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

James Marcin
*Methodist University, jmarcin@methodist.edu*

Vivian Petre
*Methodist University, vpetre@student.methodist.edu*

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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**
  - ‘Feeling’
  - (CE)

- **REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION**
  - ‘Watching’
  - (RO)

- **ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION**
  - ‘Doing’
  - (AE)

- **ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALISATION**
  - ‘Thinking’
  - (AC)
Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory

Figure 2: The Four Learning Styles.

- **Concrete Experience (CE)**: Feeling
  - Accommodator (Do & Feel)
    - AE/CE
- **Active Experimentation (AE)**: Doing
  - Converger (Think & Do)
    - AC/AE
- **Reflective Observation (RO)**: Watching
  - Assimilator (Watch & Think)
    - RO/AC
- **Abstract Conceptualisation (AC)**: Thinking
  - Diverger (Feel & Watch)
    - CE/RO

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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”
Experiencing Philosophy: Engaging Students in Advanced Theory

- 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: 4%
- Part-Time: 96%

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

### Frequency Distribution

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<th>Q4-1</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Midpoint</th>
<th>Width</th>
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<th>Percent</th>
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<td>53.2</td>
<td>47</td>
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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:
  – D1=f(Q4-4, Q4-6, Q4-8)
  – D2=f(Q4-3, Q4-4, Q4-6, Q4-8)
  – D3=f(Q4-2, Q4-3, Q4-6, Q4-8)
Survey Data Analysis
Regression Analysis

- **Test-Intercept**

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<th>Q4-2</th>
<th>Q4-3</th>
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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
Experiential Learning is effective and should be incorporated into business education programs.
Questions?