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

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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
"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’
- **Reflective Observation (RO)**: ‘Watching’
- **Abstract Conceptualisation (AC)**: ‘Thinking’

The cycle moves from CE to AE, then to RO, and finally to AC.
Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory

Figure 2: The Four Learning Styles.

- **Concrete Experience (CE)**
  - Accommodator (Do & Feel) AE/CE
  - Diverger (Feel & Watch) CE/RO

- **Active Experimentation (AE)**
  - Converger (Think & Do) AC/AE

- **Reflective Observation (RO)**
  - Assimilator (Watch & Think) RO/AC

- **Abstract Conceptualisation (AC)**
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: 6%
- Field Trips to Relevant Sites: 26%
- Hands-On Activities in Classroom: 11%
- Observation: 0%
- Combination: 26%
## Survey Data Analysis

### Frequency Distribution

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<th>lower</th>
<th>upper</th>
<th>midpoint</th>
<th>width</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>Q4-3</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
Conclusion

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