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CONCISE PAPERS

Sustainable Meta-Class Model in Higher Education

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Abstract:

The pandemic and natural disasters in the world have proven that it is imperative to develop more flexible and sustainable learning spaces for all students and instructors. Hybrid or blended learning spaces take importance in higher education, providing flexible participation options for students. Considering the challenges to continue education during the pandemic and the big earthquake in Turkiye, we proposed a research project in higher education. The main objective is to design a sustainable hybrid meta-classroom that uses sustainable architectural design techniques and educational technology including analyzing, designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating processes of learning environments to facilitate the learning process. To carry out the research objectives, educators, architects, and civil engineers have been studied collaboratively. The project is currently in progress, and it started with the selection of a lab class to convert to a hybrid class. Afterward, the architectural design was carried out and started to transform the class. While designing the physical space and furniture in the class, attention has been paid to the creation of flexible learning spaces suitable for disadvantaged students. Moreover, certified sustainable (eco) materials are preferred. In the meta class, it will be possible to provide online synchronous, online asynchronous, or face-to-face teaching (course delivery modes) considering the students' need. Students can select their course participation modes before the teaching process. This research can serve to improve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) and 11 (Sustainable cities and communities). In addition, this endeavor contributes to a broader shift towards at the Dokuz Eylul University (DEU) sustainability, hybrid learning methods, and codesign of classrooms with the potential to inspire other institutions and sectors to adopt similar practices.

Keywords: learning spaces, hybrid teaching, quality education, inclusive education, higher education

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