Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Experiential Learning in a Business Education Program at a Small Private Liberal Arts University

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Recommended Citation
Marcin, James and Petre, Vivian, "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Experiential Learning in a Business Education Program at a Small Private Liberal Arts University" (2013). SoTL Commons Conference. 2.
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Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Experiential Learning in Business Education Programs

Vivian N. Petre
Outline

- What is experiential learning and the foundations behind this learning theory?
- The Next Generation
- Literature Reviews
- Student Survey Analysis
- Interview with Educators
- Conclusions & Recommendations
Experiential Learning

“I hear, I know. I see, I remember. I do, I understand.”

- Confucius, 551-479 BC
What is Experiential Learning?

• Learning from experience or by doing
• Forms of Experiential Learning:
  – Internships
  – Job Shadowing
  – Field Trips to Relevant Sites
  – Exchange Programs
  – Volunteer Work
  – Hands-on Laboratory Activities
  – Interviewing
  – Education Placement
Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory

Figure 1: The Four Modes of the Learning Cycle.

- **Concrete Experience** (CE): ‘Feeling’
- **Active Experimentation** (AE): ‘Doing’
- **Abstract Conceptualisation** (AC): ‘Thinking’
- **Reflective Observation** (RO): ‘Watching’
Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory

Figure 2: The Four Learning Styles.

1. **Concrete Experience (CE)**
   - Accommodator (Do & Feel)
   - Converger (Think & Do)

2. **Abstract Conceptualisation (AC)**
   - Assimilator (Watch & Think)

3. **Reflective Observation (RO)**
   - Diverger (Feel & Watch)

4. **Active Experimentation (AE)**
   - Converger (Think & Do)
   - Accommodator (Do & Feel)
Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory

• The Four Learning Styles
  – Accommodators
    • Hands-On Experience
  – Divergers
    • Observe and collect a wide range of information
  – Convergers
    • Practical application of concepts and theories
  – Assimilators
    • Presented with sound logical theories to consider
The Next Generation

• Born between 1982 – early 2000’s
• 36% of America’s population
  – 90 million immigrants are included

• Referred to as:
  – Millennials
  – Generation Y
The Next Generation

- Seven Distinguishing Traits
  - Special
  - Sheltered
  - Confident
  - Team-Oriented
  - Achieving
  - Pressured
  - Conventional
The Next Generation

• Educators – Baby Boomers and Generation X

• Distinct Learning Differences and Preferences
  – Traditional Lecture Style
  – “Digital Natives”
Literature Review

• Experiencing Philosophy: Engaging Students in Advanced Theory
  – Sean Blenkinsop & Chris Beeman

  – Experiential learning should enhance the learning experience.

  – Allows learners to have alternative ways to make sense of complex and theoretical ideas.
Literature Review

• Enhancing the Educational Value of Experiential Learning: The Business Court Project
  • Anne Ness, Susan Willey, & Nancy R. Mansfield

• The Legal and Ethical Environment of Business

• Feedback
  – 75% better understanding
  – 72% more appreciative of the complexity
  – 68% ‘demystified’ the legal system
Student Survey

- 48 Students Surveyed – 47 Answered all Questions

- 19 Questions
  - 4 Multiple Choice
  - 12 Likert-type
    - Each likert-type question was given a designated code
  - 3 Open Ended
Survey Data Analysis

**Enrollment Status**
- Full-Time: 96%
- Part-Time: 4%

**Class Structure**
- Regular Classroom: 17%
- Hybrid (Combined online with classroom): 83%
Survey Data Analysis

Form of Experiential Learning Experienced in a Business Course

- Internship: 32%
- Job Shadowing: 26%
- Field Trips to Relevant Sites: 11%
- Hands-On Activities in Classroom: 6%
- Observation: 0%
- Combination: 0%
# Survey Data Analysis

## Frequency Distribution

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<th>upper</th>
<th>midpoint</th>
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- Total: 47 | 100.0
Survey Data Analysis
Frequency Distribution

- Lowest percentage D3 – 78.7%
- All other more than 80% of positive agreement
Survey Data Analysis

Histogram

- All skewed to left
  - Exception Q4-7 & Q4-9
Survey Data Analysis
Regression Analysis

- All Possible Regressions
- Independent variables that had direct relationships with dependent variables:
  - $D_1 = f(Q_{4-4}, Q_{4-6}, Q_{4-8})$
  - $D_2 = f(Q_{4-3}, Q_{4-4}, Q_{4-6}, Q_{4-8})$
  - $D_3 = f(Q_{4-2}, Q_{4-3}, Q_{4-6}, Q_{4-8})$
## Survey Data Analysis

### Regression Analysis

- **Test-Intercept**

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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>*</td>
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- # - 90% Confidence Level
- * - 95% Confidence Level
- ** - 99% Confidence Level
Survey Data Analysis

- Open-Ended Questions
  - “foster a stronger knowledge of the skill/task at hand”
  - “remembered lessons better because of the setting”
Interview with Educators

• 11 Questions
  – How was experiential learning incorporated?
  – Challenges and Resistance
  – Difference in Students
  – University’s assistance and support

• Similar Sentiments
Recommendations

- The university can increase support
- Encourage students to participate
- Incorporate this pedagogy into business program department policy for academic standards
Conclusion

Experiential Learning is effective and should be incorporated into business education programs.
Questions?