

The Fact of Learning Economics at National University of Laos During The Pandemics Covid-19 in Lao PDR

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Abstract: The out-breaking of Pandemics Covid-19 which is affected to many countries and regions in the world in the term of education. This study uses a qualitative approach which is the type of research is Phenomenology (case study). This type of phenomenological research is used due to it is oriented to the topic of teaching-learning economics course of teachers and students in National University of Laos. The determination of this research subject with the Snowball Sampling technique and the data collection techniques with in-depth interview and documentation. The finding results of this research found that learning economics in National University of Laos is not directly affected and is still continuing lecture as normal classes (face to face) and it is followed the order of National Operation Center for Covid-19 (NOCC) committee to resumed regular education after the extension of the annual yearly holiday during the Lao New Year in April 2020. For learning via online application, it has been already approved for teaching-learning for example: Google Meet, Zoom, skype etc. in addition, the perception and preparation most of them are readiness 100% which is mean that lecturers and students are aware of how to implement of online learning application

Keywords: Outbreak of Pandemics of Covid-19, higher education, university, Teaching-learning Economics

Abstrak: Merebaknya Pandemi Covid-19 sangat berdampak ke banyak negara dan wilayah di dunia dalam hal pendidikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif yang jenis penelitiannya adalah Fenomenologi (studi kasus). Jenis penelitian fenomenologi ini digunakan karena berorientasi pada topik belajar-mengajar mata kuliah ekonomi guru dan mahasiswa di National University of Laos. Penentuan subjek penelitian ini dengan teknik Snowball Sampling dan teknik pengumpulan data dengan wawancara mendalam dan dokumentasi. Hasil temuan penelitian ini menemukan bahwa pembelajaran ekonomi di National University of Laos tidak terpengaruh secara langsung dan masih melanjutkan perkuliahan seperti kelas normal (tatap muka) dan mengikuti perintah panitia National Operation Center for Covid-19 (NOCC). Untuk melanjutkan pendidikan reguler setelah perpanjangan liburan tahunan tahunan selama Tahun Baru Laos pada bulan April 2020. Untuk pembelajaran melalui aplikasi online, telah disetujui untuk belajar-mengajar misalnya: Google Meet, Zoom, skype dll. Selain itu, persepsi dan persiapan sebagian besar adalah kesiapan 100% yang artinya dosen dan mahasiswa sudah mengetahui cara penerapan aplikasi pembelajaran online.

Kata kunci: pandemic COVID-19, pendidikan tinggi, universitas, pembelajaran ekonomi

INTRODUCTION

In the end of year 2019, many countries encounter the effecting the pandemic name as the new virus as Corona Virus. Lao PDR is a final country in ASEAN has confirmed Covid-19 cases in March 2020 and reported a decrease in the number of cases of Covid-19 infection and the cases are very less. In Lao PDR, 1.7 million students nationwide in the year of academic 2019-2020 from primary to universities were both direct and indirect impacted. National University of Laos re-open the lecture with hand sanitizer in the basin, use the soap of toiletries and wear the mask, as well as keeping a social distance of 3 m in May 2020. UNICEF reports the impact of Covid-19 to Lao students that the closure of the schools has had a devastating effect on Lao students due to inequality of access to education (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2020). Alongside with the target to 2030, one in which the Lao government has distinguished social improvement as the highest priority of vital advancement by focusing on improving the livelihoods of individuals, destitution decrease, local area, cultural and educational development, and workforce abilities development as far as quantity and quality (People et al., 2020)

Teaching-learning economics (Zhang & Ramse, 2021) during the epidemic and university policies have established equal educational rights for human resource to have rigorous academic knowledge who specialize in economics, acquire knowledge and skills in economics, strengthening capacity in scientific research and providing professional services in economics. National University of Laos (National University of Laos, 2020) is served as the represent to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) in organizing teaching and learning economics to build academics, researchers and scientists and provide technical services to society during the out-breaking of pandemics covid-19. Laos continues (Kyophilavong et al., 2018) to push for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4: Equal Access to Education), which has been transformed into the 8th National Five-Year Plan for Socio-Economic Development of Lao government has been declared (People et al., 2015). While the scarcity of databases persists, there are also difficult and challenges to education, especially during the Covid-19 period, which required attention to be given to better promotion. While learning online at home is becoming more and

more popular around the world, the fact that in Lao PDR the out-breaking of pandemics Covid-19 are not serious situation as the neighboring countries, and the infected patients of Covid-19 are very less. Beside of that, some of Laotians face it is that they do not have access to the internet or tools to access such work (Families & Lao, 2021).

From the background and problems as previous mentioned, the fact that the out-breaking of pandemics Covid-19 it not effects for learning economics in National University of Laos, Lao PDR. With the circumstance of learning during the of pandemic of COVID-19, it was still continuing to attend the lecture (Non- stop) by face to face, but all of lecturers and students have to wash the hands in the basin with soap, sanitizer water, wear the mask and check the body temperature before attend the lecture every time. It also is importance for Lao government to conduct the strict policy and adapt the national education planned which was dispatched by Ministry of Education and Sports of Lao PDR for the equality and quantity of education

Epidemiological (Jiang et al., 2020) propose that the corona virus, as largely said was related with a Hunan fish market in Wuhan city, China. It presents that (Acharya, 2020) COVID-19 pandemic has defied pretty much every area of the world making awful destruction and affecting everyday existence of every person. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV2), distinguished and detailed in Wuhan city, China spread across the globe with an inconspicuous and unusual direction and restricted information on pathogenicity and the study of disease transmission. A prolonged school closure (Families & Lao, 2021) could additionally put kids and young people's learning and prosperity in danger. The security of students and schooling staff is especially significant. Insurances are important to forestall the likely spread of COVID-19 in school settings. Simultaneously, care should likewise be taken to try not to defame understudies and staff who may have been presented to the infection (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2020)

Economics is an exceptionally intriguing subject since its investigations how human beings make decisions trying to boost utility. It additionally investigations how a society looks to dispense their restricted resources in other to accomplish development. The

term economics is gotten from two words economy and science meaning, the science of the economy or the science of proper use of resources. To comprehend the topic of economics, we attempted to take a gander at its various definitions by various researchers. The essential ideas of economics are examined in other to give a superior comprehension of the definitions. There is likewise the need to comprehend the fundamental economic issues of any society in light of the fact that different issues revolve around these issues (Óläl & Óläl ÞáÚä Èää, 1392). The Classical economist analyst's economics as a science of wealth. Adam Smith the father of economics (Wong, 2015), in his book titled: 'An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of Wealth of Nations', characterized economics as the science of wealth. According to Adam Smith, economics makes investigations into the elements that decide the wealth and of a country. Along these lines, to Adam Smith what frames the topic of economics is the creation and extension of wealth.

Referred to the economist Alfred Marshall (Marshall, 2011) gave economics a respectable place among sociologies. Marshall characterized economics as the investigation of humankind in the customary business of life; it inspects that part of individual and the social activity which is most firmly associated with the accomplishment and utilization of material prosperity. Wealth was viewed not as an end in itself but rather an end because it was viewed as the wellspring of human welfare. According to J.N Keynes (Schumpeter & Keynes, 1936), a positive science might be characterized as a collection of organized information concerning what it is; while a regularizing science is a body of systematized information identifying to the criteria of what should be. The target of a positive science is the foundation of logical laws; while the goal of a regularizing science is the determination of the ideals.

Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) episode (Li et al., 2020) has given provokes itself for instructive foundations, particularly higher education. Expecting the transmission of the infection, the government has given various policies, like disconnection, social and physical separating to large-scale social limitations (Lock down). This condition requires its residents to stay at home, work, worship, and study at home. It is discoveries (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020) on what students with no internet access are to do during this Covid-19 pandemic show that as the level of neediness expansions in the community, the pace of internet availabilities declined quickly and by suggestions,

students with no or low socio-economic ability to bear the cost of broadband connection are generally vulnerable to fall behind or encounter additional challenges to get together with others in online learning (Bahasoan et al., 2020)

An assortment of frenzy at the university level that is not prepared to lead online educating (Sulisworo et al., 2020). In view of the Circular of the Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture No. 3 of 2020 concerning Prevention of COVID-19 in the Education unit, all tertiary instruction in Indonesia, made a firm stride on the government's call to direct taking in learning activities from home (Radha et al., 2020). Although the issue of applying Information Technology (IT) in Higher Education in Indonesia is one of the fascinating them for analysts and practitioners in the discipline of Information Systems in the previous two decades ago (Sharma et al., 2019). In Indonesia a few colleges have carried out systems technology mixed learning or hybrid courses, which are learning measures that incorporate online learning and face-to-face learning, among lecturers and students. Be that as it may, because of COVID-19, all universities in Indonesia and even throughout the world are needed to execute Information Technology (IT) to be utilized as an online learning media. Instructors, educators, and students, particularly in Indonesia feel the true effect of COVID-19 (Hanafi et al., 2021).

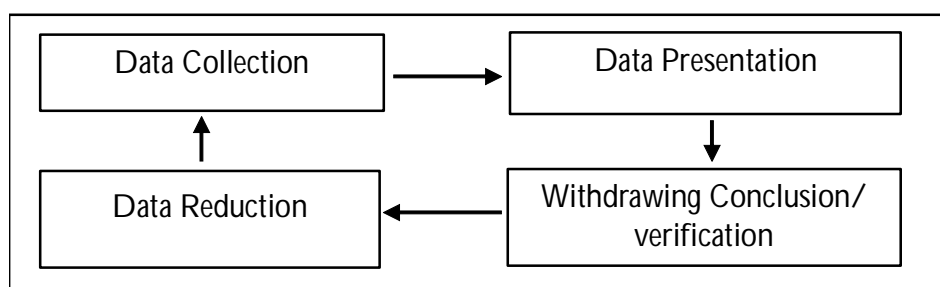
METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach which is the type of research is Phenomenology (case study). The research was carried out during in February to March 2021. The determination of this research subject (Hove, 2011) with the Snowball Sampling technique and the data collection techniques with in-depth interview and documentation. The data validity techniques are used triangulation of sources and methods.

Sources of research data include primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from interviews with lecturers and students at Faculty of Economics and Business Management, National University of Laos. The number of informants who were interviewed to obtain data were voice dean (Academic Affair), 1 economics lecturer, 1 master and 2 bachelor economics students.

Table 1. Research Informants

No.	Coding	Name	Information detail
01	Inf_1/SC	Assoc. Prof. Sengchan Chanthasene	Vice dean (Academics affair)
02	Inf_2/KF	Dr. Kar Faidang	Economics lecturer,
03	Inf_3/KB	Mr. Kaevilay Boualivanh	Economics' master student
04	Inf_4/SH	Ms. Samaiphone Harnvongxay	Economics' bachelor student
05	Inf_5/PK	Ms. Phew Keomany	Economics' bachelor student

**Figure 1. Data Analysis According to Miles and Huberman**

The interview conducted by the researcher is a structured interview. Interviews were conducted with 5 informants who have been determined in Lao language via the online application for example: WhatsApp's call, Messenger's Video call and Google Meet, and then author was translated into English language. Documentation was obtained when researchers conduct supporting data from the answers given by the research topic. This documentation can later be in the form of documents or images of context on teaching and learning evaluations that have been made by lecturer and students in the class learning and campus (Pratiwi, 2015)

Data analysis was performed using an interactive analysis model. Miles and Huberman (Donovan & Pratiwi, 2016) argued that activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continuously in each stage and are carried out to completion, and the data is saturated. Activities in data analysis consist of 3 main things such as: (1) data reduction (2) data presentation (3) withdrawal conclusions/verification.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The Faculty of Economics and Business Management is a leading staff this is developing professional who will specialize in research and academic in order to provide scholars that support national socio-economic development as well as integrating with international and regional networks (*Lao Education Law*, 2007). On 24 March 2020, Laos became the final country in Southeast Asia to report its first confirmed case of this virus.

Lao government is has taken strict measures to close the country at the first, it was able to control this outbreak basically in the country by quarantine for high-risk cases and for those who are travelling from overseas as well as the from the increasing epidemics' region. In Lao PDR, there are only 45 patients of Covid-19 infection (15 March 2020), which is a little number if we compared to neighboring countries

(*Inf_1/SC*) & (*Inf_2/K*). Therefore, Ministry of Education and Sports of Lao PDR is resumed regular education after the extension of the annual holiday during the Lao New Year in April 2020 (*Inf_2/K*). Consequently, National University of Laos or Faculty of Economics and Business Management is not affected and still continuing teaching-learning economics course as the normal class, it means that university non-stop learning (not disruption) by face to face directly during the outbreaking of Pandemics Covid-19 in Lao PDR (*Inf_1/SC*), because of the epidemics are not serious situation and the faculty is followed the order of Ministry of Education and Sports (*Inf_2/KF*)

Faculty of Economics and Business Management is followed the order from National Operation Center for Covid-19 (NOCC) to closed school during extended Lao New Year holiday over the April from 18 March 2020 and re-open on 01 May 2020 (stop learning economics by face to face for 2 weeks on 18-30 March 2020) (*Inf_1/SC*) and, it is already approved using online application for teaching learning for example: Google Meet, Zoom, skype etc. (*Inf_3/KB*). In the addition, perception and preparation of lecturer and students for teaching-learning online, in the term of material, tool, application understanding, internet access or other technology facilitations most of them are readiness 100% (*Inf_5/PK*). Most of the students are aware of this application, due to faculty is the leading aculty in the term of teaching and learning, and there are a few students that are not well understood because it is new application for them (*Inf_4/SH*). Some teachers use online application, but there are not affects to the students learning much, it may from the motivation, accessible and learning style (*Inf_1/SC*).

Online learning is new way to study that some students are not readiness to join the class whether no control from the teachers. Furthermore; online learning is almost focus in the theories as we are learning economics, many courses it is needed to practice in the whiteboard for example: mathematic and econometric subjects (*Inf_1/SC*). On the way to protect Covid-19, National University of Laos, it should emphasize and prioritize the prevention of outbreaks, such as avoiding crowds, providing basic prevention knowledge, such as hand sanitizer, wear a masker, etc. (*Inf_1/SC*). The teaching and learning were found to be normal and unaffected, but not negligent, we have the awareness of this disease was always advertised in the classroom (*Inf_1/SC*)

DISCUSSION

National University of Laos during Outbreak of Pandemic COVID-19

The important timeline of the measure of Lao government response to anti outbreaking of pandemics Covid-19: the schools were closed by starting from 18 March 2020 until after Lao New Year's annual yearly holiday. Beside of that, the government announced a lockdown on 29 March 2020, starting on 30 March 2020 and on 2 June 2020, students returned to classrooms. According to Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) of Lao PDR and the Education Cluster (Action, 2021) has arranged an Education COVID-19 reaction intend to relieve the effect of the pandemic and backing the area's recuperation, for example,: the first it is to help students, educators, guardians/parents and school communities to forestall the transmission and outbreak of COVID-19 in accordance with national public health wellbeing direction and guarantee the prosperity of learning and education staff. The second, to guarantee progression of learning through the execution of diverse/key learning activities/opportunities focused on quality learning and wellbeing of students, educators, guardians/parents, and school communities considering value and inclusivity (United Nations Country Team, 2020).

National University of Laos or Faculty of Economics and Business Management is not affected and still continuing teaching-learning economics course as the normal class, it means that university non-stop learning (not disruption) by face to face directly during the outbreaking of Pandemics Covid-19 in Lao PDR because of the epidemics are not serious situation in Lao PDR and the faculty is followed the order of Ministry of Education and Sports and followed the government declaration from National Operation Center for Covid-19 (NOCC) to closed school during extended Lao New Year holiday over the April from 18 March 2020 and re-open on 01 May 2020 (stop learning economics by face to face for 2 weeks on 18-30 March 2020 (Families & Lao, 2021).

Overview of Education System and Learning Economics

Economics is a subject that studies relative with the human behavior to determining and allocating the limited resources for maximum efficiency, and it is a vital force in the development of social creativity and

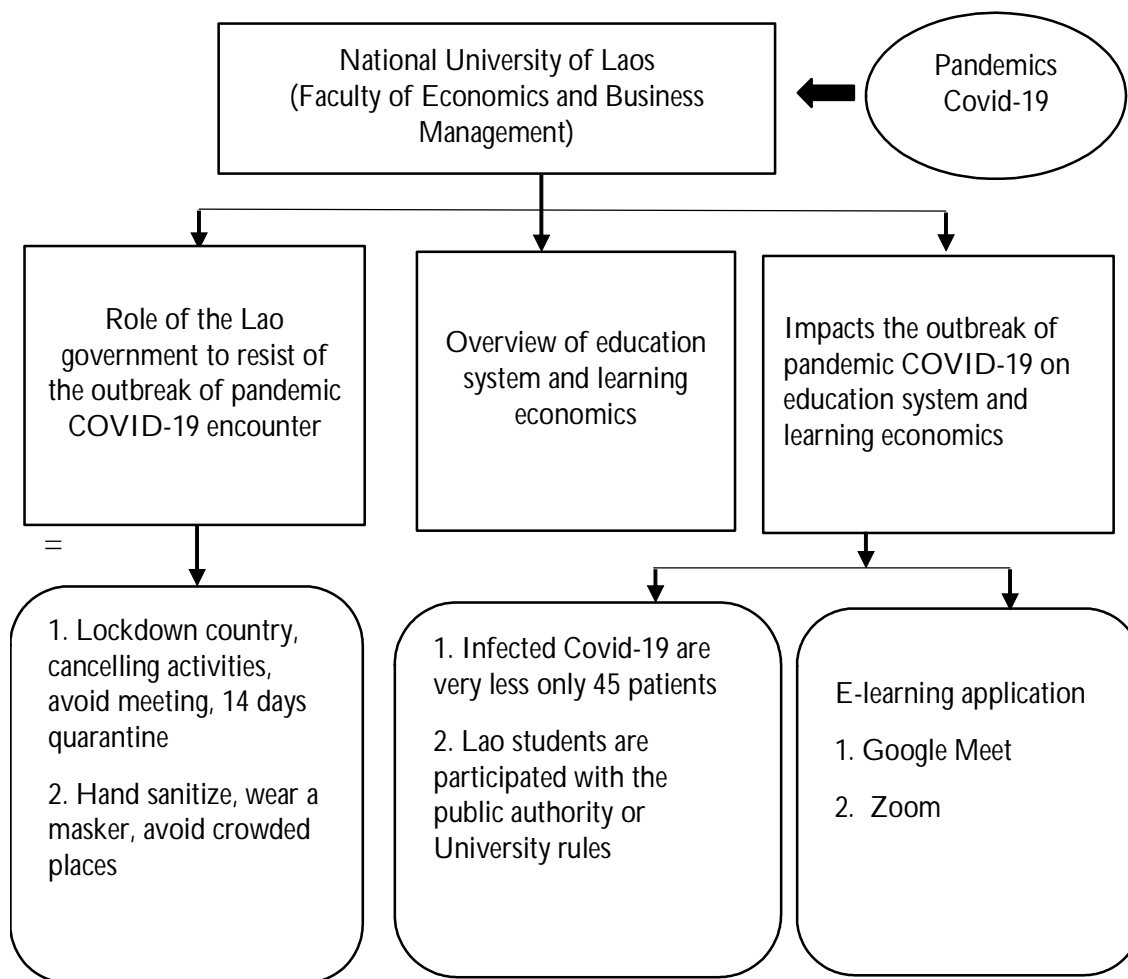


Figure 2. Flow Chart of Research Findings

future of the country in the process of human resources are valuable and essential in education management systems. Economics education is a process of human resource development in the form of increasing knowledge, increasing thinking, intelligent, rational in the science research to increase their abilities and skills until they may be able to define that economics education is a kind of economic production which is transformed to humanity into higher quality

Schultz (Schultz, 1961) points out that “investing in education is a critical factor in explaining the importance of education, economic growth and it was found that about 20-40 percent of the total production increased as a result of educational investment. It has greatly increased the productivity of labor in the total yield increased significantly”.

Human resources and manpower are important production factors of the economy, especially in developing countries. Therefore, the efforts to increase human resource productivity or giving ability to each individual for create more economic productivity while other resources are having limited, it is extremely urgent for countries that want to accelerate economic development.

Impacts the Outbreak of Pandemic COVID-19 on Learning Economics

National University of Laos is not directly affected as in neighboring countries and other countries in the region. The main cause that is not affected is that the outbreaking of pandemics Covid-19 in Lao PDR is not as severe as in other countries, the outbreak

is under the control of the Lao government, but the Faculty of Economic and Business Management is not neglecting and ignoring the epidemic situation by seen from the campaign of prevention, providing basic knowledge to students, avoidance from vulnerable areas such as crowded communities, events, activities and so on. The action policy to teaching economics at the Faculty of Economics and Business Management, National University of Laos, it had taken command of the Ministry of Education and Sports issued such as: Ministry of Education and Sports issued a notice to the party over the Lao New Year before two weeks, Faculty of Economics and Business Management also follow ordered the Ministry of Education and Sports, during the period of April 2020 some teachers which is available are used Application Online continues to their class and give assignments instead, on the other hand, some teachers are stopped teaching because it is over the near Lao New Year's holiday (Head & Education, 2020)

The global COVID-19 pandemic has overturned our day by day lives in unprecedented ways. Economic educators may make advantage of this chance to instruct their students with some key economic principles/theories utilizing these COVID-19 related occasions (Facility, 2020). Faculty of Economics and Business Management is the leading faculty in technology, application and networking in National University of Laos. During the trouble situation of outbreaking pandemic Covid-19 in the early (March-April 2020), the faculty is approved an application for its own teaching-learning, such as: Zoom, Google Meet, Skype and etc. (Kuhn et al., 2018). on the other way, for internet networking and tools, it can be found that most of the lecturers in National University of Laos are well-versed because each of the lecturer is knowledgeable and expert in experience. For the students, there is still some are not well understanding yet of learning online due to in the fact that the students at the university have different basic knowledge and different family's condition, making access to modern materials are not ready yet and some are inaccessible to some places.

Due to the Covid-19 patients in Laos is very less and the government can control the epidemics. National University of Laos does not have an application yet for its own teaching-learning, but there are other apps that can be used, such as: Zoom, Google Meet, WhatsApp etc. and Faculty of Economics and Business Management is prepared and committed 100% to implement online learning in the future because most of the teachers are experienced

and highly educated, most of them have been trained and graduated from overseas. In addition, most of the students (Wagner, 2017) are aware of this application, too because the Faculty which is the leading Faculty that applying technology to teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

National University of Laos or Faculty of Economics and Business Management is not affected and still continuing teaching-learning economics lecture as the normal class, it means that university non-stop lecture by face to face directly during the out-breaking of Pandemics Covid-19 in Lao PDR. It is because of the epidemics are not serious situation in Lao PDR and the faculty is followed the order of Ministry of Education and Sports and the declaration from National Operation Center for Covid-19 (NOCC) to closed school during extended Lao New Year holiday over the April from 18 March 2020 and re-open on 01 May 2020 (stop economics lecture by face to face for 2 weeks on 18-30 March 2020). On the term of learning online application, National University of Laos or Faculty of Economics and Business Management is has been already approved using online application for teaching-learning for example: Google Meet, Zoom, skype etc. in addition, the perception and preparation of lecturer and students for teaching-learning online, in the term of material, tool, application understanding, internet access or other technology facilitations most of them are readiness 100% which is mean that they are aware of this application, due to Faculty of Economics and Business Management which is the leading Faculty that applying technology to teaching and learning, and there are a few students that are not well understood because it is new application for them. More information; during the extension of Lao New Year's holiday in the April 2020, some teachers use online application, but there are not affects to the students learning much, it may from the motivation, accessible and learning style. In addition, online learning is new way to study that some students are not readiness to join the class whether no control from the teachers. Furthermore; online learning is almost focus in the theories as we are learning economics, many courses it is needed to practice in the whiteboard for example: mathematic, econometric, Introduction economics, project appraisal and so on.

In the next study, the analysis about the fact of teaching-learning economics during the outbreaking of pandemics Covid-19, it has to take more time and reach to the location, the data collection it should be included with observation, and many data informants in university

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