, Deale et al. (2013) evaluated current hospitality and tourism teaching methods and identified the most preferable technique from both the teacher and student and found that, due to practical limitations, the idea of abandoning lectures seemed unreasonable, claiming that the lecture (with discussion) method offers a means to present content material to large numbers of students and, therefore, is efficient as a teaching method. However, recent research has identified three main approaches: traditional, active, and experimental (Ahmad et al., 2018).

Hospitality traditional learning normally consists of lectures, case studies, assessments, and exams. Active-based learning is focused on analytical thinking and creativity with the help of stimulation games, speakers' visits and trips. Experimental learning is about consulting, mentoring, practical trainings, and project-oriented learning (Ahmad et al., 2018). Hsu et al. (2013) emphasised that hospitality educational system in Taiwan is based on active learning which enhances presentation skills and students' engagement. A variety of activities such as group discussions and problem-solving tasks sustain the interest and create understanding. Both examples would indicate the appropriateness of adopting FL for hospitality education.

However, it is important to recognise cultural differences and it has been found that some hospitality students in China reject active learning method due to a fear of misunderstanding and a change from the more traditional teacher-oriented approach (Aynalem et al. 2015). However, Penfold and Pang (2008) claimed that

blended learning in Chinese hospitality is widely practiced and accepted, and the reality of teaching and learning is often a combination of traditional and innovative methodologies. Furthermore, the approach increasingly adopted internationally (Revi & Babu, 2016). In fact, online learning has increased resource accessibility, improved teacher-student communication and learners' efficiency in task accomplishment. However, the scholars raise an issue towards technological inconsistency and unavailability in many countries (Revi & Babu, 2016). To conclude, the author introduced a selection of methods practiced in the hospitality education in different countries and moves towards the investigation of one recently invented innovative method.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

### 2.1. Approach

Guided by an objectivist research perspective and thus adopting a quantitative approach to gathering data, this study aimed to evaluate the impact of adopting a flipped approach to learning. It further aimed to develop an understanding of students' preferences between such an approach and the more traditional methods of teaching hospitality management at a Swiss Hotel School. The adoption of a quantitative method of gathering data for this study allowed for measurement and the analysis of variables (Apuke, 2017) and reflects objectivity, high representativeness, demands the inclusion of a large group of participants and allows some form of generalisability amongst the group in question (Zikmund et al., 2013; Eyisi, 2016; Queiros et al., 2017).

Data were gathered via an online survey that was sent to all 236 students who were enrolled on one of the five full-time undergraduate and post graduate programmes by the school. The online survey comprised a total of 23 multiple-choice questions based on issues identified in the literature review. The survey commenced with general questions concerning personal preferences regarding teaching approaches and this was followed by questions that addressed the various elements of the flipped classroom and thereafter elicited responses regarding the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach. Finally, respondents were asked for a range of demographic data, such as age, nationality, and an indication of any prior educational experience. The survey was preceded by a covering letter that introduced the study and explained the concept of the flipped classroom. The survey was administered via email on the 20th of January 2020 and a reminder

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email was sent to all students on the 4th of February 2020. In total 167 useable responses (out of a possible 236 students) were which achieves the appropriate response rate threshold for quantitative studies in order to achieve reliability and validity of findings (Fincham, 2008). The surveys are produced and sent to the respondents as a Google form to where they could select the most preferable answer and leave a short comment. After collecting the data, the results of each survey were analysed via Excel. This allowed for the development of descriptive statistics and a series of cross tabulations that provided opportunities for the creation of a series of graphs and charts that both highlighted collected data and allowed for an understanding of viewpoints on flipped classroom effectiveness.

## **2.2. Ethical issues**

Given that this study was undertaken with students who were enrolled on a full-time programme at the hotel school, the researchers were particularly cognisant of ethical issues pertaining to gathering data from students. Particular attention was paid to ensuring that collected data were confidential and anonymised. Potential respondents were provided with appropriate information that allowed them to make an informed choice as to whether to take part in the study and all participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study without any penalty.

## **2.3. Limitations**

Whilst every effort was made to ensure that the appropriate approach was adopted and that participants were treated in an ethical manner, the researchers fully understand that any type of research will have its limitations. This study is no different and is limited by the commonly accepted issues associated with quantitative methods. Such an approach can only ever ask leading

and closed questions that may lack nuance and detail but do provide hard and reliable data. In addition, it is understood that the research focussed on students studying in one institution in Switzerland at a particular time. Students enrolled on programmes are considered a fairly unique group in that there were no domestic students in the cohort and all students were international. Whilst such a study would not achieve the threshold of generalisability, it is contended that sufficient surveys were completed to allow the development of general findings, at least amongst this cohort of students. It could therefore be argued that the findings from the study may allow for the development of some general indicators of good practice.

## **2.4. The research context**

The Swiss hotel school that is the location of this study is typical of similar Swiss schools in that all students who are attracted to undertake their qualification are international. The school is accredited by the Swiss Association of Quality and Management Systems and British Accreditation Council and provides both Swiss and UK accredited undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

The educational culture of the school focusses on student-centred and active learning and classes will typically utilise a blend of lectures, tutorials with presentations and discussions. The main goal of the institute is to encourage students to become independent learners and thus provide the skills necessary to become hospitality professionals. This organisation was chosen as the research site for a number of reasons. Firstly, the researchers were familiar with the institution and were granted access to students. Secondly, the institution is transitioning from a traditional approach to learning to the introduction of a more student-centred focus that includes the adoption of the Flipped Classroom philosophy – therefore students will have experienced a variety of learning and teaching methods. Finally, the institute is relatively small and represents a microcosm of teaching at all educational levels.

## **2.5. Summary of respondents**

The following section covers the demographic characteristics of the students: their gender, age, year of education and nationality. Stated genders were split fairly evenly with slightly more female respondents (51%) than males. Most respondents indicated their age as being between twenty-one and twenty-five (61%) with a further 31% stating their age as being between

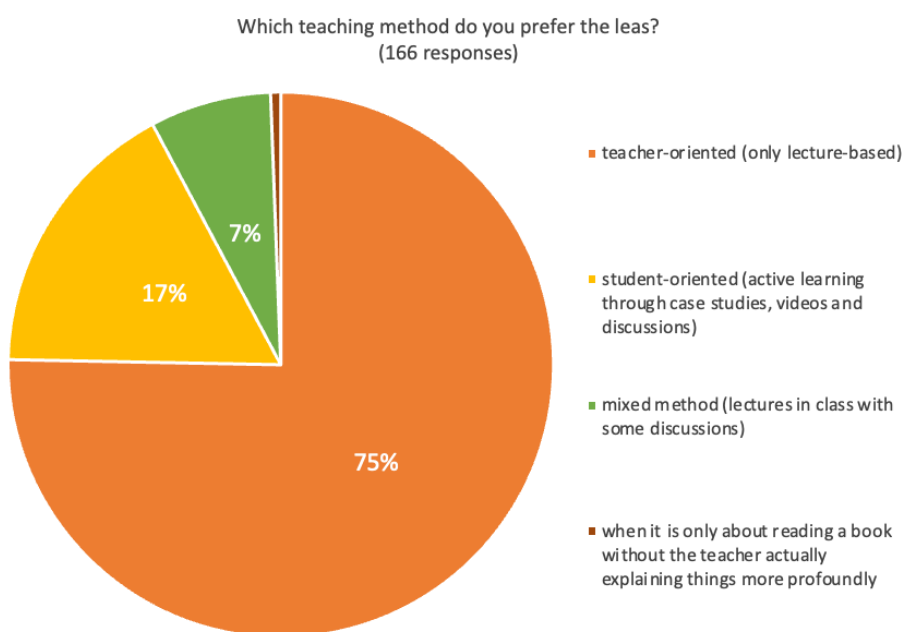
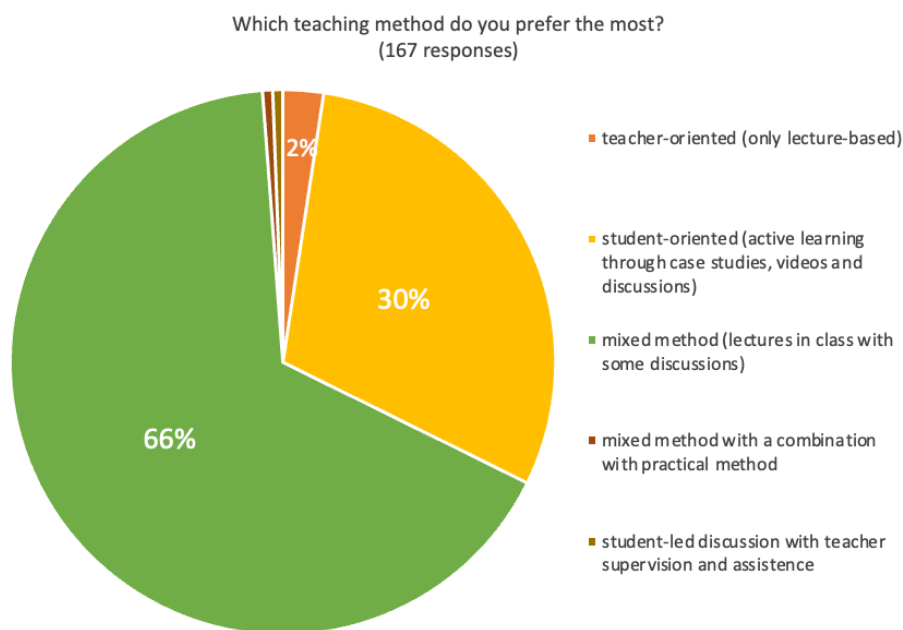
eighteen and twenty. Students were enrolled on several programmes with the majority (92%) studying at undergraduate level. Some 69% of respondents identified as being of Asian nationality and 31% European.

### 3. STUDY AND RESULTS

#### 3.1. Personal preferences of teaching approaches

The students were asked to choose the most preferable teaching method amongst those taught in their courses such as teacher-oriented, student-oriented, mixed methods or to provide any further suggestions. 66.5% of respondents selected the mixed method

which lecturing and discussions not specifying how the lectures should be introduced. 29.9% identified student-oriented method as the most effective highlighting such as aspects as case studies, videos, and deep discussions with active practical learning. Only 2.4% gave their votes to the teacher-centred learning (Figure 2). Reading books, listening to the lectors with no further explanations were considered as least effective in learning. Additionally, a handful of respondents described their most liked approach being students sharing the knowledge after studying home while being supervised and assisted in class by a tutor.





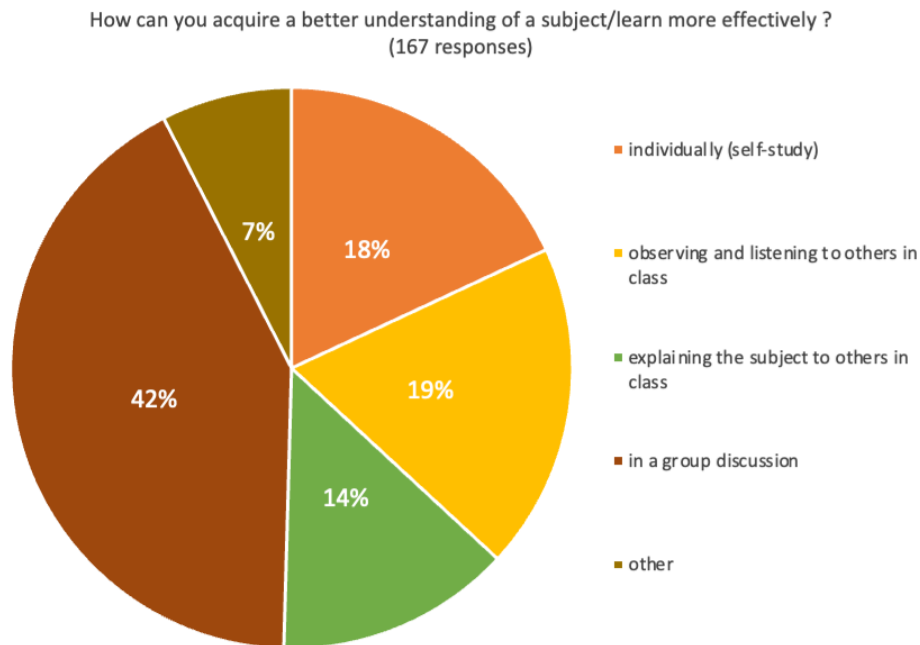


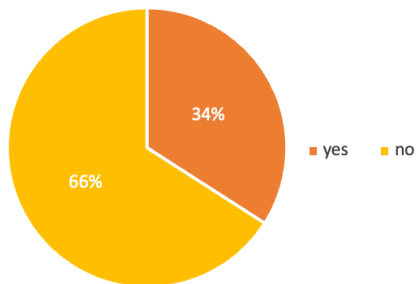
Figure 2. Teaching methods preferences and disliking

### 3.2. Teaching methods assessment and preference

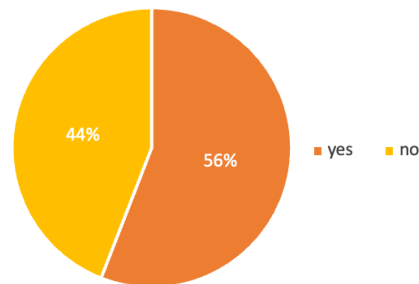
The participants of current study were asked about their awareness of the flipped classroom method used in a number of hospitality subjects at their school. 65.9% were fully aware of the approach whereas 34.1% had little idea. Nevertheless, those who experi-

enced the approach rated it as acceptably effective to very effective (78%) and those with little knowledge were interested to try. All participants were divided in their opinion on the most effective flipped class approach varying from classic flipped room to the video analysis, discussions, case studies (Figure 3).

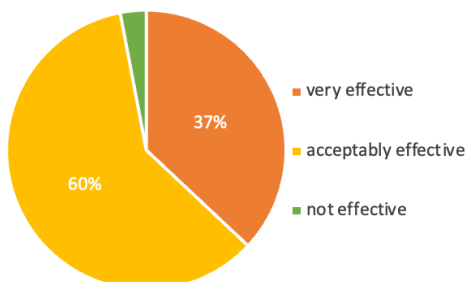
Have you heard of the term 'Flipped Classroom' before? (164 responses)



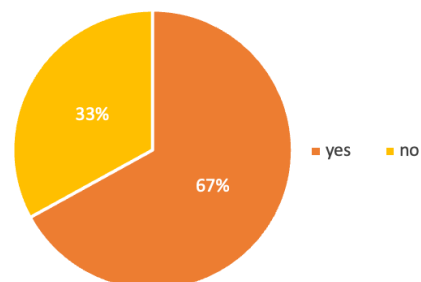
Have you been taught by the use of this approach? (120 responses)



If the answer is yes, how would you rate the effectiveness of this method? (91 responses)



If the answer is no, would you be interested in experiencing the method? (148 responses)



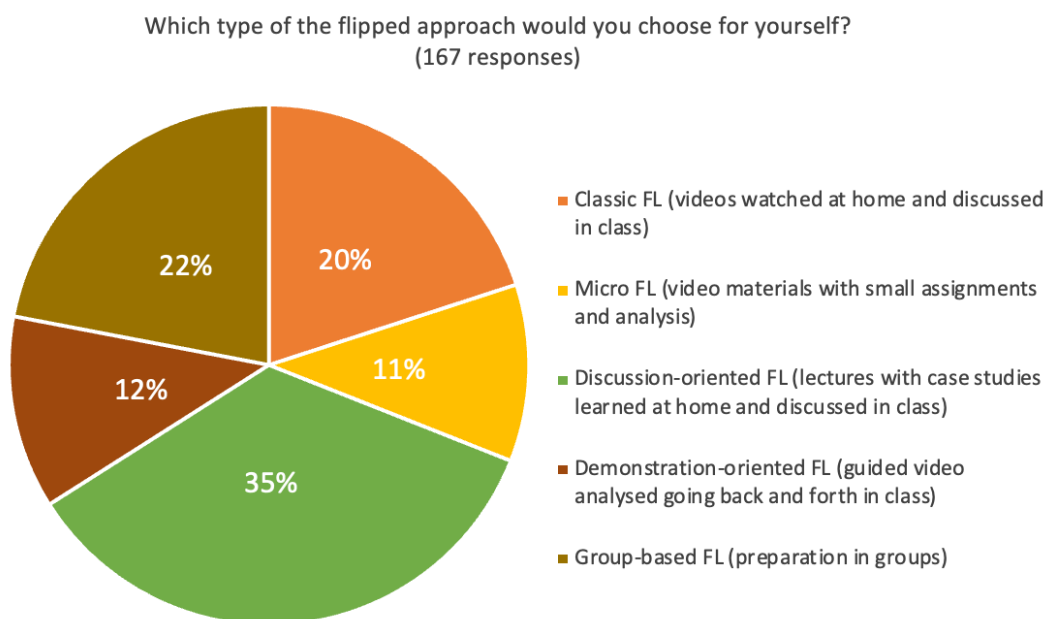


Figure 3. Assessments and preferences

### 3.3. Motivation, engagement, and empowerment

In the second section of the questionnaire, students were asked to evaluate a specific statement related to the flipped classroom approach and flipped learning based on the F-L-I-P theory which is presented in the theoretical chapter. Questions for assessment included:

*I like the idea of flipped learning: schoolwork at home and homework at school.*

*I may be more motivated to learn more through flipped learning.*

*Flipped learning may help me to improve my social skills and cultural peculiarities.*

*The flipped approach can enhance my sense of responsibility and improve my self-awareness.*

*I prefer to explore topics in depth and create rich learning opportunities.*

*I prefer learning content prior to class and use the class time for applied learning/*

*Through flipped learning I may be able to manage my time and have full control over my studies.*

*Flipped learning may provide an opportunity for me to be engaged in deeper classroom discussions.*

*I may feel less determined about what I need to learn and which materials I need to prepare for the flipped class.*

*I feel that teachers' feedback and support only throughout discussions in class cannot help me to understand the topic better.*

*In my opinion, teachers' involvement should not overpass students' participation.*

Thus, many students (58%) were interested in studying through FL, agreeing to the fact that this approach may enhance their social skills, level of independency and cultural peculiarities. In fact, 57% were positive about an increase of motivation to study. Moreover, FL was strongly associated with self-awareness and responsibility with over 80% of positive responses. 77% of participants stated that they prefer the type of learning which will explore all topics in more depth and create rich learning possibilities for discussion. At the same time, 71% of students added that before-class preparation and content learning is more effective than acquiring information in class for the first time. Instead, they acknowledged that class time could be used for applied learning.

Nevertheless, one fourth of participants claimed that FL could be challenging for people with poor skills in time management and self-organisation. Moreover, half of the participants believed that it might be confusing for learners to understand what to study and which materials to prepare before class as information complexity could be encountered as a challenge.

The role of a teacher has also been analysed and students' opinions were twofold. 41,6% positively reacted on teacher's feedback and support only in class during the discussions, however, some students required more explanation and full presence of the tutor (20,5%). The rest stayed neutral assuming that either way could work for them. In terms of teacher's involvement in class, 30% of participants identified a necessity

in teacher’s constant interaction whereas other 30% liked the idea of self-study in class and little guidance from the teacher.

Consequently, the participants were asked to assess FL in terms of its benefits and drawbacks. As seen below, most students singled out a challenge of topic’s full comprehension, especially being at home and learning on your own. Moreover, a big discussion was raised on the time management and self-motivation. The participants claimed, that when there is a choice to not learn with little explanation and only guidance in class, any student will be demotivated to engage. At the same time, the percentage of those not preparing prior to the class will considerably increase. As a result, there may be little interest in class participation and respect towards teachers (Figures 4 and 5).

On the contrary, there are several meaningful perspectives on the effectiveness of this method. Many respondents believed that a deeper understanding and critical thinking may occur if a student comes to class already prepared and gets into details in class with teacher’s help. Furthermore, FL enhances communicational and presentational skills. Some participants stated that openness can be improved by practicing the approach. What is more, flipped classrooms teach students self-management, organisation and creativity. The novelty of this approach is debatable. Some students assumed that not everyone is able to be taught by this teaching method whereas other liked the idea of innovativeness. Lastly, flexibility – practicality, freedom of choice and structure – were mentioned as advantages of the approach (Figure 6).

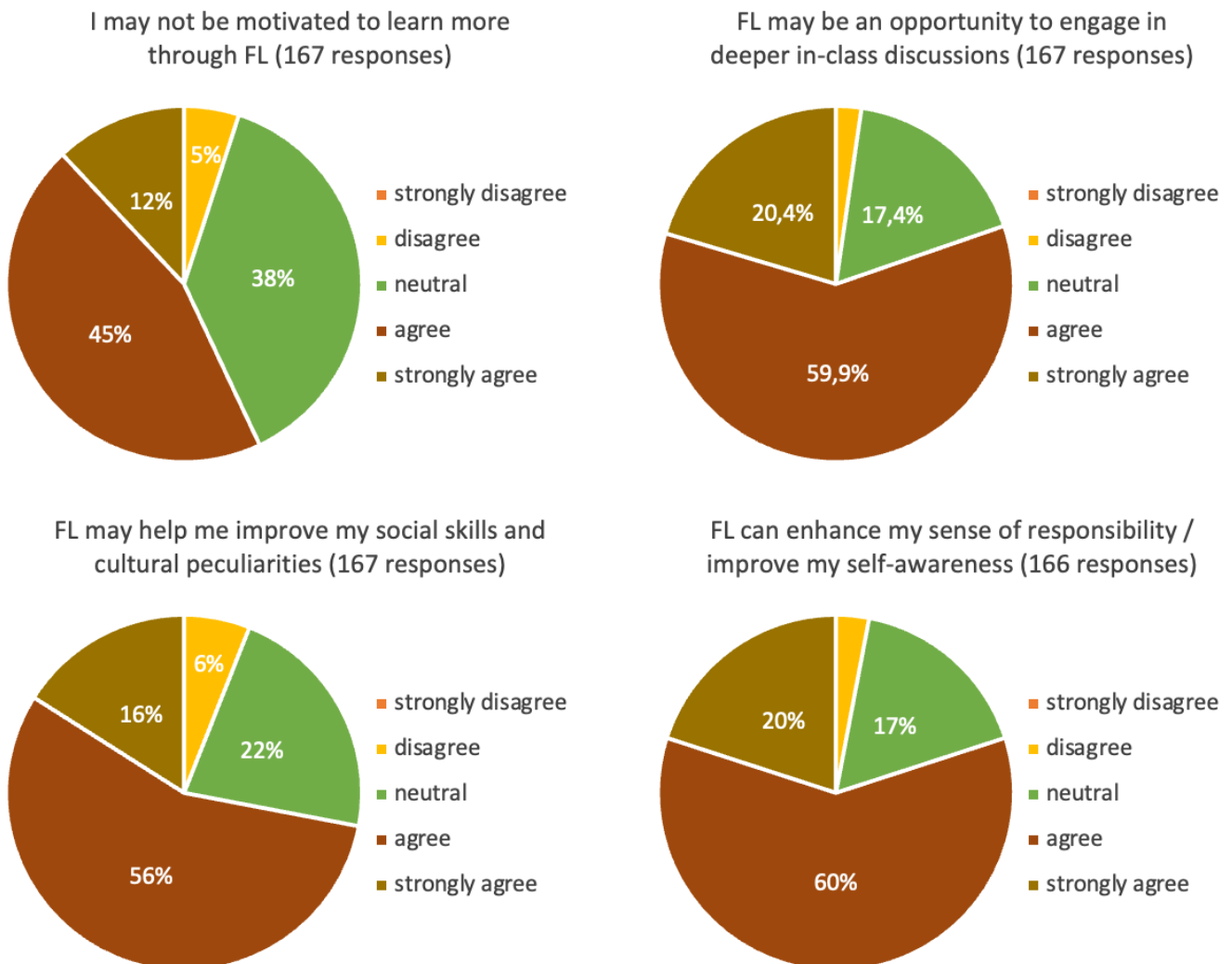


Figure 4. Motivation, engagement, self-awareness

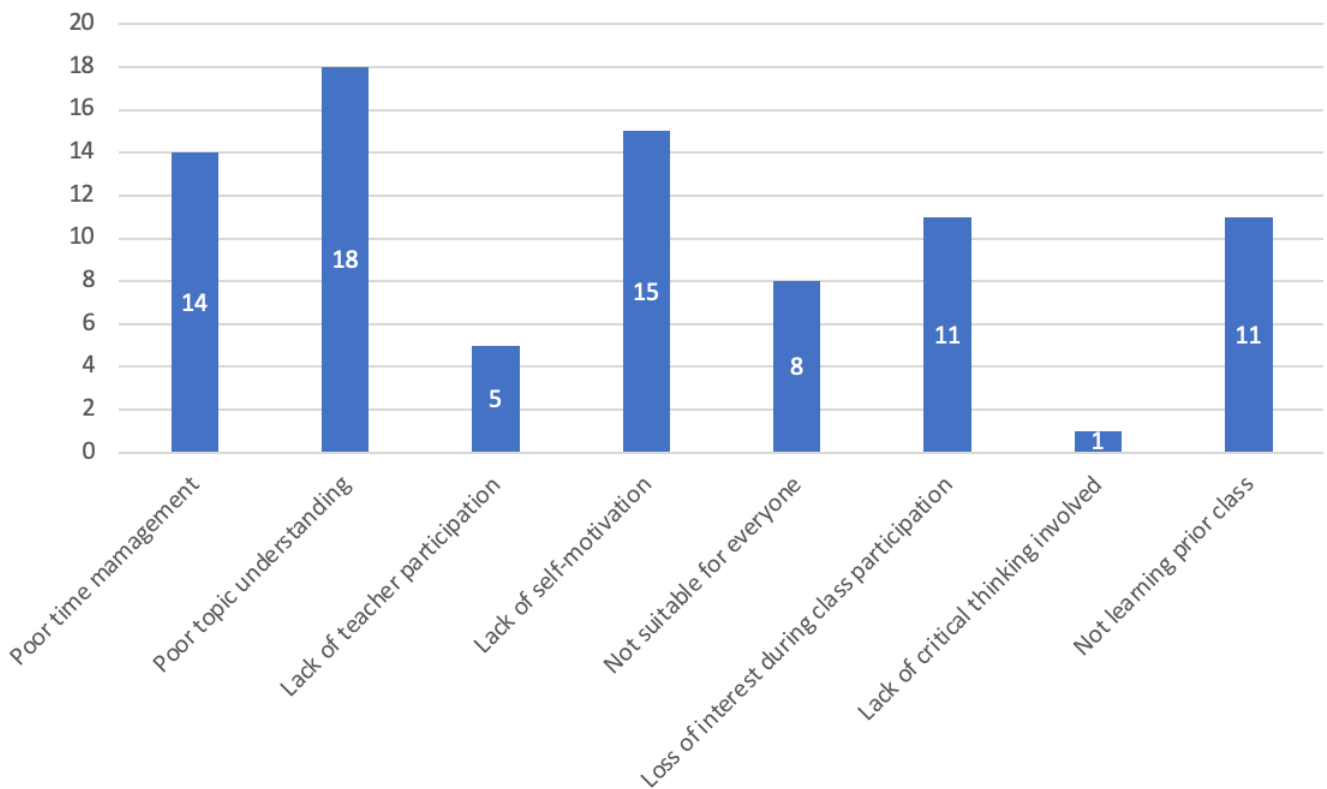


Figure 5. Drawbacks of flipped classrooms

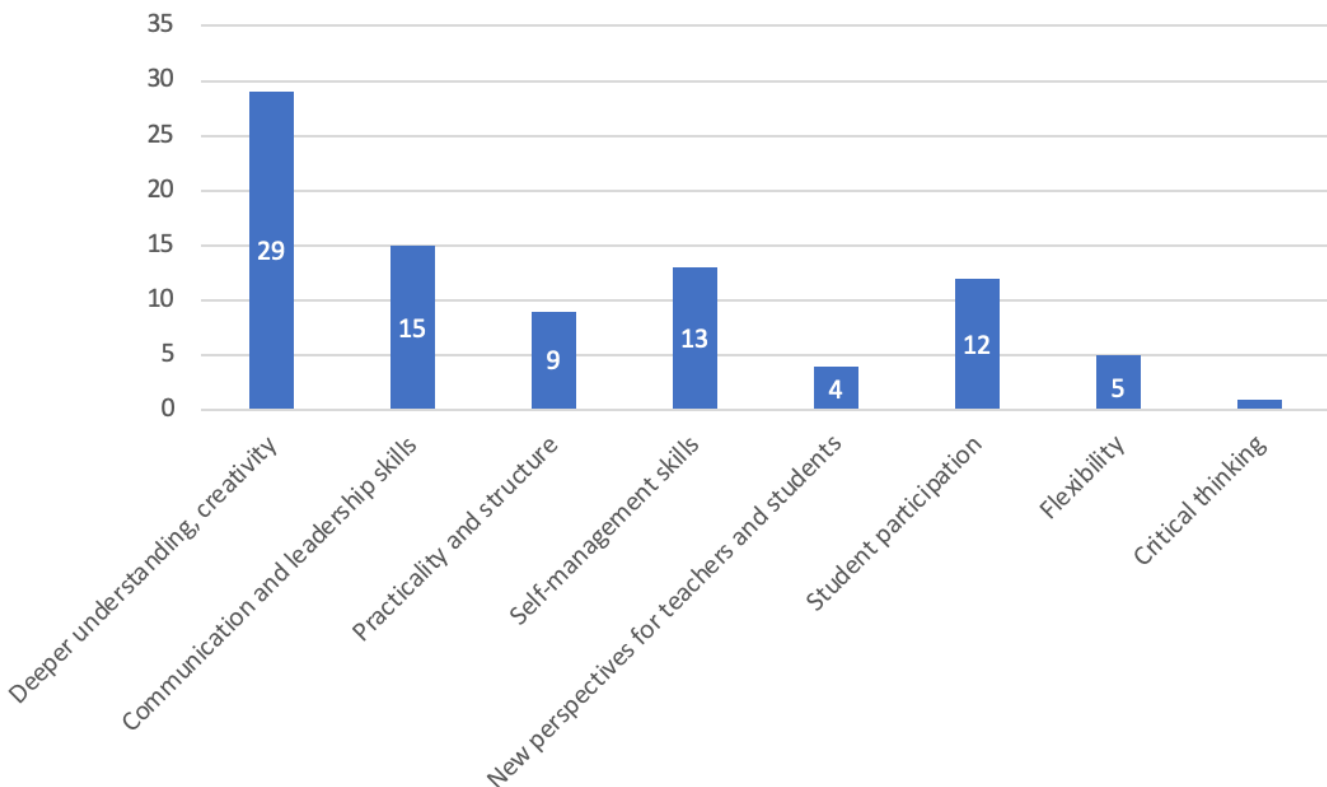


Figure 6. Benefits of flipped classrooms

## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Teaching methods assessment/preferences

Colucci and Flannery (1983) highlighted that hospitality students learn effectively through a shared experience between a teacher and a learner. This shared experience may occur verbally and by means of practice. Moreover, Deale et al. (2013) established a study on current hospitality and tourism teaching methods and identified the most preferable technique from both teacher and student perspectives. The results demonstrated that the idea of abandoning lectures seemed unreasonable, as with class sizes increasing and resources becoming scarce, the lecture (with discussion) method offers a means to present content material to large numbers of students and, therefore, is efficient as a teaching method. Aynalem et al. (2015) identified students' teaching preference in the tourism field, where a blended method of lecturing and in-class activities was discussed and acknowledged as the most positive. Furthermore, lecture/discussion and case study/team project were identified as the most prominent mixture. Our study has also shown that about half of participants were not aware that they had been taught in a flipped format but were highly interested in this approach considering it fairly useful. Additionally, the answers demonstrated that Ahmad et al.'s (2018) experimental learning had little relevance to students' interest, only in terms of practical training and project-oriented learning which were highlighted by a handful of students. Some participants strongly agreed on the necessity of sharing the experience and providing examples for a bigger and understandable picture. Others added that a formula of an individual study or group discussion plus practical activities with teacher support as a mentor would benefit students' learning. At the same time, no correlation has been found from Chinese hospitality students who preferred traditional teaching. Only a handful of respondents preferred lectures and full explanation in class followed by the exercises given as homework. Most respondents concluded that blended learning could be the most efficient one along with more practical exercises in class applicable straight to the industry and discussions (Deale et al., 2013; Aynalem et al., 2015).

### 4.2. Student perceptions on FL

The study showed that flexibility of time and the environment were highly acknowledged and rated by students. Therefore, the first pillar can be fully related to hospitality learning organisation. Flexibility creates a

stress-free environment for both students and teachers. Students are not put in the frame of rushed and compact lectures but are offered help from their mentors. Instructors are also free from a standardised method of teaching, they can reveal creativity and put precious time in real practice (Demirel, 2016). From the results, the value of teacher support and mentoring is very high. Moving on, students have not demonstrated any sign of cultural influences or the impact of classmates' skills and abilities on their learning process. Nevertheless, they have acknowledged the importance of deep meaningful discussions and a full teacher presence.

The content of a subject appeared to be the most important among participants in the flipped environment. Students fully agreed on this but mentioned that content must be explained properly either before the lesson in a recorded form or during. Otherwise, it would not be able to create true knowledge. A variety of responses concluded that different people request different approaches. Current study of the hospitality students in Switzerland has shown no correlation between students' learning and teachers' personality as was found in Liasidou's (2016) research earlier. Also, many students did not require their hundred percent presence or full explanation as previously addressed. In fact, teacher involvement with feedback and support if something is misunderstood was requested. Consequently, the idea of professional educator could be related to the results of this research.

### 4.3. Effects of flipped classroom teaching

Steen-Utheim and Foldnes (2017), Sun (2017) and Hartyanyl et al. (2018) have received the same results as participants of this research pointing out a favourable effect of FL on communication skills, levels of motivation, self-awareness, responsibility, empowerment and engagement. The only difference was that students could view positive effects only during class and were concerned about the practices outside the school premises. Guerrero et al. (2020) pointed to the same suggesting that overall rating of FL is still questionable even though communication skills, learning experience, level of motivation, empowerment and engagement are positive outcomes. Furthermore, the research has found no relevance to performance improvement and higher grades as Butzler (2014) who did the same research but in scientific context. At the same time, students raised multiple concerns about time management, organisation, and procrastination prior to the lesson. Finally, the actual understanding of the topic was



questioned in this inquiry. To add on, one fourth of respondents stayed neutral seeing no effect in engagement, motivation, and empowerment variances.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Flipped classroom method has been gaining popularity in different educational fields both in scientific and humanitarian domains. Many participants demonstrated the positive effect of flipped methods for students and teachers in specific educational areas (Murillo-Zamorano, 2019; Valero et al., 2019). Nevertheless, some inquiries have been questioning the results (Comber & Bos, 2017; Lo & Hew, 2017) and requesting a thorough investigation on this matter with a focus to a particular field (Ozdamli & Asiksoy, 2016; Nouri, 2016; Tan et al., 2017; Awidi & Paynter, 2019). Therefore, this study intended to analyse the success of flipped learning in the hospitality and tourism education and took a case of a hotel school in Switzerland.

The study demonstrated that social learning is the strongest method for hospitality students which in case of hospitality might be influenced by the personal traits as well as the level of class involvement, teacher expertise and explanation ability. The results also showed that hospitality students do prefer a student-oriented method over traditional teaching referring to Bloom's Reversed Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956). At the same time, their particular interest is on the mixed approach, but with less teacher involvement and more student participation. The best way for students to learn and for teachers to educate them was recognised as a combination of some explanation in class and group discussions for the rest of the class time.

Flipped learning was considered by many as an effective tool for self-organisation, group discussions, deep meanings, time management, social skills enhancement, self-development, and high level of engagement. Moreover, half of the students were aware of this method, and more than half have been taught by it. Nonetheless, flipped learning didn't do well in helping students to understand the material better. The participants were concerned about the motivation to prepare beforehand and lack of control from teachers. What is more, a great apprehension is for the novelty of the approach, which cannot be universal for everyone.

On reflection of this research project the researcher suggests that current inquiry does not fully reveal the effectiveness of flipped learning through an actual performance, for instance, before and after the application. Since some uncertainty has occurred in the results of

this research, an additional study could be conducted as an examination of the motivation and engagement improvement techniques in the context of flipped classes. Furthermore, such topic as true knowledge development in flipped education, its strategies and procedures could cover the gap of a current matter. The authors also believe that younger group can be examined once again since every generation has its individual peculiarities and struggles. This type of research should be conducted among a different nationality group with Europeans as the core cohort. Current research had more Asian representatives, therefore, the results might vary. The investigation can also be looked from the qualitative study or a different quantitative approach such as of examination tests with flipped and traditional teaching or simply pre and post evaluation. Finally, the author suggests conducting a study for a hospitality school in another country. This might provide a wider perspective on flipped learning.

Based on study results, the authors strongly recommend revising the teaching methodology utilised in the hospitality schools. Apart from that, hospitality schools should monitor the upcoming trends and directly implement them in the educational process. Many students have quite some theoretical disciplines with case studies and discussion, however, the true knowledge of the subject is not ensured. Therefore, a necessity in practical implementation is highly required not only for service or front office subjects, but also for human resources, sales and marketing and other theoretical subjects. In current contexts, more research should be focused on potential changes in educational filed in a relation to Covid-19 and how these changes will influence the future of education.

Overall, the institutes may come up with a strategy of how to strengthen the knowledge and understanding from students' perspective. For instance, to have a separate expert to analyse the industry and work on student satisfaction level. Moreover, it might be beneficial to introduce a thorough evaluation form for both students and teachers and to frequently brainstorm new ideas and suggestions. In addition, instead of flipped learning, the mixed method can be applied in all subjects to examine the improvement and performance rate. Furthermore, to improve student qualifications, the internships provided by hospitality organisations are encouraged to open more opportunities and positions in different departments to gain benefits on both sides. Students can stay permanently in the hotels and hotels can minimise the expenses by decreasing employee wages.

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