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I'M GEN Y, I LOVE FEELING ENTITLED, AND IT SHOWS

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ABSTRACT

Entitlement, as defined by The American Heritage Dictionary (1985), is "to furnish with a right or claim to something." In a previous study, the authors investigated the possible cognitive determinants which have led to an "entitlement" mentality found in "Generation Y" individuals ("Millenials") confronting both academicians and employers.

This paper extends this research stream by examining the resulting affective and behavioral attitudinal components arising from this "entitlement" mindset. The research draws from an extensive review of relevant literature and results from focus groups used to validate the constructs leading to the development of an instrument which was utilized to measure the antecedent cognitive constructs and the resulting affective and behavioral effects leading to the entitlement attitude detailed in this paper. The findings and implications of this research will be discussed.

ACTIVE LEARNING IN AN INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COURSE

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ABSTRACT

The need to improve student engagement and success and increase the retention rate of introductory university students has received increasing attention in recent years. In addition, colleges and schools of business have an ongoing need to attract students who can be successful in the professional business program and to improve the engagement and success of those students. Introduction to business courses provide an early opportunity to engage students in thinking about business careers and to attract students to the business major. Active learning teaching techniques focus on improving student engagement with the expectation that this will increase student success and retention. This study describes a set of active learning techniques implemented in an introduction to business course at a mid-sized public university. Using survey and student performance data, collected for a control group and the classes implementing active learning techniques, the study examines the impact of the use of these methods on student engagement, student success, and student intentions regarding pursuing a business major.

INTRODUCTION

Efforts to attract and retain bright and motivated students have always been Important to university business programs and the need for such efforts has increased in recent years. The perceived need to increase the proportion of the U.S. population earning college degrees in order to better compete in the world economy coupled with recent fiscal distresses have caused legislatures around the country to place more pressure on schools to show improvements in student success and retention. These trends make it particularly important in the current environment, that business schools be able to recruit and retain students who will be successful in the business program.

Studies have often found that commitment to school and commitment to their planned occupation is a critical factor in student retention and success (Tinto, 1975 and Spaeth, 1970). Commitment to a specific occupation or career has also been shown to improve retention (Dodge, Mitchell and Mensch, 2009 and Willcoxson and Wynder, 2010). More broadly, Sandler (2000) found that students who are more confident in their ability to make appropriate career decisions, including the selection of a major, are more likely to persist in college.

Early establishment of career understanding and commitment appears to be important. Williams (2010) argues that delays in building career understanding and commitment among students enrolled in courses prerequisite to the Nursing major may increase attrition rates among nursing students. While Koch and Hayworth (2009) found that enrollment in the introductory programming course for majors more than doubled in the 2 years following introduction of a program in which current majors were given a central role in designing recruitment efforts and were used in job fairs, presentations in beginning classes, and mentoring activities.

Early establishment of career understanding and commitment would seem to be a critical need for business programs as well, since first courses in the business disciplines of management, marketing, and finance are rarely offered at the freshman or sophomore level - in less than 15% of schools according to one study (Morgan, Tallman, and Williams, 2006). Thus students with a specific career interest in those disciplines may not be getting the knowledge and engagement they need to solidify career plans. A properly designed introduction to business (hereafter I to B) program may be critical in establishing a feeling of connection and commitment to the business major and in enhancing career understanding of lower division students.

A few prior studies have examined attempts to explicitly introduce active learning techniques and career focused activities in I to B courses and related first year retention programs. Chonko and Roberts (1996) describe the design of an I to B course focusing on skills, such as – critical thinking, integration of skills, and communication skills - that will help students be more marketable over their careers and on career building. Summary data from teaching evaluations found generally favorable responses to the course, but no statistical comparisons to a more traditional course were provided. Another school introduced an I to B course designed specifically target retention of first year business students (Cox et. al., 2005) through components specifically devoted to diversity and globalization, business ethics, and the development of "learning skills and academic success strategies." Additionally, the course builds a social support structure via "block scheduling, peer and faculty mentoring" and use of team activities. Participants were found to earn higher GPAs, have lower rates of academic disqualification and a higher likelihood to return for their second year, compared to students not taking the course. Finally, Potts and Schultz (2008) report on a business college retention program involving placing students in cohorts, and giving them a 1 credit freshman seminar focusing on academic and career planning, accessing academic assistance, use of library resources, and the content and career opportunities in the majors offered in the (business) college. This program did not produce significant impacts in the general student population, but, did produce enhanced levels of retention and performance among at risk students. Additionally, nearly a third of students changed their major within the college as a result of completing this course.

FOCUS OF THIS STUDY

This study compares student survey and student performance data collected from an I to B course offered as an elective to freshman and sophomore level students at a mid-sized public university in the southwest. Parallel data sets were collected both before and after the implementation of significant course redesign intended to emphasize active learning teaching methods. The active learning elements introduced are described below.

The redesigned IB class utilized "clickers" to engage students in active participation and provide real time feedback in the wrap-up of lecture and discussion sessions. In addition, a number active learning and career awareness oriented assignments were added including:

1. Success Practices/Team Building Activities – Critical student success practices including time management and study skills are emphasized early in the course with introductions to available university resources and students are required to introduce themselves including posting a picture of themselves online during the first week of class.
2. Fantasy Business Journals - Designed as a creative learning activity to self reflect and apply learning in an individualized and personal environment. Built on a model of journaling/nonlinear thinking and integrated with the concept of creating a fantasy business. Students were assigned 4 'online" journal topics (Business Formation, Management, Marketing, Information Technology) each topic having 7 key questions to stimulate thought and structure student responses. Essentially, the students built the fundamentals of a business plan.
3. Video Review Memo's - Designed as an in-class learning activity. Students were shown a short video related to the topic of study and were provided a sample blank memo to the instructor which used to summarize their learning/insights. Used for both individual and group assignments.
4. Personal Profile Report - Designed as a self reflection personal assessment. Students were required to assess their individual skills and personality characteristics using an online career and major exploration instrument (SIGI[3]), and were required to write a single page report using terminology from the assessment and adding any personal perspectives. In a second assignment students were required to research open positions with US Companies, to select one which they would aspire to, and to describe the position discuss why their skills and personality would make them a good fit for the position.
5. Company Profile Team Report - Designed as a course wrap-up team project. Students were assigned a major NYSE listed corporation and were to research and profile the company in a 5 page report. Students were given extra credit to address the class and present significant learning's about the company.
6. Pathways Reports – This activity connected students to a set of co-curricular activities called "pathways" offered by the business college in order to enhance engagement of lower division students with real-world business issues and leaders. The IB students were required to attend and write a summary report on 2 to 3 of these sessions.

The before data set consists of 94 observations from a set of sections of the I to B course taught using traditional methods in the Spring of 2010. The after data set of 89 observations is drawn from sections of the course offered in the Fall of 2011 after implementation of the redesign focusing on active learning methods that was described above. In each instance, an identical set of questions was asked at in a Pre-Q questionnaire during week 2 and again in a Post-Q questionnaire during week 15.

FINDINGS

Our analysis of the survey results is still in process, and only a summary of a few initial findings will be presented here. One key question asked students to indicate their "the extent to which you are considering majoring in business" by responding on a 7 point a Likert scale (with 1 indicating not at all and 7 indicating very seriously. Summary results for this question are presented below in Table 1. Students in the active learning oriented course were more positively disposed to majoring in business than those in the traditional course both at the end of the course and at the beginning. While the difference in the mean Pre-Q score cannot be explained by the change in the course design, it is interesting to note that the mean level of interest improved under the active learning approach where it had actually fallen in the survey of the traditional course. For the active learning course, 40 students increased their level of interest in the business major during the course versus 19 students whose level of interest fell and these changes were significant at the .05 level for a one tailed Wilcoxin signed ranks test of the hypothesis that the I to B course will increase student interest in majoring in business.

Table 1: Impact of Active Learning Approach on Interest in Majoring in Business

APPROACH	Mean Rating Pre - Q	Mean Rating Post - Q	Post Rating > Pre rating	Post Rating < Pre Rating	Wilcoxin Signed Ranks P-Value
Traditional	5.02	4.89	26	27	Not Significant
Active Learning	5.66	5.77	40	19	.037

Another point of interest is the degree to which the I to B course causes changes in preferences among majors within the business discipline. Arguably such changes suggest that the I to B course builds a deeper understanding of career options and a stronger commitment to the chosen major. A summary of student changes in preferred major among business disciplines for the active learning I to B course is presented in Table 2. Overall 31.6% of students shifted either to or from one of the business disciplines in their self-reported intention to major, between the pre and post survey. A number comparable to that reported for the Potts and Schultz (2008) career development program cited above. In addition the largest proportion of changes were among the management and marketing majors where courses in the major are not available to help build career commitment during the lower division curriculum. Results for the traditional course are not presented here, but are relatively similar to those for the active learning delivery.

Table 2: Impact of Active Learning I To B Course on Choice of Business Major Discipline

Major	Plan This Major Pre - Q	Plan This Major Post - Q	Shifted From This Major	Shifted To This Major	Net Change
Accounting	6	6	2	2	0
CIS	6	5	1	0	-1
Economics	4	3	2	1	-1
Finance	8	7	1	2	-1
Management	16	19	9	6	3
Marketing	23	23	5	5	0

SUMMARY

This study has examined the impact of the I to B course on student intentions to major in business and their preferences for majors within the business disciple. Results both before and after implementation of a curriculum redesign aimed at introducing active learning elements were presented. The results suggest the active learning elements introduced in the course did lead to a small but significant increase in student intentions to major in business, whereas no such change was present using a more traditional curriculum. In addition, nearly a third of student changed their preferred major within the discipline over the course of the semester in which they completed the I to B course, which suggests that the course had significant impact on student career awareness. While the results presented here are limited by the fact that they involve only a single school and are based on self-reported data, they do suggest that the active learning elements described here may be impactful and are worthy of consideration when deigning an I to B course.

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STRUCTURING THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AROUND LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Consider how professions have changed over time as depicted by popular TV shows. During the 1960s, the legal profession was represented by Perry Mason, a lone defendant lawyer who had all the wisdom and insight necessary to free his wrongly charged client and to get the truly guilty person to admit it on the stand. Today's popular legal shows include Boston Legal, typified by a team of lawyers sharing knowledge and responsibility for cases. The practice of medicine was different, and was so represented, by Dr. Kildare on Ben Casey. Today it is Grey's Anatomy or House with a team of physicians providing services and sharing responsibility.

Contrast that with shows about education. Welcome Back Kotter of the 1970's with the single teacher in the classroom is no different today that it was then or even one hundred or two hundred years ago, especially in higher education. The adage, "Being a professor is a lonely profession," is usually attributed to the long hours professors spend on their research, but we submit the loneliness of the profession actually occurs in teaching. Professors discuss their research with one another and collaborate on projects, but how often are college or department meetings devoted to improvements in learning?

College teaching is most like a factory model: raw materials (students) enter the institution and are processed at independent stations (classes). The independent stations are linked through curriculum, but beyond requiring one station to process the raw material before another, little communication is done about the progression of learning or the quality of the product in aggregate as opposed to individual pieces. It is assumed professors, operating within the curriculum guidelines, will make proper adjustments to the student to assure a well-built product at the end of the process (graduation). Workers at the work stations (professors) have responsibility for the work done at their station, but have little, if any, sense of responsibility for the final product or any defects that might exist.

Student learning should be the focus of any educational institution. According to DuFour (2005) On Common Ground: The Power of Professional Learning Communities there are four questions an educational institution should answer:

- *What is it we want the student to learn?*
- *How will we know when each student has mastered the essential learning?*
- *How will we respond when a student experiences initial difficulty in learning?*

- *How will we deepen the learning for students who have already mastered essential skills and knowledge?*

In higher education, neither the evaluation system nor the organizational structure directly addresses these questions. Most faculty evaluation systems evaluate teaching and that becomes the partial basis for merit increases, promotion, and tenure decisions. And the classroom environment, just as it was 200 years ago remains one teacher operating independently. The AACSB Assurance of Learning Standard is an attempt by the national colleges of business largest accrediting agency to address learning. That standard may measure student learning over a small number of pre-identified topics, but does little to address the success of students as they progress through the system or assigning responsibility for that success.

The core mission of education is not simply to ensure that students are taught but to ensure that they learn—learning focus rather than teaching focus. Business curricula may do a good job of answering the first question posed by DuFour, and some may do a reasonable job at addressing the second, but few, if any, are able to address the last two questions primarily because they are not organized such that they can.

This paper will propose a different organizational structure for colleges of business that will promote learning rather than teaching. It will begin by examining typical work structures for college professors and the motivations and incentives it facilitates. It will then propose a new organizational structure and defend it through a variety of well accepted theories including job satisfaction, job design, professional learning communities, and student learning in collaborative environments.

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INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS INFLUENCE CRITICAL THINKING: DO STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS AGREE?

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Scope and Purpose

The issue of relating teaching strategies and instructional methods to critical thinking student outcomes is a frequent topic among administrators and faculty (Bruan, 2004). There is a significant body of literature regarding critical thinking as well as case studies of the application of various instructional methods and teaching strategies (Cohen, 1981; Gellin, 2003; Snyder & Snyder, 2008). However, there appears to be a void in the literature regarding the alignment of perceptions between instructors and students as to what methods influence or enhance critical thinking.

For clarification, we are using the definition of critical thinking from Scriven and Paul (1987):

> Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.

This study reports findings of a survey of students and instructors in the business school of a small Southern college that addresses the basic question "do students and instructors agree which instructional methods or teaching strategies influence student perceptions of critical thinking instruction? Three propositions are examined to determine the extent of any relationship between instructor perceptions of their selected teaching strategies and student perceptions of critical thinking instruction.

Proposition 1: *Student perceptions of critical thinking instruction differ significantly between courses. As they progress to higher level courses, students will increasingly respond to critical thinking instructional methods reflecting synthesis, analysis and application of course content.*

Proposition 2: *Student perceptions of critical thinking instruction are highly correlated with the instructor's perception of critical thinking instruction in the course pedagogy.*

Proposition 3: *n instructor's emphasis on a selected instructional method or teaching strategy is highly correlated with student perceptions of critical thinking instruction.*

METHODOLOGY

A standard instrument for measuring student perception of critical thinking instruction developed by the Foundation for Critical Thinking (Paul & Elder, 2007) was administered to both instructors and students. This instrument contained twenty items addressing the purposes and cognitive skills associated with critical thinking. The phrasing of each item was slightly altered for a corresponding survey of instructors as "my instructor" became "I". Data was collected in a census survey of core courses in the business program. A total of 60 core course sections were surveyed with 689 responses from an enrolled total of 797 students (86.4% response rate).

In addition, instructors were surveyed regarding the instructional methods and teaching strategies incorporated in their respective courses. This instrument contained a selected list of twenty common direct and indirect teaching methods. Faculty members were asked to indicate which methods they employed in a class, the relative importance of the method or strategy to the course and an approximate percentage of classroom time allotted to the method.

Student Perceptions of Instruction

Proposition 1: *Student perceptions of critical thinking instruction differ significantly between courses. As students progress to higher level courses, students will increasingly respond to critical thinking instructional methods reflecting synthesis, analysis and application of course content.*

When examining course level mean scores for student perceptions of critical thinking instruction, we were able to reject the null and find there are statistically significant differences between mean scores at different course levels ($N = 60$, $F = 2.786$, $p < .10$). When examined on a course level basis between sophomore and junior level courses, the difference was statistically significant. However, the difference in scores between junior and senior level courses was not statistically significant. Therefore, students in courses for sophomores view critical thinking instruction differently than students in junior and senior level courses.

Students and Instructors View of Instruction

Proposition 2: *Student perceptions of critical thinking instruction are highly correlated with the instructor's perception of critical thinking instruction. Agreement between students and instructors regarding critical thinking instruction fosters a* *positive learning environment and reflects critical thinking within the course.*

At a course level, we examined the mean scores from students with instructor scores. Using a paired samples *t*-test, we found support for the alternate proposition that differences between course level mean scores between students and faculty were statistically significant ($p < .01$).

Correspondingly, there is a weak correlation between course level mean scores for perceived critical thinking instruction between students and faculty ($N = 58$, $\rho = .235$, $p < .05$). Therefore, on a course level basis student perceptions of critical thinking instruction are quite different from the perceptions of the instructors.

When examining course level scores between students and faculty on an item-by-item basis, there is a different picture of agreement. Of the twenty items in the survey, students and faculty agreed on the extent that instructors teach so as;

- To make clear the reason why students are doing what they are doing (the purpose of the assignment, activity, chapter, test, etc…).
- To help students learn how to identify the most basic assumptions in the subject.
- To enable students to think more clearly.

Matching Instructional Methods and Student Perceptions

Instructors were asked to rate the relative importance of the instructional methods incorporated in their course. Methods varied according to instructor interpretation of the course discipline and content as well as the course level. In discussions external to the survey, instructors also expressed their desire to match instructional methods with the learning styles of their students. Achieving these objectives in course design and the associated instructional methods and teaching strategies suggest our next proposition.

Proposition 3: *An instructor's emphasis on a selected instructional method or teaching strategy is highly correlated with student perceptions of critical thinking instruction.*

A Pearson's product moment correlation was computed for each of the instances and instructor rated emphasis where an instructional method was incorporated in a course and the corresponding student perception of critical thinking instruction. The following discussion highlights instances where the resulting correlation was significant ($p < .05$ or $.01$).

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION

The instructional method "Lecture / Discussion" reflecting a form of the Socratic method was the most frequently selected method (92%). This teaching strategy demonstrated a moderately strong correlation to student perceptions of critical thinking instruction across all course levels ($N = 55$, $\rho = .432$, $p < .01$). The relationship is highest in senior level courses ($N = 9$, $\rho = .487$, $p < .10$).

Videos

Use of videos as part of the course pedagogy produces some counterintuitive results. Overall, it appears that use of videos at the sophomore course level has a negative relationship to student perceptions of critical thinking instruction. From sophomore to senior level, the analysis shows a progression from negative to positive correlation between the use of videos and the student perceptions of critical thinking instruction. When applied in senior level courses, the correlation with student perceptions of critical thinking instruction is high ($N = 7$, $\rho = .702$, $p < .05$). One reason may be the nature and positioning of the choices for videos, their expected contribution to critical thinking as well as their relevance to the course content and expected course outcomes. A counter argument may be that as students mature in the college experience, they improve their skills in processing and applying information from a variety of sources.

Discussion and Brainstorming

When employed in a course, instructor lead discussion exhibits a moderately strong correlation with student perceptions of critical thinking instruction ($N = 46$, $\rho = .523$, $p < .01$). This relationship appears to be consistent across all course levels. A related activity, brainstorming, exhibits similar pattern. Including brainstorming as a teaching strategy has a moderately strong correlation with student perceptions of critical thinking instruction ($N = 38$, $\rho = .474$, $p < .01$).

Individual Projects and Presentations

Individual project assignments actively engage students in problem solving activities and promote development of critical thinking skills. When employed in a course, the individual project exhibits a moderately strong correlation with student perceptions of critical thinking instruction ($N = 43$, $\rho = .623$, $p < .01$). Interestingly, the strongest correlation was in the sophomore level courses ($N = 21$, $\rho = .759$, $p < .01$). However, a team project at the sophomore level has a negative correlation ($N = 8$, $\rho = -.625$, $p < .05$).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We found support for Proposition 1 that student perceptions of critical thinking instruction differ significantly between courses. As they progress to higher level courses, students perceptions of critical thinking instruction increase. This suggests that students will increasingly respond to critical thinking instructional methods reflecting synthesis, analysis and application of course content.

We did not find support for Proposition 2 that student perceptions of critical thinking instruction are highly correlated with the instructor's perception of critical thinking instruction in the course pedagogy. There was statistically significant agreement on only four of twenty items included in the survey of perceptions between instructors and students. In this study, we found support for an alternate proposition that there is a significant difference in the instructors' perceptions and the students' perceptions. This disconnect is most prevalent among the sophomore level courses.

We found limited support for Proposition 3 that an instructor's emphasis on a selected instructional method or teaching strategy is highly correlated with student perceptions of critical thinking instruction. Out of twenty direct and indirect instructional methods included in the survey, only four methods exhibited correlations with student perceptions that were statistically significant. These were lecture with discussion, brainstorming, discussion, and individual projects, all of which entail student's active engagement.

In light of these results, we believe instructors should re-examine their assumptions about critical thinking instructional methods. In particular, they should consider different strategies that may foster closer alignment with student perceptions. The results of this study suggest several points for faculty.

Simple measures such as identifying the relationship of an assignment or activity to critical thinking may foster a closer alignment. Clarity in instruction and sharing the instructors thinking about the assignment is a form of role modeling critical thinking. There is anecdotal evidence from instructors that these behaviors have as much to do with the students perceptions as the assignment itself.

The degree of disconnect between instructor perceptions and student perceptions of critical thinking instruction should be a warning sign that instructors are not engaging their students in active learning. Education literature regarding learning styles as well as student engagement literature may provide further understanding of this relationship and provide a basis for formulating more effective teaching strategies. Administrators responsible for faculty development programs should

As there is evidence that student perceptions of critical thinking instruction change as students transition from sophomore level to senior level courses, further investigation is needed to uncover the underlying factors that contribute to this pattern. Is there a relationship with student learning styles or does this reflect a difference in teaching strategies based on the instructors' perceptions of "what's best" for a particular course level. In other words, are instructor's expectations may actually be hampering active learning.

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THE BIG FIVE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT

The sample used in this study consisted of 671 nascent entrepreneurs. The measures that we used included the modified Rep Test of Bieri et al. (1966) to measure cognitive complexity, the least preferred coworker scale of Fielder (1985) to measure leadership, and behavioral observation to measure entrepreneurial performance. All but Extraversion were related to task oriented leadership. Those who were Conscientious and Emotionally Stable were more likely to be task oriented while those who were Agreeable and had greater Openness to New Experiences were less likely to be task oriented leaders. Conscientiousness and Extraversion were related to performance as an entrepreneur. Those who were more conscientious did better as entrepreneurs and those who were extraverted did better as entrepreneurs. As Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability increase levels of cognitive complexity decrease while Cognitive Complexity increased with increasing levels of Extraversion.

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THE EFFECT OF HUMAN INTERACTIONS ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND SATISFACTION OF BLENDED LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines whether human interaction in blended learning enhances student performance and satisfaction for an introductory principles of accounting course over the period 2010-2011. It has been argued that interaction is one of the most important components of any learning experience ((Dewey 1938), (Vrasidas and McIsaac 1999)). Preliminary results indicate that the blended course with greater human interactions does not impact the student performance after controlling certain control factors such as prior GPA, math grade, gender and transfer status.

However, student evaluations have improved with greater interaction, suggesting human interaction is associated with greater satisfaction with teaching.

THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS: FROM NATIONAL INITIATIVE TO INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative is based on a vision of "college and career readiness" for K-12 students. The CCSS, a compressed set of instructional mandates, are evidence-based and globally-informed. Thirty-five states believe the increased rigor of the CCSS will improve student learning (CEP, 2011) and therefore merit immediate implementation. Although the CCSS identify what should be taught (learning objectives), the standards do not delineate how to teach these standards. The stakes are high. Moving from a national initiative of this magnitude, to improved instructional practice and increased student achievement, is the challenge. This paper will discuss this dilemma and provide evidence that Idaho Total Instructional Alignment (TIA) is answering the challenge. Idaho Total Instructional Alignment (TIA) is a model for implementing the CCSS based on six research supported features of effective professional development. The priority is strengthening the capacity of educators and modifying instructional practice to deliver standards-based education so that "no child is left behind."

INTRODUCTION

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are based on a vision of "college and career readiness" for K-12 students. According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative (2011), the underlying rationale behind the new CCSS is that these standards are crucial for success in college, where course content is more demanding, and for careers, because employers expect employees to be able to read and apply information within context.

Fundamentally, the CCSS identify *what* should be taught (learning objectives), not *how* the standards should be taught (methods and curriculum). In a recent Center on Education Policy (CEP) survey, 35 states agreed that the increased rigor of the CCSS will improve student learning and as such the CCSS merit immediate implementation; however, "states face challenges in fully implementing the standards, particularly in finding adequate funding… [And] do not expect to fully implement the new standards until school year 2014-15" (2012, p. 1).

Moving from a national initiative of this magnitude, to improved instructional practice and increased student achievement in the classroom, is the challenge. This paper will discuss this dilemma and provide evidence that Idaho Total Instructional Alignment (TIA) is answering this challenge. Idaho TIA is a model for implementing the CCSS based on six research supported features of effective professional development. It is absolutely crucial for policymakers to be aware that "fully implementing the CCSS is a complex undertaking that will take time and will affect many aspects of the education system-from curriculum, instruction, and assessment to teacher policies and higher education" (CEP, 2012, p. 10). The priority is strengthening the capacity of educators and modifying instructional practice to deliver standards-based education so that "no child is left behind."

EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

New initiatives and legislation for K-12 education (e.g., No Child Left Behind, 2001, and most recently the CCSS, 2010), can typically be translated directly into new requirements for teacher professional development (Education Week, 2011). Although the CCSS represent a major step forward for education, there is a missing link in the initiative. Hirsh (2012) states, "While we are promoting radical change in creating a coherent national framework for what students should know and the way they learn, we have not yet committed to offering teachers the deep learning they will need to transform the way they work" (p. 1).

Answers to the question, "what constitutes quality teacher professional development" can vary. However, six features identified in the literature as crucial in the design and evaluation of teacher professional development by Hawley & Valli, 1999; Kennedy, 1998; Wilson & Berne, 1999 (as cited in Desimone, 2009) and the National Center for Educational Statistics (2005) are: focus on content taught and methods used; opportunities for active learning; duration of training; collective participation; coherence or format; and alignment (see Table 1).

Table 1. Critical features of teacher professional development.

Hawley & Valli, 1999; Kennedy, 1998; Wilson & Berne, 1999 (as cited by Desimone, 2009).	**NCES (2005).**
Content Focus: What teachers learn that can improve instructional practice and increase student achievement.	*Focus on content and focus on methods*: Subject matter content and/or teaching methods employed.
Active Learning: Engagement in interactive activities that apply to instructional practice (e.g., observations, interactive feedback, discussion).	*Active Learning Opportunities*: Activities including observation, planning, practicing, and presenting.
Duration: Length and time span of an activity, as well as contact.	*Duration*: Number of hours, weeks, or months of training.
Collective Participation: Participation on grade level, department, building, or school district teams.	*Collective Participation*: Peer collaboration focused on instructional practices.
Coherence: Connection and continuity between existing or previous knowledge and new knowledge or teacher learning.	*Format*: Activities integrated into daily instructional practice.
	Alignment: Alignment of PD with standards, other initiatives, professional goals of teachers, and assessments.

IDAHO TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL ALIGNMENT (TIA)

Idaho TIA responded to the CCSS with a design including the six key features of effective professional development (see Table 1). As a result of the challenges prescribed by

NCLB (2001), Idaho TIA began in 2008 with alignment of the Idaho state standards. In 2010, Idaho TIA began alignment of the CCSS (2010). In 2012, all content areas (ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Arts and Humanities, Physical Education/Health and Professional Technical Education) are engaged in the alignment process. This *alignment* (both horizontally across a grade level and vertically, between grades), conducted by grade level/content teams, is a continuous process beginning with *task analysis* (dissecting the CCSS into "teachable components") and *cross-walking* (a strategic comparison of existing state standards with the new CCSS), and ending with development and synthesis of formative and summative sample assessments. Bottom line, Idaho TIA has evolved into a framework that is adaptable and can be utilized to manage any new educational initiative as it comes forward.

CONCLUSIONS

Teacher professional development programs aim to improve student learning. With the release of the rigorous and compressed CCSS, and their adoption by 46 states, the time is now for effective professional development. The stakes are high. To ensure an increase in student achievement several key issues must be addressed. First of all, the professional development must be well-designed with the *initial* goal of increasing the likelihood that teachers will be motivated to change. The necessary *teacher change* desired is in teacher knowledge, attitudes and/or beliefs. This teacher change must in turn change instructional practice. Conclusively then, the factors of professional development, teacher change, and instructional practice are interlinked, and the combination is the engine behind student achievement.

The Idaho TIA model works because it is based on these key principles. As a precursor to teacher change, Idaho TIA is focused first on teacher needs, followed by determining the means with which to accomplish those needs as espoused by Guskey (2202) and Desimone (2009). Furthermore, the Idaho TIA model encompasses the six key features of effective professional development as identified by Hawley & Valli, 1999; Kennedy, 1998; Wilson & Berne, 1999 (as cited in Desimone, 2009) and the National Center for Educational Statistics (2005).

Analysis of teacher perception and attitude data collected in June 2011 from 480 participants indicated that the majority of teacher concerns regarding the CCSS were alleviated by Idaho TIA (Agamba & Jenkins, 2012, in press). Idaho TIA is answering the call to assist school and teachers to implement the CCSS and to prepare students to be college and career ready. Idaho TIA is helping move from a comprehensive and rigorous national initiative to improved instructional practice. And as always the ultimate goal remains, "increased student achievement."

PLANNING, PREPARATION, AND EXECUTION OF OVERSEAS STUDY TRIPS

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INTRODUCTION

Group travel overseas has its ups and downs, some very funny, or, once in a while, tragic. Since I have never had to deal with anything worse than a “wrong key”, I, thankfully, cannot comment about tragic circumstances. However, the phrase “wrong key” brings to mind a situation that occurred on one of my trips to Munich, Germany. One of my travelers saw some police officers while we were waiting for a tour bus. He asked them to use their handcuffs to cuff him to a metal stanchion for a picture with them. They agreed, but our bus arrived just as they posed for the picture. The police tried to unlock the handcuffs, but found they did not have the right key. As the rest of the group loaded on the bus, which was already late, one of the policemen ran two blocks to get the right key. As we were pulling away from the curb, the policeman ran up and unlocked the handcuffs to release the traveler. Hopefully, if you ever find yourself in charge of putting together a trip of this nature to Europe or other overseas destination, this will be the only or worst problem that you have. In any event, there are many steps that you must take before, during, and after the trip to ensure a good trip. This paper is designed to help you put everything together, so that the trip will be successful in every way. When you find yourself in this position, you must first decide whether you are going to hire a travel agent or group to plan and execute the entire trip or do it yourself. There are a number of these groups who can do this for you in an excellent manner; and, in many cases, they will provide a free position on the trip for you, the planner. The main thing that you need to remember is that you lose all control over the planning and execution of the trip, and there may be fees and costs that are not evident in the initial planning. When these eventually come to light, you may find yourself too far into the planning and too close to the actual trip to be able to retake control, and ensure that there will be no glitches. In this case, you find yourself having to pay the added fees or deal with the required changes to the itinerary. Even if you make the decision to have an agent do all of the planning for you, this article will cover some things for which you would be responsible.

TRAVEL LOCATIONS AND DATES

The first thing that must be decided is the visit site(s), and at what time of the year you will travel. Will the trip include only one city, from which your group will travel daily to other close locations, or will the trip include two or more locations, which will require train, bus, or additional air travel within the major area, i.e., Europe? If this trip is a class trip for an education institution, the trip will normally be planned to coincide with the end of a semester or school year. You will need to determine if there are any major holidays or sports activities in your cities that might create hotel/ transportation problems.

ITINERARY

An itinerary of the trip is the best way to allow your travelers to know how, when, and where each aspect of the trip will take place. Dates, times, and dress need to be addressed for each movement and visit during the trip. Name, address, and contact information for each hotel that will be used during the trip are also necessary. Itinerary development starts early in the process. As each step is completed, an entry should be made in the tentative itinerary. Be sure to compare email attachments with email content, as contacts may put date or time changes in attachments without regard to what they are telling you in the email. In some cases, errors can be corrected after the trip starts; however, guides or bus drivers may show up early. You will have real problems getting your travelers together early. Discuss travel times with bus companies. They will give you the times for pickup and return. Concierges or hotel front desk personnel or visit contacts can also provide times to get to specific locations from your hotel. You should then do a dry run to those locations within the city prior to the actual visit day. You should always allow plenty of time for travel to account for any problems you may encounter. This means that you will sometimes arrive much earlier than your meeting time. Your guide may be amenable to starting the meeting early, but this only happens occasionally. You should be prepared to provide some diversion to your group to keep them occupied until the meeting time. Copies of the tentative itinerary should be given to the travelers at your first meeting, then again at each later meeting, with updates. I have found that giving the travelers a final copy, in a format easily carried in a shirt pocket or a jacket pocket, on brightly colored paper is very manageable. The size of the itinerary is at your discretion, but I have found that four itinerary pages to a normal 8 ½ x 11 inch paper page works well. Each copy of the itinerary should be provided to other professors/ chaperones.

TRAVEL BROCHURES

Once all decisions have been made concerning dates and locations for the trip, you should make up a brochure for advertising purposes. The brochure should include information dealing with passport requirements (Time and cost required for application), locations to be visited, travel dates, down payments, and individual requirements for consideration. Depending on available funding, this brochure can be as inexpensive as two-sided printing on colored paper to expensive, glossy, multi-pictured, multipage brochures. I always go for the two-sided printing for a multi-fold 8 ½" x 11" colored (buff or white) brochure. This type of brochure can accept a number of color pictures, and can be arranged to allow a part of the back page to be an application for the trip. Since my trips are aimed at a relatively small audience at two locations, for a trip group maximum of 20 students and two professors, I normally will print no more than 150 brochures. This brochure must be edited in detail, and not be printed for release until all details have been decided. A proof copy should be provided to all individuals having input for the trip for their approval. Brochures should be made available to potential travelers at least six-months prior to the trip.

TRAVELER PAYMENTS

Applications for trip positions should include a down payment to ensure the position, the traveler's intentions, and to provide funding for those costs for which a deposit must be made. If, for some legitimate reason, an applicant cannot travel, and there is time to replace the applicant, then the down payment, or some amount that can be replaced, should be returned. If there are no replacements, then the down payment should be forfeited. This information should be made a part of the brochure, which I will discuss later. The rest of the cost of the trip should also be addressed. One way to address this in an educational institution is to treat the trip as one class or two. In this way most of the cost of the trip can be covered by tuition. Financial aid can be used to pay for the semester- or quarter-hour costs. The hours can then become a part of the overall bachelor's degree program through specifically oriented or elective courses. One problem that has occurred in almost every one of my trips is that of a very deserving potential traveler not being able to take the trip because of the inability to find the down payment. There may be faculty or other types of scholarships available to assist in solving these problems, which would allow a student to participate who would not otherwise be able. I have heard many students comment that this trip is the trip of a lifetime, and many of my students have never been out of the state, much less the United States.

MEETINGS DURING TRAVEL

Decisions must be made as to the theme of the trip (If any) and how many visits will be made during the trip. If the trip is for business purposes (A business school), most of the visits should be to businesses and manufacturing activities in and around the core cities. (I have participated in seven total trips to date, six of which I personally planned and executed, for a small, four-year, church-affiliated college business school). The very best trips that I developed involved at least two visits to automobile manufacturing activities in two different countries, requiring my students to compare each to the other. For an art school, visits to major art activities, such as the Louvre, would be quite in line. There are many other types of activities that should be a part of any trip, such as city tours, major historical venues, or locations that would otherwise never be a part of an individual or family trip. I included a visit to a World War II concentration camp, as well as city tours of each of the two cities that were a part of my trips. When planning these visits, you should consider travel time to each of the sites. If the sites are within the city, and local subway systems are excellent (As one would find in most any large European city), then you can plan for two visits in one day. If bus travel is involved to the site and the travel is greater than one hour, then you should consider only planning one visit for that day, and allowing the travelers some free time to visit other non-trip activities or shopping. You should also be very careful to determine the venue times. Some activities, such as government activities may not be available for visits on Fridays through Mondays. I have found that federal banking activities are favorites because of the issues with the use of the Euro. Most federal banks have museums that are very interesting for a hot afternoon. Remember that the internet has a wealth of information for most companies and governmental activities, including contact information. When sending email to contacts, be sure to give a range of trip information, including number and type of travelers, and desired visit dates and times.

AIR TRAVEL

The next major requirement will be to contact a travel agent or use the internet to determine the availability of air travel from your closest airline hub to the major location to which you will travel during the trip. If at all possible, you should use direct air travel, rather than intermediate stops. Whenever you have to deal with intermediate stops, you increase the risk of luggage problems or maintaining contact with your travelers. Under most circumstances, if you do have to deal with an intermediate stop, your luggage will be checked through to your final destination, and you will not be required to deal with it again until you claim it. Upon arrival at your intermediate destination, you should move your group to the next gate area, to be sure that they know where and at what time the next movement will take place. You can then release them to get food, drink, and/or souvenirs, on the same concourse. A travel agent will probably take any stress away from you in dealing with airline tickets. This decision will provide you with ticket costs quickly for budget purposes. Finally, most airlines require group travel to be handled through a different section of their reservation group, which can ultimately increase the individual ticket cost. Don’t be surprised at the difference in ticket costs using this method. Another thing that you can do to assist your travelers is to go to the airline’s website to find and download pictures of the seat layout for the particular type of aircraft for your trip legs. This will allow each traveler to visually determine the location of their seats. Also, it will be to your traveler’s advantage to request and ensure that each traveler’s seats are either aisle or window seats. Nothing is more uncomfortable than having to share a seat with two other travelers for long periods of time (8-12 hours). Most long-distance aircraft today have few center seats, so this is not as much of a problem as it may seem, but it must be looked at as soon as tickets are issued to ensure timely requests and traveler comfort.

HOTELS

The next major issue to deal with is housing. The internet provides a major source of information for hotels in your cities that have rooms available, including costs for budget purposes. Most major hotel chains have detailed information available on the internet about the specific hotels and rooms. One item that you should be very careful about is air conditioning. You will find it to be very uncomfortable for your group without air conditioning, if you are traveling in the spring, summer, or early fall. Another problem that arises is the need to open room windows, particularly in dealing with road or other outside noises. The one thing that you cannot determine in dealing with hotels through the internet is the neighborhood in which the hotel is located. One particular year, I found that the hotel had not been quite truthful about air conditioning, in that the main spaces in the hotel were air conditioned, but the rooms were not. The neighborhood where the hotel was located included youth hostels and the noise was unmanageable late into the night. Once you find a hotel with rooms in your price range, you should immediately make reservations for the maximum number of rooms necessary for the trip. This will require a credit card, so you should be sure to have a card issued in your name by your institution. I would suggest that you not use your own personal credit card for this, as you cannot know what the hotel requires in down payments. In some cases, hotels will offer discounted rooms for extended time periods (three or more days), for bulk room requirements, or for making reservations via the internet. As the trip planning progresses, and the actual number of travelers and room requirements become known, you can reduce the reservation requirements. Unless you are planning to arrive on Monday, hotel rooms will probably not be available until the afternoon, so be sure to make plans for your group to fill the time between arrival and availability of rooms, since most flights to Europe from the United States leave late in the afternoon and arrive early to mid-morning. These are the best flights for groups, since they allow for sleep during the normal sleep cycle. I generally try to make arrangements for my group to clean up, and then take them on a city tour. I also recommend, since there is a 5-7 hour time difference between most European cities and US cities, planning on activities that will keep your group awake until mid-evening, to allow for a smooth change in the body clock. Every year, I have at least one traveler who recommends that I make hotel arrangements in hostels, to save money. This is not a good idea, as one of your meals should be breakfast, which is not normally served in a hostel. Also, hostels have age requirements, which would not allow professors or chaperones to stay, availability is unpredictable, and control goes out the window.

TRAVEL BETWEEN MAJOR LOCATIONS

If your planning includes more than one major location, you will need to schedule travel between each of these locations. If rail travel exceeds six or so hours, then you should consider using air travel. You can also consider overnight travel, which actually will cost less than hotel space, but sleeping on a train is difficult, and your travelers will arrive tired and difficult to deal with. Information dealing with train travel through Europe can be found at www.raileurope.com. This site is all inclusive, including group travel assistance. I have found, however, that there are companies in the US that deal with this kind of travel that can provide all services necessary for you. They act just as a travel agent would, and make this issue much easier to deal with. Most reservations cannot be made prior to 90 days before travel, and seats fill up quickly, so time is of the essence in making these arrangements. Many people travel without making seat reservations, so it will be to your advantage to pay the extra $5-$10 to reserve seats for your group. Train travel during meal periods includes a food car available for your use. The problem with this is that the food is usually hot dog or hamburger type of fare and you must make early arrangements with the servers to take care of your group, as their service is limited. They do take credit cards.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Large European cities have excellent subway systems that are relatively inexpensive. Most of these systems have extensive internet websites, which include downloadable maps and ticket costs. I have found it to be much easier to purchase longer period passes, such as three-day passes, depending on how long the group will be in the city. This allows travelers to have access to all parts of the city for both group and individual purposes. It is important that the group leader be familiar with how to get to the visit locations. The easiest way is to request the visit contact to provide this information, prior to departure from the US. You will then have the directions in writing. When you are dealing with activities outside the city and to and from airports or train stations, you will need bus service. Having to deal with luggage on mass-transit is a no-no unless there is no other choice. The hotel contacts can usually provide information for you, or you can use the internet to find these types of supplier. The bus supplier can provide you with costs, as well as travel times to your locations. Be sure that the supplier understands your requirement for air conditioning and luggage storage, if necessary. Bus drivers can pick your group up at the airport, so be sure that you provide them with the airline, flight number, departure location, and arrival time. These costs are well worth the small added expense.

FOOD

There are a number of scenarios dealing with food during the trip. The trip can include one, two, or three meals each day. The best situation is to include two meals per day, breakfast and either lunch or dinner. In most situations, breakfast is included with hotel rooms. Most 3- and 4-star hotel breakfasts include food that you will find in the United States, e.g. eggs, bacon, cereal (Milk will usually be at room temperature), sweet rolls, fresh fruit, etc. Lower star hotel breakfasts will usually be continental style, i.e., no hot foods, but including fish products, fruits, breads, and cereals. Giving your travelers access to a good breakfast is one of the most important things to remember. Having food that is familiar at the beginning of the day will make your group easier to deal with, since other meals will be much different than they are used to. This will allow the travelers to experiment with different foods on their own, and to get to know one another better, while also allowing them to get out on their own to visit venues that are not a part of the trip. There are occasions that will call for all three meals as a part of the trip plan, especially when traveling between cities. You should always plan for a meal (Depending on travel times) upon arrival in a new city, which might also require a meal on the train or other means of transportation. This will remove concern on the part of your travelers that they would be required to find their own way for a meal in a city with which that they are not familiar.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

Almost all of the above issues carry financial costs. As you develop each of the issues, you must keep the costs in mind in developing your trip budget. There are essentially two ways to develop budgets, using the cost component or using the income component. Under most circumstances, this budget should include all costs, including chaperones and directors. Once all costs have been accumulated, then you can figure the cost per traveler (Not including the director or, in some cases, the chaperones). Using this method, you must include actual foreign currency costs, currency translation fees, and bank fees. Since currency translation fees fluctuate constantly, you must use a “worst case scenario”. If final costs are below this scenario, then you can consider “reimbursing” travelers for overcharges due to translation fees. You can actually make a reimbursement after the trip or pay for an additional meal during the trip. Most hotel internet sites will provide costs in US currency. You must remember that these costs are made using the most current currency translation fees, and are subject to change, as translation costs change. For this reason, you should keep a close watch on currency exchange rates, and make adjustments when/if rates change dramatically. As an example, if the Euro exchange rate currently is \$1.35 and rising, you might plan your budget using a rate of \$1.50. This should also provide a buffer for bank fees. If there is a large, permanent rise in rates, then you should consider making changes to your budget. If your budget is revenue related, such as dealing with semester hour costs for your students, then your only concern is staying within the total income range for the number of students taking the trip. As a rule of thumb, control issues dictate that a travel group should include one director or chaperone for each ten students. Even if the number of travelers is more than ten, but less than 15, the trip should still include two directors or chaperones. Your budget should be reduced to a spreadsheet so that changes can be readily made as costs change.

PRE-TRAVEL PAYMENTS

Most major expenses (Air, train, hotel, local travel, etc.) must be paid prior to travel, normally using a credit card through the internet. Most companies have secure sites for these types of payments. Hotels may require bank transfers, but these require additional charges. Payment by check is also a convenient method for US businesses.

DRESS CODE

Dress codes are very important. These should be broken down into five basic areas: Travel casual, casual, business casual, business, and formal/semi-formal. These areas should be addressed with the travelers more than once during preparations. Travel casual is the dress for wear when traveling on planes and trains. This dress should be loose, to allow proper blood flow when confined to a seat for long periods of time. This dress should also allow for appropriate security of passports, cash, and other valuables. I find that tying a jacket or hooded sweatshirt around my waist provides security for my billfold and passport. These items can also be secured in carryon luggage. Casual dress includes jeans and pull-over shirts that an individual is most comfortable in when not dealing with business activities. Business casual includes dress shirts and slacks that are appropriate for visits to manufacturing plants where clothing might sometimes get dirty. This clothing also should include flat, comfortable shoes, with closed toes/heels for walking on cobblestone streets or other activities where heels might get stuck or put the wearer in danger. Business dress includes suits or slacks and blazer with ties. Women's clothing should be demure, not revealing. This is very important in that revealing clothing is not appropriate in a business environment, and could cause problems. I will never forget a visit to an auto manufacturing plant where my group was moved to an overhead metal platform so that we could better see the manufacturing activity. Most of the women in the group were wearing short skirts and low, somewhat revealing blouses and jackets. They were also wearing high heeled shoes. As we mounted the platform, I noticed that the attention of the workers had immediately shifted to our group, so-much-so that the manufacturing activity came to a complete halt. The tour guide also noticed the change, and hurriedly completed her talk, not allowing for questions, to get us out of the situation. I admire her for being able to read the situation so quickly and making the appropriate decision. I know that I made a decision that day to require my travelers to be more selective about their attire, and always require business casual attire for manufacturing visits. The final area, formal/semi-formal, is only required if one of the items on the itinerary involves a formal dinner or meeting. This is very infrequent, and should be avoided if at all possible, as it requires packing specific clothing for only one activity.

TRIP SAFETY

The final thing to discuss is the matter of safety during the trip. Obviously, safety when you are in the hands of others, such as travel or tours, is the responsibility of the operator. Of course, while overseas, you are the director, and therefore responsible for ensuring the safety of your group. However, there are times when members of your group are away from you enjoying their own pleasures. Safety is doubled when they travel in pairs, and there are certain times and area of the city that could lower the safety threshold. Also, "fanny packs" should not be used. Robbers have used box cutters to slice the fanny pack strap in the center of the wearer's back, which could be very damaging to one's spine.

ORIENTATION MEETINGS

Travelers should meet at least twice prior to the trip. During these "classes", copies of passports, insurance certificates, and other trip documentation should be made for the director. At least three copies of each passport should be made, two of which should be provided to the traveler for placement in both checked and carry-on luggage. During the classes, the travelers should be told that the actual passport should be secured in the hotel safe upon arrival, and a copy should be carried until movement to the next city destination. The trip director should also carry a copy of each traveler's passport, in the unlikely event that a passport needs to be reissued. All that one needs to do is take a copy of the lost or destroyed passport to the local US Embassy, and a temporary passport can then be issued to get the traveler back to the US. Medical certificates should be checked to be sure that the traveler is covered overseas. Medicare is not valid overseas, so travelers covered by Medicare need to obtain other insurance that covers them overseas. There are specific insurance policies available that will cover repatriation of travelers back to the US, after medical stabilization. The classes should also be used for familiarization with the locations to be visited, currency to be used, packing instructions, movement through security and customs, and any other information necessary to assist travelers in preparation for and actual commencement of the trip. There are a number of CDs available concerning travel to European destinations that can be used to better inform the travelers, most of which are 30 minutes or less in length. Most of these can be purchased through PBS, EBay, or Amazon for a relatively inexpensive cost.

CASH/CREDIT CARD MANAGEMENT

There are at least three ways that you have to choose from for the management of cash and credit cards, all of which involve having a MasterCard or Visa credit card. Few if any European businesses will accept Discover Card, and only a select few will accept American Express. Unfortunately, more than a few banks and businesses in Europe now require credit cards with imbedded chips. You may find yourself with problems if you don't have one of these cards. You should notify your cardholder at least a month in advance that you will be overseas, telling them where and for what dates. Hopefully this will preclude the cardholder from cutting off your access to funds. I also recommend that you carry your own personal credit card, with a PIN, so that you can access cash from ATMs during the trip, and have another means to pay for trip costs. This will provide you with an alternate means to cash, in the event your cardholder declines to pay for card use (This has happened to me on one occasion). You will also use your principal credit card to pay for meals and other incidentals. The three principal ways to manage cash requirements are:

1. Carry foreign currency with you. You can create a budget for cash, which includes cash tips, entrance fees, tours, and food/drinks. You can then ask your local bank to order foreign currency for you. This is the most expensive and problematic. You could be pick-pocketed or robbed. The cost of this method is very expensive, including exchange fees and bank and transaction fees.
2. Carry US currency with you. Most foreign banks without affiliation with US banks will not deal with you, as they don't have pens for validity. Only exchange companies and hotel front desks can be used. In either circumstance, you will get at least 10% less than the going exchange rate, probably much less. Some businesses will accept US currency, but the exchange rate will be very low.
3. Use ATMs. The least expensive method is the corner ATM. You get currency at the most current rate, with a normal ATM rate ($3-$5 per transaction). Proper planning allows only 1-2 ATM transactions in each city. Some banks have agreements with overseas banks to waive these fees. Be sure to ask before you leave. In this situation, you may have to use personal credit cards, and pay transaction fees through your own bank. Interest fees may also accrue. Some of these may come from your pocket.

PAYMENTS DURING TRAVEL

Try to pay as much before the trip as possible. This minimizes the amount of cash for which you are responsible, and smoothes problems. Take printouts of all prepaid expenses for payment verification. Obtain receipts for all expenditure that you make. Tips are another matter. Receipts for tips are difficult to obtain. Therefore, make notes about tips, especially how figured. Tips are very important, as many of the people who provide services depend on tips, so I will list the main areas where tips are required:

1. **Food.** In the past, food has included tips, but lately, restaurant bills state that tips are not included. Whereas 15%-20% is the norm here in the United States, 8%-10% is acceptable in Europe, with more for good service. Credit card use allows including a tip, however, the credit card bill does not always allow for tips, and the restaurant expects you to pay tips in cash.
2. **Tour Guides** As a general rule of thumb, tour guides should be tipped approximately one dollar equivalent (Euro) per traveler per hour of a tour, more if they are exceptional in their presentations.
3. **Drivers** As a general rule of thumb, drivers should be tipped one-half dollar equivalent per traveler per hour of service. Luggage handling calls for a tip of one dollar equivalent per piece of luggage.

AFTER-ACTION

Once travel has been completed, credit card charges should be compared to receipts and verified for payment. Any purchase orders involved need to be closed out, and final trip costs should be compared to the initial budget. Any large deviations should be noted in a final after action report, to be used in planning for following trips. Thank you letters should be sent via email to the organizations that you dealt with, to ensure that you can use them again on other trips. This can also be helped by giving tokens (Ball-point pens, thumb-drives, etc. with logo are excellent to use) to the presenters after presentations. It is good to use travelers to make these presentations. Requiring travelers to keep travel journals, which will be turned in after the trip is also a good thing. In addition to using them for future planning purposes, the journals will serve to cement the experiences of the travelers in their minds, as these trips are life-changing experiences for all.

TEACHING AN OLD DOG NEW TRICKS: INVESTIGATING HOW AGE, ABILITY, AND SELF EFFICACY INFLUENCE INTENTIONS TO LEARN AND LEARNING AMONG PARTICIPANTS IN ADULT EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Participation in adult education and adult learning are two important areas of research as more and more adults seek learning opportunities, via academic institutions or organizational training programs, in their quest to achieve their various goals. Thus, it is important that educational (and business) leaders are aware of the dynamics surrounding the learning process of the "older generation" so that reasonable steps can be taken to facilitate their success in acquiring and retaining required and/or desired knowledge and skills. Numerous factors play a role in individuals' decision to participate in adult education and in the learning process they experience. This paper will investigate the influence of age, ability and self-efficacy on adults' intentions to learn and actual learning from educational/training programs. A conceptual model, implications for educators and educational leaders, and suggestions for future inquiry will also be presented.

Keywords: participation, adult education, age, ability, self-efficacy, learning intentions, learning

USING WIKIS TO FACILITATE VIRTUAL TEAM COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Given the difficulty in promoting team collaboration in online courses, this study uses qualitative techniques to assess students' satisfaction with using Wikis for team collaboration. It measures the use of Wikis versus traditional face-to-face team meetings. This study addresses the advantages and disadvantages of using Wikis as a tool to promote teamwork in team-based projects, and provides suggestions for educators embracing the new Web 2.0 technologies in distance and traditional learning environments.

USING WIKIS TO FACILITATE TEAM COLLABORATION

The ability to work effectively in a team environment is considered an essential skill and key learning outcome of business school curriculum today. One of the challenges and goals of instructors of online business courses is how to motivate students to participate in team-based learning exercises. To accomplish this goal, many instructors use "virtual" teams. Ale, Ahmed, and Taha (2009) defined virtual teams as, "small temporary groups of geographically, organizationally and/or time dispersed knowledge workers who coordinate their work predominantly with electronic information and communication technologies in order to accomplish one or more organization tasks." In fact, virtual teams have become a common feature of college distance-learning courses today.

This study examines the utility of using Wikis to facilitate collaboration and communication among students in a graduate MIS course. As educators increasingly leverage Web 2.0 tools such as Wikis to facilitate team projects in distance learning courses, there is a need to better understand these technologies and how to effectively integrate them into the learning environment. Wikis offer unique features that make them particularly applicable to the creation of knowledge in the online learning process, and by design, are relatively easy to develop and use by both students and educators.

In this study, qualitative techniques were used to assess students' satisfaction with using Wikis for team collaboration vs. traditional face-to-face team meetings. The study addresses the advantages and disadvantages of using Wikis as a tool to facilitate team-based projects, and provides suggestions for educators embracing new Web 2.0 technologies in distance and traditional learning environments.

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STUDENT CHOICE OF COURSE MATERIALS

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ABSTRACT

Today's university students have never had more varied choices in course materials than they do now. Videos, podcasts and simulations provide ways to access materials without reading a textbook. Even textbooks themselves present new opportunities for learning as e-books for computers and e-books for mobile devices join the traditional paper book. This study presents the results of a survey conducted among business students at a Norwegian college and an American university. Course notes posted online were by far the most desired way of obtaining course material, followed by paper textbooks, videos and e-books for computers.

INTRODUCTION

Today's university students are accustomed to accessing materials and communicating with each other in almost any place and any time. An important issue in the question of which educational materials are best for a class is the preference of the students who will be using them. This study examines the different types of materials students prefer, from traditional paper text books to e-books to internet materials. The results of a student survey are then presented in the following section.

Textbooks and multimedia

Textbooks have long been used in classrooms from first grade through the university level. In recent years, however, many students have cut down on school-related expenses by not purchasing textbooks, even when the professor "requires" the book (Owuor, 2006; Robinson, 2011). In a study of a small semi-rural campus of a large public university, two-thirds of the participating students reported that they always purchased "required" textbooks, but only one-fourth reported they buy them when the books are just "recommended" (Robinson, 2011). While there are many advantages to e-books, most people still prefer to read from paper textbooks (Robinson, 2011; Sadon & Yamshon, 2011; Weston, 2011). Difficulties in using the technology necessary to read e-books, discomfort stemming from eye strain and a general preference for paper are major factors slowing the adoption of e-books (Ismail & Zainab, 2005; Matthiasdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2007; Mercieca, 2003; Robinson, 2011; Sadon & Yamshon, 2011; Spencer, 2006; Vernon, 2006).

A separate issue with e-books is the acceptance of their use in class by instructors. Whereas a paper book is "self-contained," e-books must be accessed through some form of technology--a laptop, mobile device or dedicated e-book reader. Many instructors restrict or forbid the use of such devices in the classroom (Fang, 2009; Schacter, 2009). This prevents students from checking their email, reading and posting on social media sites, surfing the internet, etc. (or at least makes it more difficult for them to do so), but simultaneously prevents students from using e-books in class.

Textbooks in general, whether paper or electronic, are not necessarily students' most preferred learning materials. Online learning materials are becoming more popular with both students and instructors. A world of websites can be used to supplement or replace textbooks. Similarly, videos can provide students with a more deeply engaging educational experience that help them learn better and remember material longer (Griffin, 2012; Hillner, 2012; National Teacher Training Institute, 2012). While teachers have long shown rented or purchased films produced specifically for the classroom, the internet (especially YouTube) provides easy and free access to a multitude of videos with varying degrees of educational content. Podcasts provide a non-visual source of material that can be helpful by increasing the ways in which material is learned, and may be especially beneficial for people who learn best by listening (Anderson, 2011; McKinney, Dyck & Luber, 2009; Molina, 2006; Robinson, Stubberud & Blom-Ruud, 2010; Vogt, Schaffner, Ribar & Chavez, 2010). Business simulations can help students gain a better and deeper understanding of the connections between the different parts of a firm and allow students to actively "learn by doing" rather than passively absorbing information (Gabrielsson, Tell & Politis, 2010).

Accessing educational materials at any time and in almost any place fits well with today's students who thrive on multitasking and consider mobile devices practically as parts of themselves (Robinson & Stubberud, 2011; Vogt et al., 2010). This study examines the different types of materials students prefer, from traditional paper text books to internet materials. The results are presented in the following section.

METHODOLOGY, RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Business students in a Norwegian college and a small campus of an American university were asked about their preferences for course materials. Out of 84 total students, 41 were female and 43 were male, and 28 attended the Norwegian school while 56 attended the American school. In a simple survey, they were asked to check off which of the listed materials they would like to use for their classes, with no limit on the number of materials they could check. These materials included paper textbooks, e-books for computers, e-books for mobile devices, videos, podcasts, simulations, interactive online lessons and notes posted in the online course management system. They were also asked to provide "other" materials they would like, but no suggestions were made.

Despite differences in the overall infrastructure of the schools (the Norwegian school provided greater wireless internet access) and the general habits of the students (most students at the Norwegian school normally used a laptop during class while those at the American school did not), only one statistically significant difference was found between the preferences of the students at the two schools. Students at the American school were more likely (76.8% vs. 53.6%) to prefer paper textbooks (Table 1). This may be related to the habits of the students regarding laptop use, as students at the American school may have found paper textbooks to be more practical in the classroom, given a lack of wireless internet. Although the difference was not found to be statistically significant, 50.0% of students at the Norwegian school wanted e-books for computers compared to 35.7% of students at the American school. This would also be logical if students at the Norwegian school liked to use e-books on their laptops during class time. Notes posted online were the most popular material among students at both school, with 9 out of 10 students indicating that they wished to have access to this type of course material.

Table 1: Choice of Material by School

Resource	Total	Norway	USA	Chi-square	P<
Notes posted online	90.5%	89.3%	91.1%	.07	.793
Paper textbook	69.0%	53.6%	76.8%	4.71	.030*
Video	42.9%	35.7%	46.4%	.88	.350
E-book for computer	40.5%	50.0%	35.7%	1.58	.209
Simulation	38.1%	42.9%	35.7%	.40	.525
Interactive online lesson	33.3%	28.6%	35.7%	.43	.513
Podcast	27.4%	32.1%	25.0%	.48	.489
E-book for mobile device	21.4%	10.7%	26.8%	2.86	.091

The only statistically significant gender difference was that men were more likely (30.2% vs. 12.2%) to prefer e-books for mobile devices (Table 2). Given that similar proportions of men and women wanted e-books for computers and paper textbooks, this may indicate that these men were more involved in using their mobile devices for various purposes. Approximately 90% of women and men from each school chose notes posted online, making notes the most popular type of material. There was a considerable drop to the next more popular material, paper textbooks. While e-books for mobile devices ranked last among women and next-to-last among men, e-books for computers were chosen by 40.5% of the participants. Although it was not asked on the survey, some students voluntarily wrote that they would choose e-books as long as they were cheaper than paper and that cost, not format, was the most important consideration. Videos (42.9%) and simulations (38.1%) were also named by a similar proportion of students. Podcasts were chosen by 27.4% of participants.

Table 2: Choice of Materials by Sex

Resource	Women	Men	Chi-square	P<
Notes posted online	95.1%	86.0%	2.00	.157
Paper textbook	68.3%	69.8%	.02	.884
Video	39.0%	46.5%	.48	.488
E-book for computer	39.0%	41.9%	.07	.791
Simulation	34.1%	41.9%	.53	.467
Interactive online lesson	34.1%	32.6%	.02	.877
Podcast	26.8%	27.9%	.01	.912
E-book for mobile device	12.2%	30.2%	4.10	.044*

The overall results of this study show that customized notes posted online for students were desired by almost all students. Seen in a positive light, it relieves students from taking notes (allowing them to devote more attention to the instructor) and ensures they have access to correct materials free from mistakes and misunderstandings that could occur when students take their own notes. On the other hand, it could also be a way to allow students to pay less attention as they do not need to write the notes themselves.

CONCLUSIONS

Computers are clearly important to students as the vast majority wanted class notes posted online. E-books for computers also beat out e-books for mobile devices by a considerable margin, even among men, who were more likely than women to choose e-books for mobile devices as a desired material. Previous studies have shown that most students who listen to podcasts do so on their computers rather than on their mobile devices (Andersen, 2011; Walls, Kucsera, Walker, Acee & McVaugh, 2010; O'Bannon, Lubke, Beard & Britt, 2011) perhaps because they view their mobile devices as instruments for personal entertainment, not for education (Andersen, 2011). This would be consistent with findings by Robinson & Stubberud (2011) that some communications methods (such as Facebook) were ranked highly for personal communication, but low for school communication. In a similar manner, e-books for computers were named as a desired material more often than e-books for mobile devices. While small screen sizes may be one factor in this difference, there may also be a feeling that mobile devices are for personal and social "play" and not for accessing course materials, which may feel more like work.

Students have different needs and preferences, leading to contradictory findings in studies regarding the use of new technologies such as podcasts (Andersen, 2011). Some researchers (Kennedy, Judd, Churchward, Gray & Krause, 2008; Margaryan, Littlejohn & Vojt, 2011) have concluded that instructors should examine student preferences for materials and technologies and respond accordingly. The results of this study suggest that this is a wise perspective. It should also be acknowledged that groups of students may prefer different types of learning materials, and it is the duty of the instructor to determine how to best serve his or her particular students. While many prefer traditional paper texts, a growing segment find newer technologies to be more engaging, making this goal a "moving target."

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TEACHING ADJUSTMENTS BY NIGERIAN FACULTY IN AN AMERICAN STYLE UNIVERSITY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

In today's economy, global competitiveness forges new relationships between employees and employers and these new relationships demand innovative and more flexible ways of doing business. With more American style educational institutions springing up worldwide, local-host teachers are finding themselves in unfamiliar work-approach environments and, as a result, have to adapt their teaching to their new settings. This paper describes the teaching adjustments made by Nigerian lecturers at the American University of Nigeria in Yola, Nigeria. The results of our findings will enable the authors to suggest recommendations for school management to develop policies and programs to assist local faculty to adapt better to an American style education system.

Key Words American,Teachers, Student, Faculty, Nigeria, American Style University

INTRODUCTION

With the privatization of higher education institutes, it is expected that a number of international teachers may find Nigeria home. However with strict immigration, foreign investment laws, and public insecurity there have been compromises in the living standards of international workers and these workers soon return home or move on to 'greener pastures'. With security, health, education, and other basic amenities challenges, American teachers think twice on whether or not to renew their contract, leaving vacancies and voids in policy and procedural matters.

With increased interconnection and interdependency on foreign investments there is a political shift in that the host country becomes more dependent on activities of foreign resources. Conversely when international workers resign from their duties, and there are no expatriate replacements, which puts pressure on the employer to seek employees locally. In other words, with the demands of quality education and American standards, employers will hire locally trained Nigerian faculty.

This study was provoked by the need to assess how the locally trained faculty members are adjusting to an American style educational system at the American University of Nigeria (AUN) in Yola, Nigeria. Our study determines the levels of teaching adjustment of Nigerian faculty and how it directly relates to their teaching conduct.

To determine the teaching adjustments made by Nigerian teachers, the authors conducted personal interviews with Nigerian faculty about their work adjustments related to their classroom experiences that took place during the fall semester of 2011. Of particular interest to the authors were the adjustments made in four significant teaching areas: grading, syllabus, teaching methodology, and assessment. The results of the findings enabled the authors to determine recommendations for school management to develop policies and programs to assist local faculty to adapt better to an American style education system.

BACKGROUND

With the ever increasing presence of American style schools, fashion, fast-food, and movies, it would seem that American values, culture and behaviours would challenge the current prevailing norms and practices in Nigeria. With an increase demand for American style education, it is expected that more teaching professionals will seek employment at AUN. With personal security concerns, limited health care facilities, and rampant malaria, typhoid outbreaks, it would seem that international workers would be less willing to forfeit their safety and well-being by residing in the north eastern state of Nigeria. In order to sustain an American level of education, it is expected that more local hires will dominate the staff numbers. At the time of this research, 61% of the teaching staff was Nigerians.

In our study, we aimed at determining what adjustments, if any, the Nigerian lecturers had to make in four key teaching areas: grading, syllabus, teaching methodology, and assessment. We were also interested in any other adjustments the Nigerian lecturers made in the delivery of their subject matter.

Grading is the process of assigning a level of achievement to a student for a course. A common approach to grading adjustment is the use of statistics (Young, 1993). However, there has is little research in the area specific to grading adjustments made by local teachers in a foreign setting. We are therefore reliant on a description of the changes made by Nigerian teachers to their grading in their summative and formative assessments.

Syllabus is an outline of a course. Adjustments to syllabus include removing or reducing the amount of content in a course because of the perceptions of the teacher towards his/her students (Salatian et al, 2012). However, there is little research in the area specific to syllabus adjustments made by Nigerian teachers in a foreign environment. We are therefore reliant on a description of the changes made by the participants themselves to their syllabi.

A teaching methodology is the principles and methods used for instruction by the teachers that focus on the students' mastery of the curricular aims that are currently being pursued as defined by (Popham, 2008). Again, there has is little academic research in the area specific to teaching adjustments made by Nigerian teachers in a non-Nigerian settings. This leaves the researchers to depend on the descriptions and observations made by subjects themselves.

Finally, assessment is the evaluation of a student's achievement on a course. Much has been written in the area of assessment, but little valuable contribution has been made specific to the issues of Nigerian lecturers. Yet again, the researchers are reliant on the description made by the participants from the summative and formative feedback.

We are also interested in any additional changes in the delivery of their courses that the teachers had to make. This, again, it is based on the observations and experiences of the teachers in our study.

THE STUDY

As AUN continues to set higher admission standards and obtain higher national and international publicity, it became an interest of the researchers to determine the adjustments that specifically Nigerian faculty undergo to meet the exclusive standards set by administrators and the needs of the students. Nigerians are considered as local hire and are offered unique remuneration packages. They bring a distinctive set of skills and work behaviours then what one may find in a 'western' culture setting. There are about 250 different languages on record which include a diverse set of cultures rooting up a number of subcultures. This study is exceptional in respect to the information it captures first-hand about the experiences of Nigerian faculty in an American higher education setting. Personal accounts are recorded and the information gathered is pertinent and applicable as data was collected from participants that were fully engaged in their teaching assignment.

The participants in our study were Nigerian lecturers. *(*Creswell, 1998) states that the participants are to "be individuals who have experienced the phenomenon being explored and can articulate either conscious experiences" while conducting a phenomenological study. The researchers had ready access to five Nigerian faculty who were articulate and willing to share their recent and relevant experience. The participants were men and women currently employed as full time faculty with expertise in varying disciplines and across all three schools (Business & Entrepreneurship, Information Technology and Communications, Arts & Science). A purposive sample method was employed since specific and relevant characteristics were necessary of the population.

Purposive sampling was the method of selecting the participants, by which it "is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore select a sample from which most can be learned" (Merriam, 1998). Faculty members were invited to speak to the researchers, as well as, the researcher met with the participants in their offices. The interview involved meeting with willing faculty for a one-one interview that lasted about 20 minutes. The faculty qualifications ranged from Masters degree holders to PhD. The conceptual basis of this study lies in the sub-cultural work context in higher education and the significance of phenomenological theory in understanding the real life situation from the faculty themselves as they describe their experiences in the classroom. It is expected that a level of interpretation will follow the description of the study providing a meaningful discussion. It was imperative that the data collected and analyzed was from untainted perspective of the faculty participant, and it was important that the researcher did not influence the ideas by any preconceived notions. One of the researchers that conducted the interview was not a faculty member, reducing any biases or influential misconceptions. While reviewing the study and data, if any clarifications were required, the researcher would call back to the participant for an extended conversation.

RESULTS

Based on our data analysis, this section reveals the specific results as foretold by the Nigerian participants regarding adjustments they made in four key teaching areas: grading, syllabus, teaching methodology, and assessment. We were also interested in any other adjustments the Nigerian lecturers made in the delivery of their courses.

The Nigerian lecturers had to make a number of adjustments to their grading. The most notable comment was that the AUN grading scheme was considered rather high and adjustments to the scheme needed to be made. The Nigerian lecturers had to incorporate more components that made up the grade such as attendance, participation, midterm, homework, and final exams. The letter grade distribution also varied, that is to achieve an 'A' grade as in the American system, it is equivalent to a mark in the range of 95 - 100% whilst in a Nigerian university system it ranges from 70 – 100%.

There were no notable observations with respect to any adjustments that Nigerian lecturers made to their syllabus.

The Nigerian lecturers had to make a number of adjustments to their teaching methodology. They noted that the American system has shorter lecture hours, for example some classes are 50 minutes each three times a week so adjustments to the amount of content needed to be adjusted to suit the timeframe. Based on the end of semester evaluations, one of the questions relate to the use of technology and so teachers are rated on this, as well, it is expected that teachers keep abreast of new developments in their field, which requires access to e-books, library and the internet. One of the strategic goals is to incorporate technology into the learning and research, hence the use of laptop, and other technology become expected teaching practice. The use of PowerPoint became a very prominent tool for teaching since data projectors had been installed in all classrooms. Again, based on the faculty evaluation forms, the use of effective technology in the classroom is evaluated. They had to set and adhere to office hours as expected practice. They also integrated discussion and group work into their courses.

The Nigerian lecturers had to make a number of adjustments to their assessment of students. There were expectations of more assessment opportunities for the student, such as regular quizzes, homework, mid-term exams and written assignments. Nearly all the respondents stated that there was clearly a lot more demands placed on the teacher with respect to grading, evaluating and assessing students on a weekly basis.

No other significant changes were made and the results confirm that a wide range of adjustments needed to be made in order to support an American style educational experience.

DISCUSSION

Given our findings, we suggest recommendations for administrators and school management to develop policies and programs to assist Nigerian faculty to adapt readily to an

American style education system. We suggest the following two recommendations: mentorship and coaching initiative; and an in-house induction and orientation program. We shall look at each in turn.

Mentorship is a relationship between two people, one being the mentor and the other the protégé. The mentor uses their expertise, knowledge and experience to guide and coach the protégé. In this case an experienced American faculty would be the designated the mentor, while a Nigerian faculty would be the protégé. The American faculty with their expertise of an American style education system would offer guidance and advice to the Nigeria faculty member with the aim to support the faculty in readily and easily adjusting to the American teaching standards.

We also propose an induction and orientation program for Nigerian teachers. In this program, the Nigerian teachers will learn about the American style teaching approach and can consequently adapt to the American style expectations of teaching. The program will describe the American style education system in the four key teaching areas of our study: grading, syllabus, teaching methodology, and assessment. The program could also be supplemented by offering exchange programs for local faculty at American institutions in the U.S. that will give them first hand exposure to preferred U.S. teaching styles.

Since there has not been much written in terms of Nigerian faculty and their adjustments to an American style education environment, it leaves the researchers compelled to encourage further dialogue and research in this area.

CONCLUSIONS

From our study, it is evident that an American style university in Nigeria is unique from a Nigerian style university that is also based in Nigeria and that teaching adjustments that have been documented may be driven by the socio-cultural disparities that the teachers find themselves in. It is apparent that the Nigerian lecturers need to adapt quickly to their new surroundings and so it is only reasonable to offer recommendations for them that would enhance the teaching and learning experience. In identifying these adjustments, it is expected that the information will be disseminated to administrators and school management so appropriate and effective policies and programs can be adopted to be able to better serve students and improve teacher effectiveness.

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THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: A STRATEGICALLY DESIGNED ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATION PROGRAM FOR 21ST CENTURY INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS

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ABSTRACT

"No one can say for certain how the schools of the new century will differ from those of the past century – but there can be little doubt that these schools will require different forms of leadership."

Elizabeth L. Hale and Hunter N. Moorman
Preparing School Principals: A National Perspective on Policy and Program Innovations
Institute for Educational Leadership, 2003

`As school district administrators labor to ascertain the qualities needed to lead schools in the 21st century, the task of designing principal training has taken countless methods and approaches. One school district made an intentional decision to develop a series of workshops for teachers enrolled in an educational leadership program with the specific objective that the results will be reflected in student achievement. The Instructional Leadership Institute was designed to explore and increase participants' level of awareness about the importance of analyzing and interpreting data to make more informed decisions about instructional improvement and curriculum alignment for their teachers as well as other fundamental elements of leadership training. While other school districts designate principals in a building first, and train them later, The Jackson Public School District chose to develop instructional leaders prior to being assigned to a school. These administrators will arrive in the building with the discipline, training and knowledge essential for 21st century school leadership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WEBSITES OF FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH CAROLINA

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ABSTRACT

With digital revolution, widespread availability of Wi-Fi, 3G, and 4G networks as well as availability of a wide variety of devices to access the Internet and World Wide Web, the websites of organizations now play an increasingly important role for these organizations and their stakeholders. This article studies the effectiveness of the websites of sixty one four-year colleges and universities in North Carolina. An important part of their communication with their constituencies takes place through the designs and contents of their websites.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet and the World Wide Web had a tremendous growth during the last few decades and they now play a major role in marketing communication and business transactions of organizations. Unlike other media that are unidirectional, the Internet and World Wide Web allow two-way communication between the firm and its stakeholders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this article, we measure the effectiveness of a website based on its design and customer interface. Belch & Belch (2012) note that a well-designed website should address seven factors: context, content, commerce, community, connections, customization, and communication. These factors are described below:

- Context – site's layout and design; look and feel
- Content – text, pictures, sound, and video that webpages contain
- Commerce – site's capabilities to enhance commercial transactions/scheduling
- Community – the way a site enables user-to-user communication
- Connection – the degree to which a site is linked to other sites
- Customization – site's ability to self-tailor to different users or to allow users to personalize the site
- Communication – the ways a site enables site-to-user communication or two-way communication

METHODOLOGY.

In fall 2011, students enrolled in an undergraduate online Marketing Communications course at a four-year college in North Carolina visited the websites of these institutions and evaluated them on these seven factors: context, content, commerce, community, connection, customization, and communication. These seven factors were rated by students on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good, and 5 = excellent. We used R, a free statistical software and programming language, for data analysis. Specifically, we utilized, Rcmder, a menu-based package, with FactoMineR, an add-on package developed by Husson, Le, and Pages (2011). We performed principal components analysis followed by hierarchical cluster analysis on the above dataset and the results are presented below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 below provides a plot of the variables in the principal components dimension. Two principal components accounted for 65.56% of the variability in the seven variables space. The first principal component shows increasing values of all variables however it primarily shows increasing values of context, content, community, and connection. The second principal component shows increasing customization at one end and increasing commerce at the other end. A hierarchical cluster analysis was performed and the solution was plotted in the principal components dimension in Figure 2 below.

Figure 1: Principle Components Analysis of Six Variables

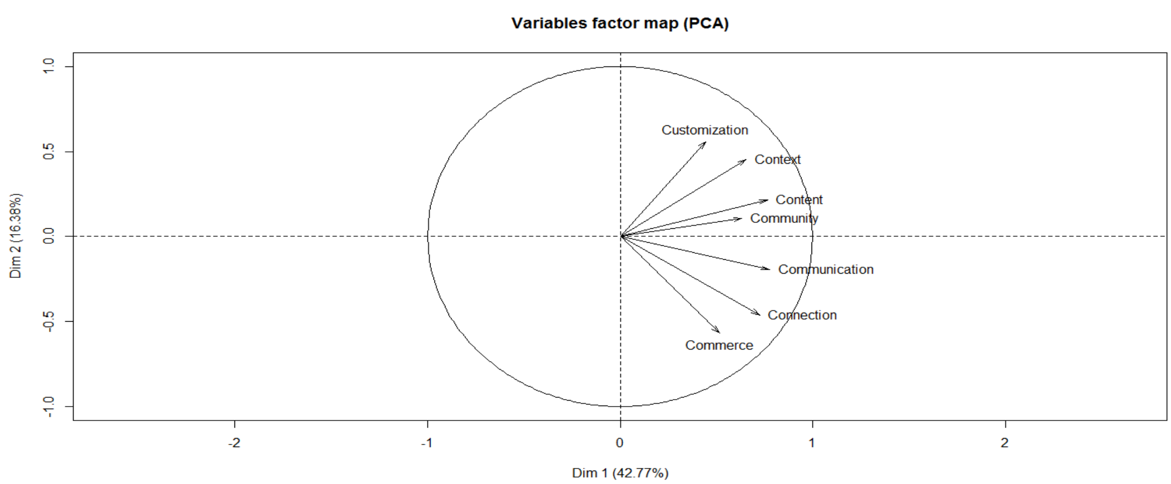
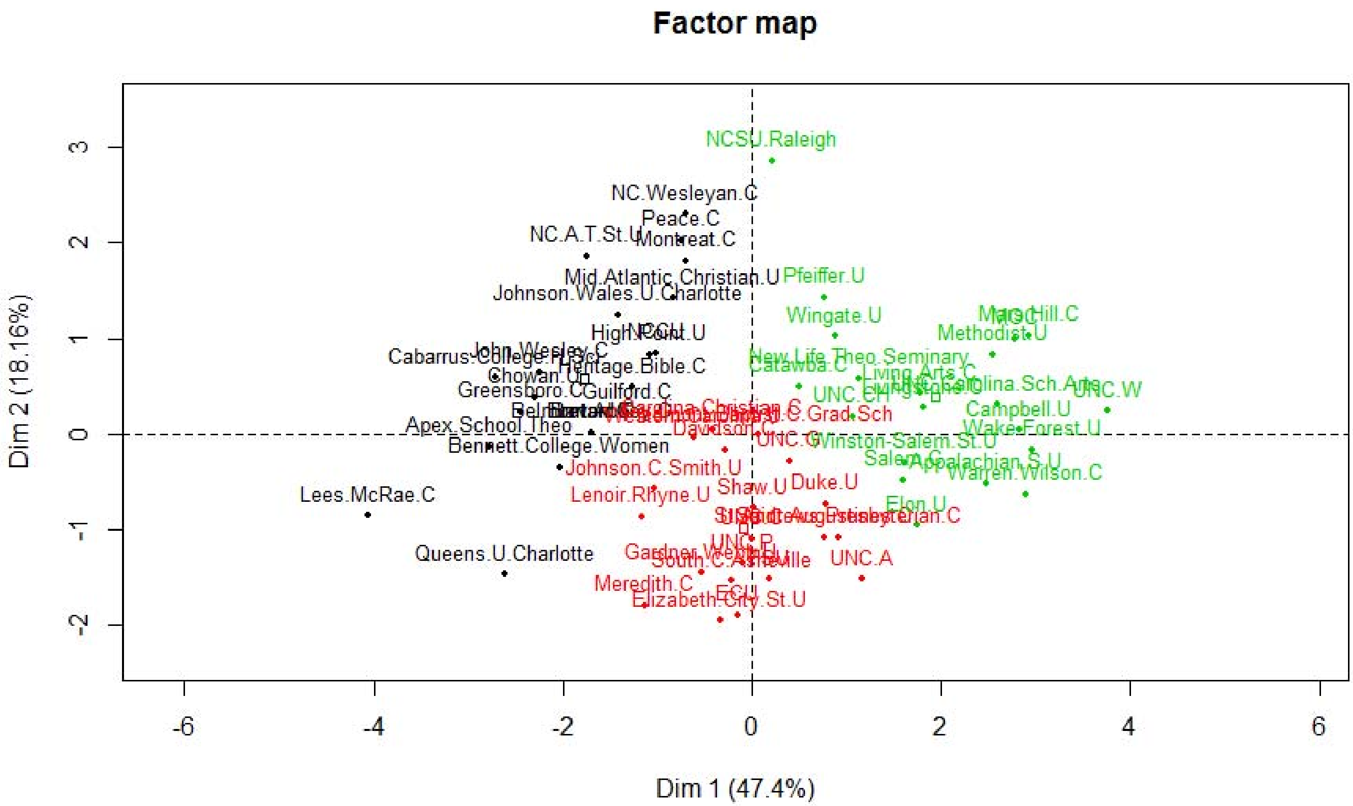


Figure 2: A Plot Of Universities And Colleges On Principle Components



CONCLUSION

This study shows that a reduced space two dimensional solution provides a good summary of the data; that a two principal components solution of seven factors (variables) and a three cluster solution of sixty one educational institutions is helpful in summarizing student ratings. While we measured the effectiveness of a website using seven factors, those factors were measured by single item 5-point scales. Future researcher should utilize multiple item scales for each of the seven factors used in this study to measure website effectiveness.

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ASSESSING ACBSP CERTIFIED GRADUATE BUSINESS DEGREE PROGRAMS IN NORTH CAROLINA

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ABSTRACT

In 2011, ACBSP identified seventeen educational institutions as its members in North Carolina. Of these, only nine universities offered one or more ACBSP accredited graduate business degree programs. These universities are: Campbell University, Gardner-Webb University, High Point University, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Methodist University, North Carolina Central University, Pfeiffer University, Queens University of Charlotte, and Wingate University. This paper describes the standards of ACBSP for accreditation of graduate degree programs in business and pay in depth attention to program assessment. This paper evaluates the above nine ACBSP accredited graduate business programs in North Carolina in 2011 in the light of four major functional areas for external program level assessment readiness as revealed by their websites. In addition, we present particular strengths of each of these nine MBA degree programs.

ACBSP STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

ACBSP presents six standards and several criteria for each standard to measure and demonstrate compliance with standards. Here we list the standards. Each standard is measured based on several criteria to document performance:

- Standard #1. Leadership
- Standard #2. Strategic Planning
- Standard #3. Student and Stakeholder Focus
- Standard #4. Measurement and Analysis of Student Learning and Performance
- Standard #5. Faculty and Staff Focus
- Standard #6. Educational and Business Process Management
- Standard #4 and its accompanying criteria are described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The ACBSP Standard and Criteria for Program Assessment	
STANDARDS & CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
Standard #4.	Measurement and Analysis of Student Learning and Performance. Business schools and programs must have an outcomes assessment program with documentation of the results and evidence that the results are being used for the development and improvement of the institution's academic programs. Each business school or program is responsible for developing its own outcomes assessment program.
Criteria	Student learning outcomes must be consistent with the missions of the institution and business school or program and the level of the degree awarded. ACBSP requires that business schools or programs must establish a learning outcomes assessment program to indicate the effectiveness of the process.
Criterion 4.1.	The business unit shall have a learning outcomes assessment program.
Criterion 4.2.	To identify trends, the business school or program should report, at a minimum, three successive sets of periodic assessment results.
Criterion 4.3.	Assessment plans should be designed to yield comparative information and data both over time and with respect to benchmarks.
Criterion 4.4.	The business unit shall make use of the learning outcomes assessment results to improve its educational processes in the interest of continuously improving student learning outcomes. The business unit must describe specific improvements it has made to its programs based on information obtained from its learning outcomes assessment results.
Source: ACSBP http://www.acbsp.org/	

PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT OF MBA PROGARMS

There are many methods for program level assessment. These methods include both internal and external assessment. Here we focus on an external assessment for program assessment, specifically the ETS Major Field Test (MFT) for MBA. This test has a primary focus on four functional areas and a secondary focus on seven other areas as indicated below.

Primary Focus

- Accounting
- Marketing
- Finance
- Management
- Strategic Integration

Secondary Focus

- international business
- information technology
- legal and regulatory environment of business
- ethics and social responsibility in business
- statistical analysis

- managerial economics
- e-commerce.

The Major Field Test for MBA assesses mastery of knowledge acquired by graduating MBA students. The Major Field Test for Master of Business Administration (MFT-MBA) consists of 124 multiple-choice questions, half of which are based on short case-study scenarios.

Assessment Indicators, presented in aggregate form, are in the following areas where the numbers in parentheses are the approximate number of questions in each category.

- Accounting (31)
- Marketing (31)
- Finance (31)
- Management (31)
- Strategic Integration (62)

The primary focus is on knowledge of specific information drawn from marketing, management, finance, and accounting while secondary focus is on international business, information technology, legal and regulatory environment of business, ethics and social responsibility in business, statistical analysis, managerial economics and e-commerce. ETS notes that the MFT-MBA measures critical thinking ability — "that is, the ability to interpret data, to apply concepts and ideas, and to analyze data, theories and relationships deductively and inductively."

Information provided at the website of nine universities in North Carolina can be compared with the major focus areas of the ETS major field test for MBA to evaluate the readiness of their graduates for external program-level assessment. Table 2, below describes in detail the four major focus areas of the MBA major field test for MBA.

Table 2: The ETS Major Field Test for MBA

I. Marketing (25%)	II. Management (25%)	III. Finance (25%)	IV. Accounting (25%)
A. Strategic Marketing 1. Metrics and Control Mechanisms 2. Environment Scanning and Marketing Planning 3. Innovation	A. Organizational Behavior 1. Leadership 2. Teams 3. Conflict 4. Negotiation 5. Motivation	A. Corporate Finance 1. Capital Budgeting 2. Cost of Capital 3. Capital Structure 4. Dividend Policy 5. Working Capital Management 6. International Finance	A. Relevant Cost 1. Theory of Constraints 2. Special Order 3. Make or Buy 4. Transfer Pricing 5. Sell or Process Further
B. Buyer Behavior 1. Consumer and Business Purchasing Processes 2. Factors Influencing Consumer and Business Purchasing 3. Segmentation	B. Human Resource Management 1. Recruiting and Selection 2. Compensation 3. Employment Planning 4. Training and Development	B. Investments 1. Financing Instruments 2. Risk and Return 3. Securities Valuation and Analysis 4. Options, Futures and Other Derivatives	B. Resource Planning and Analysis 1. Forecasting 2. Cash Budgeting 3. Variance Analysis
C. Market Research 1. Competitive Intelligence 2. Research Process, Concepts and Tools 3. Managerial Decision Making	C. Organizational Theory 1. Organizational Change & Development 2. Organizational Structure Design 3. Systems Thinking 4. Entrepreneurship/Small Business Management	C. Financial Markets and Institutions 1. Capital Markets 2. Money Market 3. Market Efficiency 4. Investment Banking	C. Cost-Volume-Profit Analysis 1. Cost Behavior 2. Break-Even Analysis 3. Target Profit
D. Marketing Planning: Target Segments and Marketing Mix 1. Specifying Target Markets 2. Pricing 3. Products/Services 4. Promotion 5. Channels & Distribution/Supply Chain	D. Operations Planning/Management Science 1. Quantitative Decision Making Models 2. Quality/Process Management 3. Supply Chain Logistics 4. Planning 5. Control 6. Service Management		D. Product Costing 1. Absorption vs. Variable 2. Activity-based 3. Process vs. Job Order 4. Byproduct
			E. Financial Reporting and Analysis 1. Financial Statements 2. Financial Ratios 3. Regulatory Environment

Source: ETS Major Field Test http://www.ets.org/mft/about/content/mba.

THE FUTURE OF THE MBA CURRICULUM: IMPROVING RELEVANCY THROUGH EVIDENCED-BASED SOFT SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The question of MBA curriculum relevancy has extended over many years, but surprisingly there has been little cohesive effort on the part of business schools to modify their approach in preparing students for successful practice management. Our research provides support to the growing concern that soft-skills education has been overshadowed by the quantitative orientation emphasized in most MBA programs, despite the weak relationship found between MBA curricula and career success. The results of our study based upon the perceptions of successful executives, revealed a set of prioritized soft skills as essential to their business success. However, these skills have not been widely embraced by business schools facing well-entrenched structural impediments to curricula change. We offer some prescriptive measures to help address these issues with the intention of elevating the relevancy of the MBA curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the tremendous growth and acceptance, or at least tolerance of MBA programs in academia and related executive development education as prime sources of revenue generation, business school curricula have suffered on-going criticism. The lack of sufficient integration across the functional business silos further hampers a more complete approach to business problem-solving rendering the MBA graduate a good analyst, but perhaps a poor leader who lacked a holistic perspective. Pfeffer and Wong (2002) assert that deep analysis has come at the expense of wisdom, leadership development, and interpersonal skills and ethics for a conflagration of failures: "teaching the wrong things in the wrong ways (and perhaps to the wrong people, or at least the at the wrong time in their careers)". Others, including Mintzberg and Gosling (2002), have been harsh critics of MBA programs and Leavitt has termed the MBA rubrics as "weird" and that the MBA experience produces individuals who are misshapened with "icy hearts, and shrunken souls" (in Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, p. 80).

Business management is first and foremost a practice incorporating action, responsiveness and organization leadership. Yet, much of the curriculum is taught as an academic subject distantly removed of the milieu of business. The focus appears to be on the academic orientation or scientific method which is indeed useful for the study of business, but rather less effective for the teaching of business as a dynamic practice. Management practice requires deep skills in leadership, organization behavior, communications and interpersonal capability (Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002). These same concerns have been voiced by the GMAC, but the success of learning these skills through readings and analysis is not sufficient for what business schools claim as success. Research has been cited as a primary factor in establishing the reputation of business schools, and reputation as the strongest determinant of student earnings. However, the relationship between the nature of the research and its practical use by either students or industry is less impressive. Others concluded from their research of academic and practitioner constructs that information basically flows from practitioners to academics rather than the reverse. A stronger orientation towards research relevancy without any diminution of rigor would at least contribute to usefulness and perhaps make theory more thought-provoking and appealing. Business schools have come under fire for what some outspoken critics describe as an overemphasis on "relatively easy-to-quantify business outcomes" at the expense ideation, critical thinking, ethics, change, values, and leadership (Mintzberg & Gosling, 2002). Business schools have also been harshly reproached of late as contributing to the volume of problems at such companies as Enron, Monsanto, Merrill Lynch, Lehman Brothers, and Phillip Morris, to name just a few. This gap in leadership direction and education within business schools may be partially due to what appears to be an oversimplification of "soft skills" training when in reality it is these multifaceted and intangible capabilities that are needed to deal with the complexities in running modern organizations, especially within a global context. We sought to help address this issue by first identifying and expanding our understanding of success factors and, second, by bringing to light those barriers that negatively impact MBA reform.

METHODS

Our research design was comprised of two major parts. First, we sought to examine those factors that were recognized as important by executives on their upward journeys; and second, we wanted to understand more thoroughly the impact of MBA program structural elements on the development of these required skills. We chose *consensual qualitative research* (CQR) for our approach as it is considered especially useful in investigations where interaction is fluid and dynamic, such as career strategy (Polkinghorne, 2005).

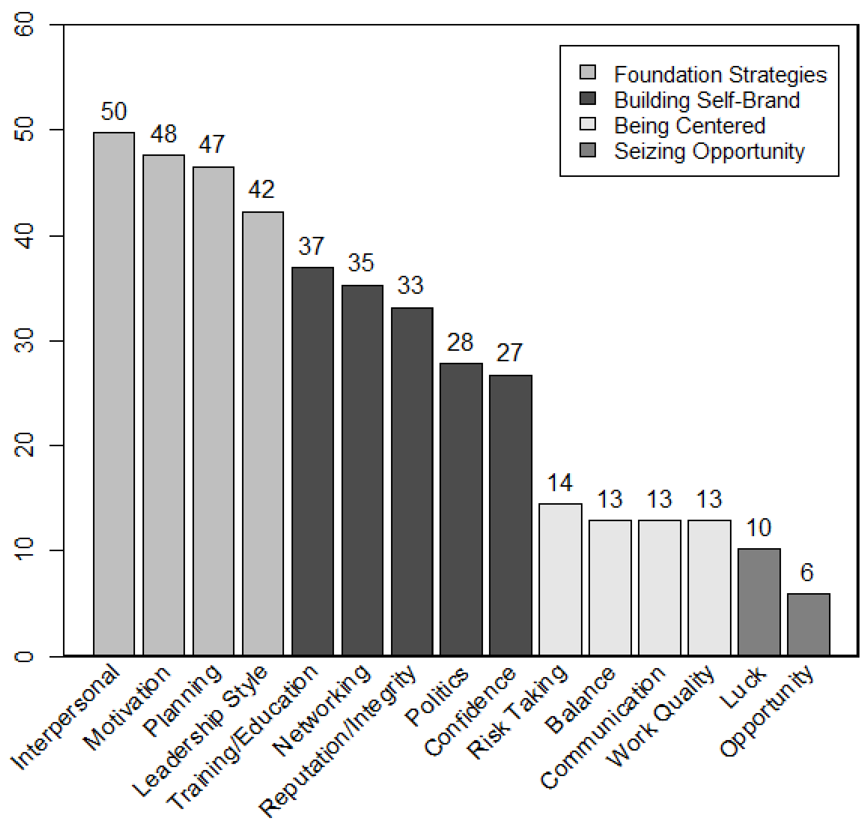
Each data set from 187 interviews was reviewed for common themes and domains. The domain areas were then reviewed and collapsed into 15 skills areas and four major categories based upon consensus (100% inter-rater reliability). The data was then coded permitting descriptive and inferential tests that helped to reveal less noticeable results. The second aim of this study was a detailed review of the MBA program literature specific to the issues of relevancy and structural impediments to career success.

Our sample base was limited to include senior level executives with titles such as CEO, president or managing partner to mid-level positions with titles including AVP, associate director or military officer. The sample base included 187 interviews from 136 organizations. Of these, 51% were industrial (96), 12% educational (28), 9% governmental (16), 9% nonprofit (16), and 6% military (12).

DATA ANAYLSIS AND SUMMARY

Respondents were asked to identify and rank up to eight career tactics that they considered instrumental to their upward mobility success. Following CQR procedures including discussion, the items were collapsed into 15 career tactic categories. Variation based upon percentages was observable with spreads from 6% to 50% (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Total sample percentage of subjects mentioning tactic items within grouping categories (n=187) (adapted from Laud & Johnson, 2012)



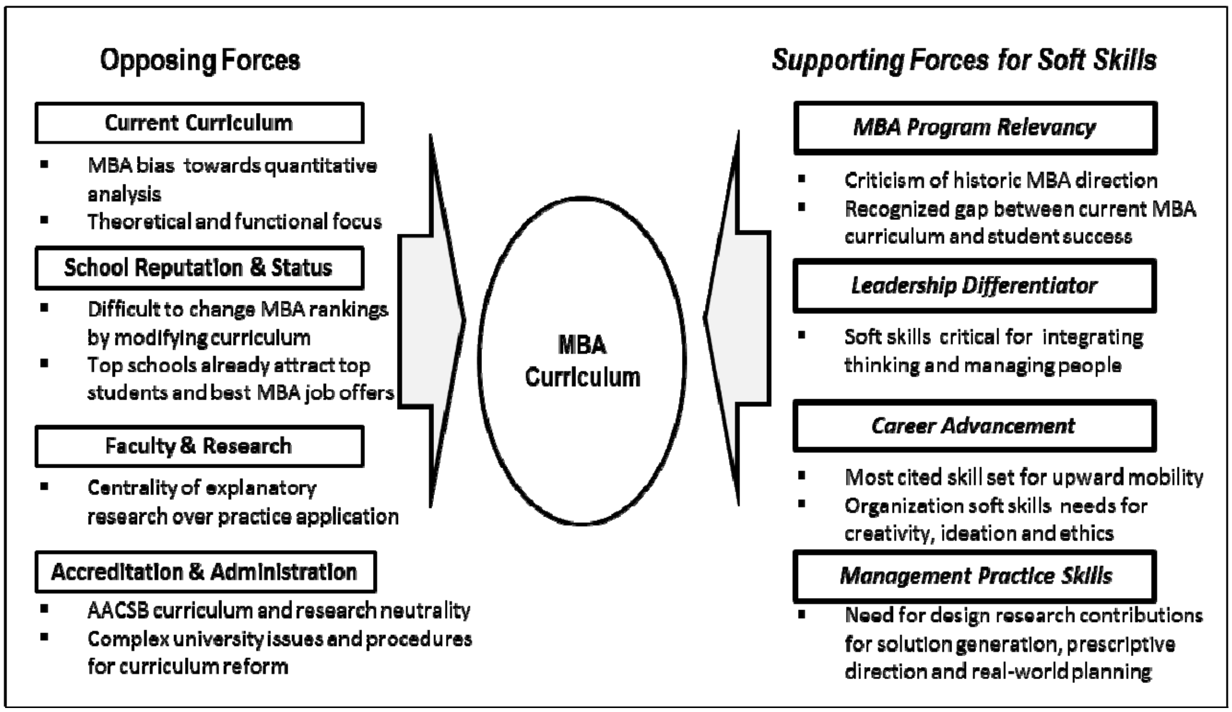
From this finding, we hypothesized that the 15 career tactics could be quantitatively grouped into four strategic categories which we called: Foundation Strategies, Building Self-Brand, Being Centered and Seizing Opportunity. The p-values in comparing any of the four categories demonstrated strong evidence (all p-values <.005) enabling us to conclude that percentage of mentions across the four categories were, indeed, distinct.

What was most interesting to us in this analysis was that we found strong empirical evidence demonstrated by the large number and high rankings of soft skills compared functional or technical skills as perceived by those who had succeeded in their upward mobility climb.

DISCUSSION

The vast amount of evidence indicates that the current MBA curriculum plays a marginal role in contributing to what is required to be successful in business (Gosling & Mintzberg, 2006; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002). Our research, which was based upon unaided feedback from successful leaders, identified a continuum of 15 key skills or tactics required for business success. Yet, an overarching question remains unresolved: why haven't business schools responded to the need for curricula reform, especially with regard to soft-skills education? Our interview findings in conjunction with a review of the literature for our selected population and its fit against theory revealed several areas of institutional resistance to soft-skill curricula change (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2 Forces Impacting Inclusion of Soft-Skills in the MBA Curriculum



Reputation plays a broad and critical role in the ability of business schools to attract students, faculty, corporate recruiters, alumni donations and research grants. We see an opportunity for both high-ranking schools, and especially less competitive schools, to differentiate their graduates by strengthening their MBAs' soft-skills capability. Although there may be merit to innovative programs, the market for reputation and prestige is not gained easily or quickly, and the diminution of criticism of MBA programs, especially at lower-ranked schools, without improving the managerial or soft-skills capability of their graduates is doubtful. The second area of institutional resistance lies in the faculties' academic orientation and research interests which are at the heart of the MBA relevancy criticisms.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For over 50 years academics, professionals and business organizations have debated the appropriateness and relevancy of the MBA curriculum. Researchers have documented a multitude of apparent and subtle goal conflicts between numerous business school stakeholders: faculty with interest in esoteric niches, deans focusing on ranking criteria, corporations needing business management skills, the AACSB searching for purpose and MBA students aspiring for successful and rewarding careers. Our research based upon a CQR methodology with successful senior executives confirmed the need for soft skills education and contributed a typology of 15 soft-skills areas important for executive advancement. Our literature review revealed several areas of structural resistance to soft-skills development within MBA curricula.

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CLICKING YOUR VOICE: USE OF A STUDENT RESPONSE SYSTEM IN A LARGE LECTURE CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Large auditorium lecture classes are a challenge to college educators who must present knowledge that may be controversial in a setting that can be perceived to be impersonal and alienating. Participants: Survey data were obtained from 212 undergraduate students in December 2010. Study reports on general observations that occurred from August 2007 to May 2011. Methods: Observation, reflection, and a cross sectional survey collected participant and programmatic data. Results: This program note describes the use of a student response system in a 240-student class on health issues at a regional university. It provides suggestions and techniques for the effective implementation of an electronic personal response or "clicker" system that are of particular interest and use to educators. Conclusions: Electronic student response systems can be a helpful tool in providing engaging classes in large lecture halls.

INTRODUCTION

In large lecture classes, opportunities for personal interaction and student class participation are limited. Student participation and involvement are curtailed because of the distance between faculty and students, the impersonal nature of the space, the seating arrangement, and the sheer number of students.[1] These barriers are especially important in courses which contain material on personal health behaviors. Because of the subject matter, students may have questions or need information that is of a personal nature and may not feel comfortable identifying themselves to the instructor or to their peers. They must often choose between waiting to speak to the instructor before or after class, coming to faculty office hours, or remaining uninformed.

Electronic Student Response Systems ("clickers") are an increasingly popular solution. Clickers enable each student with a uniquely assigned keypad to answer questions posed by their instructor. Their responses are electronically recorded via the use of a receiver that is attached to the instructor's computer. Uses of the clickers include taking attendance, completing quizzes and exams, and providing student comprehension feedback to the instructor. Questions can be created in advance or "on the fly." Student responses are aggregated and presented immediately as graphs or tables, while maintaining the anonymity of individual students. This technology has the potential to transform the classroom experience, providing opportunities to modify the class to better meet the needs of students.

The literature on the use of clickers in the classrooms is preliminary. Many studies have been descriptive, often focused on the attitudes and opinions of students and instructors regarding the use of clickers. [2-4] The literature suggests that several factors contribute to students' attitudes and perceptions of clickers. Some of these factors are the students' desire to be engaged, the view that traditional lecture styles are not best, the evaluation of feedback, the amount of clicker use in the class, and the anticipated course performance.[5] For example, in sexuality education classes, students have reported that they have enjoyed using a student response system and that it had a positive influence on their learning experience.[6] Additionally, students have reported that they were more likely to answer personal questions honestly with the use of clickers.[7]

Clicker Use in an U.S. Health Issues Course

This research was conducted in an interdisciplinary course on the structure and function of the U.S. healthcare system and issues of concern to public health and healthcare management. This course drew students from across the university as it fulfilled an interdisciplinary studies general education requirement for students completing the baccalaureate. The class met twice a week for one hour and fifteen minutes and had an enrollment of 240 students. Although this course has been taught with and without clickers for 12 semesters by one of the authors, this discussion focuses on one section taught in Fall of 2010.

At the end of the semester, students were asked to complete a voluntary online evaluation survey that included questions on clicker use. Those survey data are presented here. Of 240 students enrolled in the course, 212 completed the survey. Class composition was consistent with previous semesters. Sixty-two percent of students were female, 24 percent were African American, 13 percent were Hispanic, 9 percent were Asian, 41 percent had used clickers in previous classes

Benefits of Clicker Use

Throughout the semester, clickers were used in four ways. First, they were used for class management and student accountability. Second, the instructor posed questions to assess student comprehension of material and guide lectures. Third, they were used to increase participation by conducting polling on current debates in health. Fourth, personal risk behavior questions were asked that could be answered anonymously.

Class Management and Student Accountability

A clicker system is a great tool to assist institutions of higher learning that are increasingly being required to be accountable for learning outcomes and to document productivity. For example, federal financial aid programs currently require that instructors report the "last date of attendance" for failing students. Simply taking attendance in a 200+ student classroom requires so much class time that many instructors opt to not do it. By having a clicker system in place, it can be managed in a matter of minutes. Furthermore, all student assessment data can be systematically collected and maintained with just a few clicks of the mouse.

Assessing Student Comprehension: Disparities in Student Knowledge

Depending on prior education, great disparities in the knowledge base of students can exist. These disparities create quite a challenge to the college instructor. Clickers are invaluable as a means to determine the extent to which a particular topic needs to be addressed in a given class. Quick knowledge questions can be asked to assess basic knowledge and lectures can be modified to address gaps in pre-existing knowledge. Rather than address content that is already familiar to students, educators can tailor their lessons to meet the particular needs of their class. In addition, as basic knowledge questions are posed and students submit responses, there is an opportunity to rectify miscomprehensions.

Increased Participation: Current Controversies

Many academic discussions in the college classroom are inherently controversial. Clickers can be used to poll students on specific controversial issues. In this course, current debates in health and healthcare were examined with the help of the clickers. For example, when discussing the structure of the healthcare system, select students volunteered as advocates for a particular position on the controversial issue “Is healthcare a right or a privilege?” The students, who had previously researched the topic, debated for approximately 10 minutes. The debate then spurred a class discussion. Students in the audience posed questions to the debaters or added their own comments. The students were polled before and after the discussion about their personal beliefs and students could see how class opinions may have shifted on an issue. This format can lead to very lively discussions during which students can improve their critical thinking and communication skills.

Assessing Risk: Personal Risk Behaviors

One of the goals of instruction in health is to encourage students to identify and minimize risky health behaviors. Because of the personal and private nature of these behaviors, students may be hesitant to identify themselves as having participated in high risk activities. It would be foolhardy to expect students to honestly answer questions such as, "Did you use condoms the last time you had intercourse?" if responses were public. With clickers, the instructor can pose very sensitive questions and students can feel free to answer honestly.

When using this technique, the instructor should demonstrate to the students that their responses are completely private and not subject to review by the instructor or their peers. Students can observe as the instructor sets up the session and chooses the ‘anonymous’ option. This enables students to be confident of the anonymity of their responses while receiving immediate information as to how their behavior compares to their peers. Instructors should make it clear that whether a student chooses to answer is voluntary and students may choose to answer some questions and not others. Armed with this information, the instructor can tailor the presentation of content to the needs of students.

DISCUSSION

There are several challenges health instructors should be aware of before implementing a clicker system in their classrooms. There is a learning curve, instructors must become familiar with the software and the hardware, and how that software interacts with existing course products such as Blackboard or other course management systems. Instructors should practice logging on to the system both as the instructor and as a student. Fair policies regarding the consequences to students saying, “I forgot my clicker” must be developed and incorporated into the grading schema. Furthermore, new assessment instruments and teaching techniques that are structured to take advantage of the clicker system must be developed, tested, and implemented.

The cost of the equipment often comes up as an issue of concern. Although the transponder and software used by the instructor is generally free, student costs can vary from $15 to $35 depending on the arrangements made by the university with the vendor. This has not proven to be overly burdensome to students in the experience of the authors. In the online survey described above, only 18 percent of students answered yes to the question, "Do you think the clickers were too expensive?"

The technological issues that often arise can cause great difficulties, especially if there are no back up mechanisms in place. Problems can occur for both the instructor and the students. The system may lock up and need to be re-booted. This tends to happen more often as the data file becomes larger or the equipment becomes older. A student may not be able to log into the system, for example, if batteries are not working or their clicker has malfunctioned. In the online survey, when asked, “What don't you like about the clicker system?" Forty-two percent of students discussed technological problems as a concern. Instructors must be flexible enough to take these glitches in stride and not let system failure take over the class. When dealing with technology, sometimes things do not always go perfectly. Adaptability and flexibility are of great importance, both for instructor and students. Building that flexibility into the grading process (dropping lowest 2 quiz scores, for example) can be useful.

These challenges can be addressed and clicker systems can be successfully implemented. Students themselves, who bear the economic cost of the system, can see its usefulness. When students were asked in the online survey "Should the professor use the clickers the next time she teaches this class?" Eighty-two percent said “Yes."

Regardless of class size or setting, educators must do what they can to ensure that students can voice their thoughts and that shared information is heard, understood, and incorporated. A student response system does not eliminate all of the various challenges that are presented by teaching in large class settings, but clickers can be a useful tool to address some of the challenges and improve instruction.

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A SIMPLE MODEL FOR ESTIMATING ENROLLMENT YIELD FROM A LIST OF FRESHMAN PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

This study develops a simple binary logistic regression model for estimating total enrollment yield and enrollment probability for individual accepted applicants using cross-sectional data from a private, liberal arts university. The model uses three predictor variables: discount amount offered, ACT score and state residence, to predict the enrollment decisions of accepted applicants with slightly over 78% accuracy.

MAKING TEACHING VISIBLE: SHARING & EVALUATING USING PEER OBSERVATION

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ABSTRACT

Calls to improve teaching and provide evidence of teaching effectiveness come from a variety of sources. Peer review of teaching can provide an internal mechanism of accountability from which AACSB International or other accrediting bodies can assess the soundness of an institution's quality-assurance procedures. Increasingly peer reviews may go into a teaching portfolio or a promotion/tenure dossier. Further, peer observation of in-class teaching encourages colleagues to "share their toys" as they experiment with instructional design and delivery. The process can encourage colleagues to collaborate in understanding and addressing challenges. This paper is intended to assist business faculty who will participate either as observers or as instructors in such a process.

BACKGROUND & LITERATURE REVIEW

Pressures to improve teaching and provide evidence of teaching effectiveness are coming from a variety of sources such as regulatory and accrediting bodies like the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

The old saying is "if you can't measure it then you can't manage it." If universities need to measure and manage (to demonstrate continuous improvement) teaching, then how do universities assess teaching? Typically faculty members are assessed by their peers on research, teaching and service. Research is published, and service is often public. Teaching is comparatively private as lectures are observed only by students, and teaching materials such as exams are confidential (Calegari et al., 1999). A system of peer review of teaching would elevate teaching from a private function to a visible improvement system while also fulfilling the accrediting bodies' insistence on continuous improvement.

How to conduct peer review of teaching? Research shows three main thrusts in review of teaching effectiveness: A teaching portfolio which documents the teaching philosophy, syllabi, content selection criteria, and the goals, objectives and results of courses over time. A second teaching review component is student evaluations of teaching. Since students are the audience in the classroom, they have some perspective on classroom ability. There are many studies that discuss the relevance or biases of student evaluations, but even the most fervent supporters of student evaluations will agree that there are perspectives that students do not possess and other trained peers do. Colleagues are in a better position than students to evaluate selection of content, appropriateness of objectives, instructional materials and delivery (Brent & Felder, 2004; Cohen & McKeachie, 1980; Keig & Waggoner, 1994). The third leg of the teaching evaluation stool should be a peer review of classroom implementation of the plans and processes as documented in the teaching portfolio.

Classroom peer review can be evaluative or developmental. Evaluation practices can be used for tenure, retention or promotion decisions, merit rewards and teaching assignment. When developmental peer review is done well, it structures constructive criticism and a sharing of best practices into a proactive force for change and a fostering of peer-to-peer mentoring. The preparation of observers and the use of observation protocols can optimize the utility of the data for either development or evaluation (DeZure, 1999).

Brent & Felder (2004) recommends selecting observers from among experienced faculty with three or more years of teaching experience. When peer observation is used for evaluation, selecting an observer who has taught the same course or has taught under similar course-settings offers the potential benefit that he or she is particularly aware of circumstances that need to be considered (Cohen and McKeachie, 1980). Training in the peer review process is necessary but may not be sufficient if the observer has little familiarity with the teaching strategies that will be observed. Colleagues are best suited to focus on the criteria for which they have the ability to contribute insight. So care should go into selecting among tenured faculty who will serve as observers, particularly for evaluative reviews.

OBSERVABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER

In a 2004 study by Tigelaar et al., 74 university teachers from various disciplines, all with five years or more of experience in the classroom, rated aspects of good teaching. A Delphi analysis of the participants' responses identified primary categories that included: 1) Person as teacher (positive attitude and respect for students); (2) expert on content; and (3) facilitator of learning processes (including capability to assess learning results) (Tigelaar et al., 2004).

In another study, 17,000 Canadian students were surveyed and identified nine behaviors essential to effective teaching. The effective teachers were respectful of students, knowledgeable, approachable, engaging, communicative, organized, responsive, professional, and humorous (Delaney et al., 2010). These behaviors could be mapped to the three categories similar to those identified in Tigelaar et al. above.

More recent research by Simendinger et al. explores perceptions of business students, faculty, and administrators from four universities about the attributes of effective business teachers. Among the highest-ranking of those attributes were: illustrating current knowledge of the subject matter; creating an atmosphere where students are at ease asking questions; providing practical examples and applications; providing information that is worthwhile; presenting material in a way that is easy to learn; and being approachable both in and outside the classroom. Interestingly, faculty ranked "challenging students to think" the second most important attribute, and students ranked it very low.

Another helpful resource in identifying observable elements of teaching and student learning in business fields is Brightman (2006). While this study focuses primarily on how to improve performance that will lead to higher student evaluations, many of the suggestions are relevant for in-class observations. Brightman has mentored over 27 faculty members and finds that organization/clarity and presentation ability are the two most important factors affecting student evaluations of instructors. Similarly, Feldman (1989) finds that these are the two most important factors affecting student achievement on common exams. The two most important elements to improving organizational clarity are the use of diagrams (e.g., how topics/concepts are interrelated) and the presentation of objectives. If the objectives involve comprehension, Brightman recommends that students demonstrate this by explaining ideas, their importance, and their implications or extrapolating (making predictions) by translating or connecting ideas they have learned. For improving clarity of presentation, Brightman suggests: (1) starting with the simple concepts and moving toward complexity; (2) starting with familiar ideas and moving toward the unfamiliar; (3) establishing why a topic is important before presenting it; (4) starting with a concrete situation, problem or data set and then present the theory; and (5) using multiple languages (words, pictures, mathematics) to present ideas and concepts.

Before adopting or adapting any peer observation instrument, also consider promotion and tenure guidelines that indicate how teaching will be evaluated. For instance, the standards may say that teaching excellence must be demonstrated across categories of instructional design, instructional delivery, and instructional assessment of student learning. If the standards are anchoring on certain behaviors, then any instrument for student evaluation of teaching as well as any instrument for peer observations should offer insight that is relevant to those dimensions.

DESIGNING AN INSTRUMENT TO GUIDE PEER OBSERVATION AND REFLECTION

Several authors have generated both conceptual analysis of peer review processes as well as practical guides. Recent extensive guides include Race et al. (2008) and Franchini (2008). While many of the protocols that exist for peer review use a rating scale, this can contribute to a "checklist" and "end of conversation" mentality (Franchini, 2008) and an illusion of precision when a richer attestation to the in-class experience and more constructive feedback might be conveyed by concrete examples from qualitative, open-ended prompts. Rating scales may be more affected by the halo effect. Under a halo effect, if the global impression is favorable, then the observer tends to mark "excellent" or "very good" on each item (Berk, 2004). Limiting an observation protocol primarily to scales and checklists may be restrictive. Unstructured/open-ended items may provide a foundation for dialogue about instructional design and delivery choices. One of the potential contributions of having a peer observation process is that it can lead to fruitful discussions in which we learn from each other about ways to transform the climate in our classes. If the peer observation protocol doesn't facilitate that dialogue, we're missing a valuable opportunity.

The use of a three-step process between the instructor and observer is common. This includes a preconference to initiate dialog, observation/reflection, and postconference. The specific prompts in the observation protocol should address what is most valued in achieving the desired specific learning outcomes for your students. Keeping the list of observable elements focused on essentials will helps to reduce the necessary time commitment.

FOLLOW-UP

For the best results, the instructor will want to follow up on the observation by taking some action designed to enhance the in-class learning experience. The peer observer may be willing to help the instructor plan an appropriate course of action during the post-observation meeting and the instructor may wish to document some reflections as part of that action plan. If peer observation is a component of a larger mentoring endeavor, regular follow-up meetings could occur in order to close the feedback loop and maximize the value of the observation. In this way, the peer observer or mentor could go further in comparing test design to learning objectives and offering options for how to respond to critical incidents that occur during classes. As Brightman (2006, 144) notes:

> Faculty, like students, benefit from help in learning how to apply general principles (in this case, principles of effective teaching and learning) to particular concrete situations.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

When participating in the peer observation process, either as an instructor or an observer, one develops greater awareness of choices in designing courses and enacting in-class experiences. This model is meant to encourage faculty to “share their toys” as they experiment with instructional design and delivery. In doing so, faculty can create more of a culture of inquiry around teaching as community property. The process can encourage colleagues to collaborate in understanding and addressing challenges. Peer observation may decrease the sense of isolation that might be felt by faculty with regard to teaching. This kind of instructional improvement program also offers an internal mechanism of accountability from which AACSB International or other accrediting bodies can assess the soundness of an institution’s quality-assurance procedures.

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